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Crowd Psychology and Communications

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Effective Communication



- No surprises and no promises approach
- Builds trust and confidence
- Establishes and maintains links with:
 - Communities
 - Relevant parties
 - Partners, etc
- Most appropriate policing style
- Identifies and mitigates potential for disorder
- Clear Audit Trail

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What is a crowd?



- Physical Crowd -v- Psychological Crowd
- Collective action within crowds

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What defines you as a person?

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How would you define yourself?



I -v- We

I -v- Group

**Inter-personal -v- Inter-group
Behaviour**

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Research indicates that:



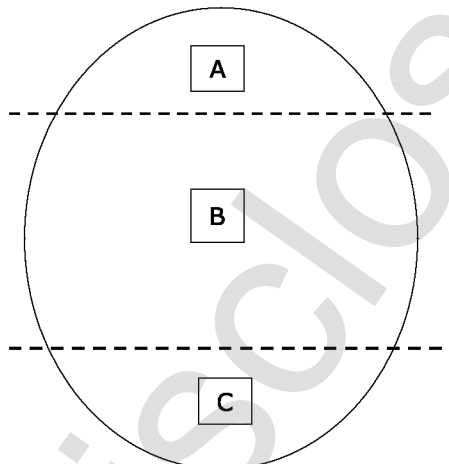
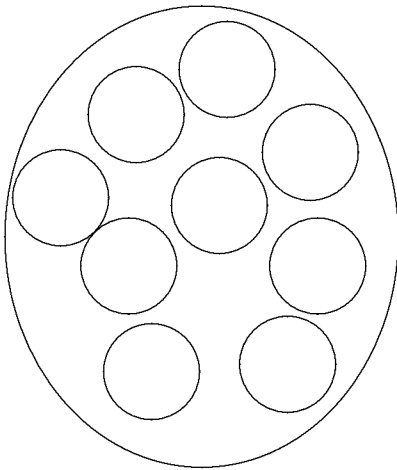
- There are multiple and separate psychological groups within a crowd
- Since these groups have separate psychological identities they will not always be influenced towards violence by other groups in the crowd
- External factors (police action) can cause these groups to coalesce into one group

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Groups within Groups



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Perception, Behaviour & Action



- Most groups tend to view police action as legitimate
- The groups' perception of the legitimacy of police action can be factor that can initiate and escalate disorder
- The undifferentiated use of force by police against a crowd can cause the groups' perception of police legitimacy to change and can therefore trigger disorder
- That communicating with the crowd before and during the event reduces the likelihood of disorder

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Example

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Play DVD

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Police should always seek to: -

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- **Educate** themselves about the crowd
- **Facilitate** peaceful protest by the crowd
- **Communicate** with the crowd and groups in it
- **Differentiate** between groups in the crowd, particularly when using force

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Devolving Responsibility



- Bronze Commanders are best positioned to perform this function because they can adapt operational protocols and tactical plans
- Bronze autonomy is important in allowing police tactics to adapt efficiently and effectively to the dynamics of risk
- Important to empower Bronze Commanders and train them with strategic competencies and theoretical knowledge

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Protestor Liaison Teams

What Are They?

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Protestor Liaison Teams



- Provide a link between the police and protestors by providing the key components of dialogue policing:
 - Negotiation
 - Mediation
 - Initiation
 - Communication
 - Sensing
- Reduce the risks of disorder by avoiding misunderstandings and rumour control
- Creates confidence and trust between police and protestors

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Considerations



- Early involvement in planning process to allow relationships and trust to be developed
- Facilitates protest in line with ECHR whilst minimising the recourse to the use of force
- Engagement strategy with a links to key stakeholders and individuals;
- Does not replace responsibility for all officers to communicate;
- Command protocols
- Information sharing
- Appropriate training
- Potential impact on crowd dynamics

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The Protestor Liaison Team



Bronze Commander

- Accredited as a Bronze Commander

Team Leaders

- Minimum Rank of Sergeant
- Knowledge of Public Order Tactics

Everybody

- Trained to fulfil the role of Bronze Protestor Liaison
- Highly developed communication skills

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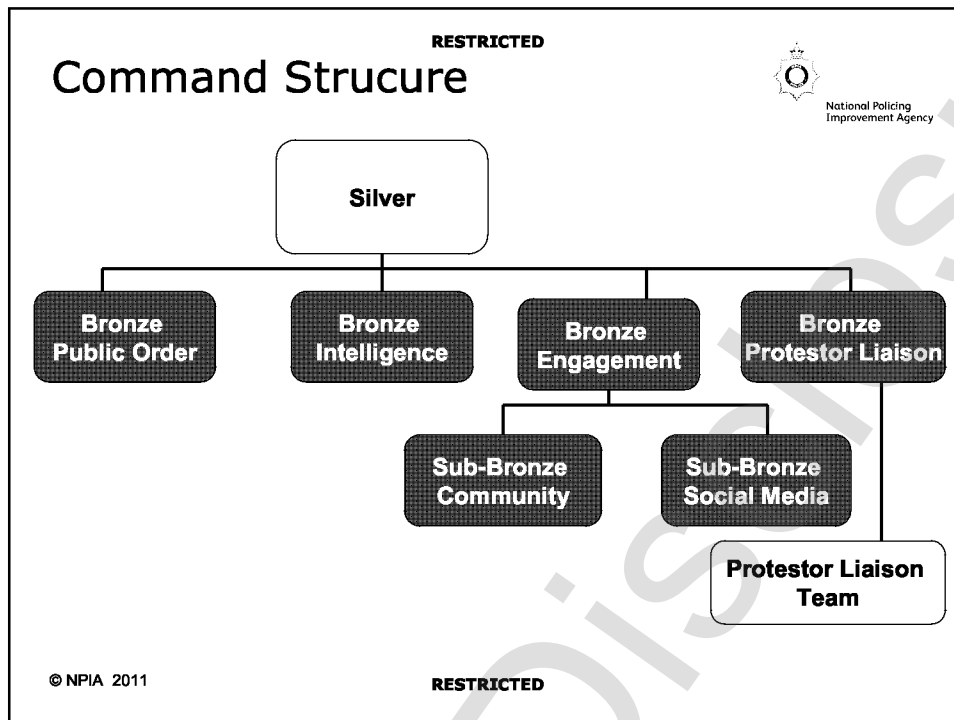
Levels of Dialogue



- **Pre-event** - Initial dialogue allows police to explain the need for restrictions on an event and to facilitate the legitimate objectives of the organisers and other protestors
- **During the event** - They concentrate on establishing communication lines with protestors
- **Post-event** - Dialogue officers facilitate post-event reviews between police and protestors


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Communicating with Crowds- How is it done?


National Policing
Improvement Agency

- Public address system
- Large screen/ signs
- Crowd liaison officers/ stewards
- Loud hailers
- Microphones and speakers
- Digital text messaging
- Independent negotiators/ intermediaries
- Protestor Liaison Teams

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Social Media



National Policing
Improvement Agency

You Tube

Broadcast Yourself

facebook ↑

myspace.com
a place for friends

Bebo

Google Buzz

YAHOO!
Groups

Google
Groups

digg

flickr

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Outcome of the Communication



National Policing
Improvement Agency

Considerations :

- Impact on Power and Policies
- Further actions required

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Conclusion

- Guidance for the police on developing effective communication strategies with protesters and the wider public
- More sophisticated media strategies
- A number of core principles can be discerned that have clear application to public order policing

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