

FESTIVAL WELFARE SERVICES

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FESTIVAL SECURITY CHARTER

Festival Welfare Services (FWS) is a charity funded by a grant from the Voluntary Services Unit of the Home Office. This Charter is proposed on the basis of the experience of Festival Welfare Services and its member agencies over many years of working at festivals. A draft was circulated for comment to festival promoters, security firms, police forces, and others and FWS is very grateful to ACPO, Showsec International Ltd, Specialized Security (Scotland) Ltd, Health & Safety Executive, St John Ambulance and others who contributed ideas. Attached at Appendix A are notes on the various points covered, highlighting a number of issues. At Appendix B is a list of some expectations of security staff by the various groups involved at a festival.

The Health & Safety Executive also consider security to be an important element in safety at festivals and have included a section on it in the "Guide to Health, Safety & Welfare at Pop Concerts & Other Similar Events".

1 General Principles

The primary duty of all security staff is to ensure the safety of customers and others attending the festival. Security staff must treat all customers politely and with respect at all times. They should be sensitive to customers in distress or difficulty and assist them by referral to welfare organisations on site or otherwise as may be necessary. They must cooperate effectively with others working at the festival, including welfare groups. Care must be taken to ensure that any action by security personnel is proportionate to the situation being dealt with.

2 Selection and Identification

All security staff should be immediately identifiable as such, and must display identification, including their name or an identification number and if possible a photograph, at all times when on duty. They should wear distinctive clothing recognisable at a distance. The shift controller should have a complete list of security staff on duty, containing the name, number if any, and duties of each person.

The co-ordinating organisation for welfare services at festivals

The Festival Welfare Services Trust is a registered charity, No 277251 **Co-ordinator:** Penny Mellor

Trustees: Don Aiken, Roger Duncan, Walter Lloyd, Alan Lodge, Trevor McCarthy, Nicole Pollen, Vicki Strangman

Participating Organisations: British Red Cross Society, Church of England, Institution of Environmental Health Officers, National Association of Youth and Community Education Officers, National Council for Voluntary Organisations, National Council of YMCAs, Release Emergency Services, St John Ambulance Brigade, Salvation Army, Samaritans, Save the Children Fund, Travellers Aid Trust, Travellers School Trust

Each security firm employed on site should have available a recent photograph of every person employed on site by them. Security teams should consist of both sexes, and where possible should reflect the range of ethnic and cultural groups likely to be found among customers of the event. No person who may, either because of a record of violence or for any other reason, pose a risk to any member of the public should be employed on security duties.

3 Qualifications and Training

Security staff should be properly trained in emergency procedures, particularly in relation to evacuation and fire control. They should have an adequate communications system, and be properly trained in its use. Security teams should include persons with qualifications in first aid.

4 Facilities Required

Staff must be adequately briefed as to their duties and fully informed about the location of site facilities and services. They must be fully briefed in advance as to their role, particularly in relation to emergency procedures, and provided with at least a summary of the most important points in writing. Security staff must have adequate rest and refreshment between shifts.

5 Information and Complaints

Festival Organisers are responsible for the behaviour of security staff engaged by them. Any person wishing to make a complaint about security staff, or to make any enquiry about their activities must be directed to a representative of the organisers. Such a representative, with authority to give instructions to security staff, must be available for that purpose at all times.

6 Searches

Customers and their property may be searched only for a clearly stated reason (eg for illicit merchandise or weapons) and where reasonable suspicion exists. Searches may take place at points of entry to the site only. They must be confined to property and outer clothing. No customer may be required to remove any item of clothing. All items searched must be replaced as found, and all property treated with due care. Women may be searched only by women. Children may not be searched. Security staff may not conduct searches for illegal drugs - this is a matter for the police.

The requirements of the law must always be observed. Any search conducted without consent is an unlawful assault. No-one may be required to submit to a

search as a condition of being admitted unless this requirement is brought to their attention before they have paid for admission.

7 Confiscation and Safe Custody of Property

Security staff may not confiscate property of any kind. Customers may be prohibited from bringing particular items into the arena or other secure area where this is necessary, provided they have been informed of the prohibition before paying admission. In these circumstances, prohibited items may be taken into safe custody with the owner's consent. If this is done a receipt must be provided, and the items must be returned to the owners without undue delay whenever they wish to leave (see Note 7). If any such item is lost or damaged full compensation must be paid.

Under no circumstances may security staff take money from the customer except for admission or other fees where so authorised by the organisers. In all cases where money is taken, some form of ticket or receipt specifying the amount paid must be provided, whether asked for or not. Any staff found to be contravening this rule must be removed from the site forthwith and not allowed to return.

8 Violence

Security staff may not carry, display or use weapons of any kind nor may they use force except "reasonable force" as allowed by law (see Note 8). Any staff found to be contravening these rules must be removed from the site forthwith and not allowed to return. Any incident of violence (including the use of physical restraint) involving security staff must be reported immediately to the shift controller, the organiser's representative and the police and the circumstances inquired into. Where any person is arrested by security staff (see Note 8), whether force is used or not, the fact must be immediately reported to the police. The promoter's representative should be consulted before any person is ejected from the site.

9 Offences

If there is any reason to suspect, or any allegation made by any person, that a member of the security staff has committed any criminal offence on site, the matter must immediately be reported to the organiser's representative and to the police for investigation. Whenever a suspected or alleged criminal offence is to be reported to the police, the names and addresses of any witnesses should be taken and any relevant evidence carefully preserved.

Appendix A

NOTES ON THE FESTIVAL SECURITY CHARTER.

It is proposed that all points of the Charter should normally be included in the contract between the festival organiser and the security firm or firms. Specific issues have been identified as follows :-

1 It is important to ensure that all security are aware of the work of welfare services on site and be prepared to cooperate and assist where necessary. All persons on site must have ready access to these services and must not be excluded or delayed by the necessity to queue at a gate or produce a ticket or pass. It is not for security staff to decide whether a person needs such a service. A person who has left an arena or other secure area to obtain first-aid or other welfare treatment must obviously be allowed to return freely afterwards - it is surprising how often this problem arises.

2 A security staff consisting exclusively of burly men is a recipe for trouble. So is the use of staff without proper identification. Also, women security staff are needed where women are in attendance. There are a considerable number of villains who have latched onto "festival security" as a good racket in recent years - any firm which takes on casual workers for a festival must be prepared to screen them carefully and supervise them closely. In addition to seeking credible references, it is now possible under the Data Protection Act for people to obtain copies of their own police record (known as a "subject access printout"), and applicants for security work should be required to produce this.

Persons known to have a tendency towards violence should not be employed, whether they have criminal convictions or not. Criminal convictions of other kinds may be relevant, depending on how serious and how recent they are. It must be remembered that security staff may have to deal with children as well as adults, and no person who may be unfit to do so for any reason should be employed.

3 Untrained and inexperienced security can be a serious liability. New employees should always be attached to teams containing more experienced members. A radio communications system is of no real value if staff are not trained to use it. Security staff should not be expected to provide a first-aid service to the public, but should be able to take the immediate action necessary in an emergency. The basic first aid qualification is awarded by the British Red Cross Society or St John Ambulance Brigade, and both organisations provide training courses. "Paramedical" qualifications are

desirable, but there is unfortunately no general agreement as to who is entitled to use this title or what training is required. Security teams should also include people with training in such areas as crowd dynamics and emergency planning. Current information on training courses is available from *The Event Suppliers Association, 29 Market Place, Wantage, Oxon. OX12 8BG*

- 4 Security staff can only be expected to treat customers properly if they are given the information and facilities they require to do their job adequately. They should be briefed on the location of facilities such as toilets, first-aid points, welfare services, disabled persons areas etc, and at larger events, provided with a site plan. No briefing can cover all situations - staff should always be prepared to seek further instructions where necessary rather than applying "rules" in a mechanical fashion. There must be adequate preplanning for crowd control, emergency procedures, etc., which will involve consultation with the police and other authorities, and security staff must be aware of their intended role in all circumstances, including "major incidents", when they will come under the direct control of the police.

Adequate supervision, with clear lines of responsibility must always be maintained. Over-tiredness is a prime cause of inappropriate reactions - an overworked team can be more of a liability than an asset. The work of security will be a great deal easier if customers are provided with maximum information, both on tickets and from information points at the event.

- 5 There must be both a shift controller in charge of security staff and a representative of the organisers prepared to take responsibility for instructing them. Both these posts need to be filled on a 24 hour basis - neither is a substitute for the other. Supervisors must be available at all times and clearly communicate any new instructions without delay, checking that these have been received and implemented. This is particularly important when several security companies are "sub-contracted" via one company to the organisers. It is in the interests of both the organisers and security firms that there should be some way of getting feedback about the work of security - this may be compliments as well a complaints!

- 6 Searches are a major cause of friction between security staff and customers. Recurrent problems are sexual harassment and theft, particularly of illicit drugs. All points where searches may take place must be well supervised. All search teams must be of mixed sex. Searches by security staff must not be combined with, or adjacent to, police searches for drugs.

- 7 There have been cases of summary "confiscation", where security staff act not only as police but judge, jury and executioner as well. This must never be permitted.

An exception to the rule about return of property arises when items are found, the possession of which is illegal. This may include certain types of weapons, as well as illegal drugs. Arrangements should be made with the police in advance as to how items of this type will be dealt with. The police should always be consulted in case of doubt. Such items should never be retained in the possession of security staff, but should be stored in a secure place under the supervision of a senior member of staff until they can be disposed of.

- 8 There have been cases of security personnel targeting particular groups on site for "punishment" or revenge. It is the responsibility of supervisory staff to anticipate and prevent such reactions. The term "weapon" includes anything which, by its nature or by the way it is carried or used, may be presumed by customers to be intended for use as such. The law provides that *"a person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime or in effecting or assisting in the lawful arrest of offenders or suspected offenders or of persons unlawfully at large."* (Criminal Law Act 1967, Section 3) The same rule applies to cases of self defence. The use of force in other circumstances will be illegal. "Arrest" includes any situation in which a person is detained and not allowed to leave, for however short a time. It must be noted that security staff have no greater powers of arrest than ordinary members of the public, namely - where the person arrested is reasonably suspected of being in the act of committing an "arrestable offence" or where that person is reasonably suspected of having committed an arrestable offence, provided that the offence was actually committed by someone. It is no defence to an action for false arrest that a reasonable mistake was made and anyone who is not confident that these conditions are satisfied would be very unwise to make an arrest. (For full details, see *Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 Sections 23 & 24*).

Appendix B

Services expected from Security Staff

When looking at security at festivals, we have to consider the needs of the festival organisers, the festival attenders and the concessions, as well as the welfare teams. Whilst it may seem that all sections want the same service from security staff, this is not necessarily true. Even if it were, each section would have different priorities for the security staff.

We have summarised what these priorities might include below :-

1 Festival Organiser

- a) Effective collection of money from ticket sales and concessions; safe transfer of this money to the organisers.
- b) In order to maximise the above, security is also required to maintain the barriers around the site to minimise or eradicate all non-paying admissions of attenders and also ensure that no traders enter the site without a trading concession.
- c) The most effective security at the lowest reasonable price:
- d) The organiser requires the site to be safe. This includes the peaceful behaviour of attenders, as well as the enforcing of parking, camping layout, access etc in accordance with the plans which may be laid down in the licence conditions.
- e) Special back-stage security to meet the demands of the specific performers.

2 Concessions

- a) Security to enable trading sites to be available as arranged.
- b) To shut down or otherwise deal with unauthorised (non-paying) traders.
- c) Security for the traders' staff and equipment.
- d) Safe access of traders' restocking vehicles onto and off site (where absolutely unavoidable).
- e) To deal with troublesome "customers".

3 Attendees

- a) Easy access to site with minimum delays..
- b) Unhindered views of the stage and other activities.
- c) Minimum restrictions on camping, parking, firelighting (when permitted) etc.
- d) To be treated politely and with respect by all staff.
- e) To have dangerous or other incidents dealt with quickly and effectively with minimum disruption.
- f) Security staff who are easily identifiable, well-managed, well-coordinated with central decision making.

4 Welfare services:

- a) Security staff who are sensitive to people in distress or otherwise in difficulty, and help them by giving immediate access to the nearest appropriate welfare service.
- b) To be aware of welfare provisions on site as well as other information and help points, and maintain contact with welfare teams.
- c) To keep welfare areas trouble free and respond quickly when help is "asked for".

(Revised by Festival Welfare Services, October 1993)