



Instituut voor Veiligheids- en Crisismanagement

Safety and security issues at large crowd events

A Dutch case study on group violence

COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management

An Aon company

June 8, 2010

Introduction

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- COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management (The Hague)
- Specialization in event risk management and crisis management



Contribution

- Event safety and violence: recent developments in The Netherlands
- Group violence: case study on hooliganism
- Current (intermediate) reflections
 - Group violence on public events
 - The role of alcohol and drugs
 - Approaches: diverging views and interests
- Towards the future: what are the needs?

Incidents at events in The Netherlands



Safe public events: top priority

- High public impact, media attention
- Triggers for awareness on risks and vulnerabilities
- Special attention to the risks of crowd control and violence



Group violence: case study on hooliganism

- Hooligans: relocation from football stadiums towards large crowd events
- Concerns:
 - risks of group violence for large crowd events
 - role of alcohol and drugs in group violence
 - free accessible events and dance events
- Meanwhile:
 - Extra attention for violence against public servants
 - Ongoing crowdedness of many public events

Current (intermediate) reflections

- Group violence at public events
 - 'Male thing', consequence of a need for cohesion in a time of individualization
 - Hooligan violence has a long history, more visible when it appears on public events
 - Soccer as a uniting identity, football hooligans relatively strongly organized
 - Urban areas and specific city cultures increase risks
 - Tensions of increasing violence among other groups: Moroccan youths, self-proclaimed 'gangs' in urban areas

Violence: the role of alcohol and drugs

- The picture
 - 22% of youths in The Netherlands is drunk at least once a month
 - 21% of youths going out in nightlife use drugs
 - Events: alcohol and drug use widely spread (esp. dance events, rural events)
- Studies: alcohol and drugs as a trigger, but not as a sufficient condition for violence
- Spontaneous aggression: big involvement of alcohol and/ or drugs
- Hooligans: instrumental use of drugs in preparation for violence



Approaches: diverging views and interests

- Police: advocacy on strict policies towards public events, esp. alcohol and drugs
- Health professionals approach: "responsible drugs use on events should be permitted"
- Local government: city marketing, local political interests, diverging policies and regulation
- Event organizers: need for more co-operation with authorities, in risk analysis and information sharing

Towards a more risk-based approach

What is needed?

- Thorough risk analysis before every public event
- Recognizing potentially risky events
- More insight in (patterns of) behavior of violent groups
- Specific measures and tactics aimed at potentially high risk groups and their behavior
- Making local governments take more "calculated risks"

Questions? Please!

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