

ENABLE

Enabling an Evidence Based Approach to Crowd Safety and Security in Swedish Football

Phase One Interim Report: Empirical Observations & Analysis.

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Clifford Stott, Jonas Havelund and Filip Lundberg

Introduction.

ENABLE is project that draws together an international network of key stakeholders and experts in football safety and security. The primary task of the project has been to undertake a programme of evidence gathering in order to analyse, identify and share good practice in the management of crowds attending Swedish Professional Football matches. The project began in late 2014 and has been supported through funding from Länsstyrelsen Stockholm (Stockholm County Administrative Board), Djurgården IF as well as the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK. Utilising these funds ENABLE has undertaken systematic observations of the safety and security operations surrounding three 'high' risk fixtures in Sweden. Two of these were in Stockholm and one in Gothenburg. ENABLE plans to conduct another three observations before concluding Phase 1 of its development in late 2015. To facilitate dissemination, discussion and learning we have provided this interim report, which focuses in detail on two of our first three observations, but also bases its preliminary conclusions on data from the third. The background theoretical context for this work draws extensively on the Elaborated Social Identity Model of crowd behaviour (ESIM). This theoretical approach is a framework for understanding risk management in the context of crowd events and has considerable policy impact at a global level in the policing context. For a list of relevant research studies see Stott & Pearson, 2014¹.

¹ http://www.n8research.org.uk/assets/files/N8%20PRP%20Evidence%20Reviews/PublicOrder_Evidence%20Review.pdf

Research framework.

The project is designed to contribute directly to reforms to organisational practices in respect to safety and security in Swedish football. This emphasis upon parallel processes of research and reform makes this particular project ideally suited to a methodology referred to as Participant Action Research (PAR); an approach widely adopted in healthcare settings but also applied to a range of policing and criminal justice issues. Its aim is to provide a platform for enhanced quality of practice by empowering stakeholders through engagement with research and implementation processes. Rather than a strictly defined method it is a research framework with the specific purpose of informing and influencing practice. Thus, we have adopted a definition of it as an approach employed by practitioners for improving practice as part of the process of change.

According to some the aim of PAR is to involve stakeholders in the "*sense making that informs the research and in the action which is its focus*" and is a "*process that involves people and social situations that have the ultimate aim of changing an existing situation for the better*"; it is about "*creating new forms of understanding, since action without reflection and understanding is blind, just as theory without action is meaningless*"². Thus, we adopted a set of practices that were designed to respond to an aspiration among stakeholders within this context to act innovatively in the face

² Quotes cited from Koshy et al (2010) reference available on request.

of practical and demanding problems. Our approach involved academic researchers and practitioners in collaborative relationships of knowledge co-production and exchange in order to create a platform in which evidence based reflection and development could take place. Accordingly, we adopted three core components in that the research was participatory, oriented toward empowering democratic forms of practice and designed to address the 'theory-practice gap'; addressing the latter by adopting an ethnographic case study format enabling an in depth and detailed case analysis of a specific safety and security operations. In this respect we implemented an ideographic mode of research where our intention is to provide depth of analysis in order to provoke consideration of more generalizable principles of good practice. The case study format adopted here enables this required level of contextual and detailed analysis.

Our observations therefore involved multiple stakeholders drawn from our key partners. These included academics from the Universities of Leeds and Keele in the UK and from the University of Southern Denmark. Also participating were police officers from Sweden and Denmark and fan representatives and SLOs from Sweden, Denmark the UK and from Supporters Direct. The observations also included Safety and Security experts from football clubs in Sweden and the UK. For each observation the teams were drawn together on the day of the fixture. They were supported by the host police force and had access to all aspects of the operation both inside and outside of stadia.

The teams worked in small groups attending briefings, interviewing participants and making observations across the operational footprint of the event. They would pay particular attention to areas where fans gathered and focus on any issue that were of significance to the police or the research goals of the project. The team was drawn together the following day where extensive discussion was undertaken. This discussion focused on drawing out and triangulating the data so that we were able to gain a clear and objective account of the nature of the event as this related to safety and security issues. During these discussions the team then began to develop some preliminary theoretical analysis of the implications and significance of these events for operationally relevant issues. These discussions were recorded and then revisited for further analysis. This latter analysis forms the structure of the report set out below.

Observation 1: Göteborg v Djurgården,
29th December 2014.

Summary of the event.

Football match days in Sweden create special conditions for the police and it also creates a sense of expectation in the city where the game is hosted. Groups of home supporters tend to gather in pubs prior to the match. Groups of visiting supporters tend to arrive some hours before the fixture and meet with other away supporters with the primary focus on socialising, supporting their club and often marching as a group towards the stadium. Large proportions of home and away

supporters travel to the event by car or buses, which can create pressure on the traffic infrastructure prior to - and after - the matches. Most of the spectators attending a match are 'ordinary' supporters who are not affiliated to any kind of formalised group. However, some do join official supporter clubs such as Järnkaminerna, which is the official supporter club for Djurgården IF. Besides these more officially recognised groups of supporters Sweden has 'ultras' and 'hooligan' groups. One of the most visible ways of expression of the ultra's 'identity' is their use of coordinated chanting, large visual displays, pyrotechnics and 'bangers'. The 'ultras' are generally distinct from 'hooligans' who focus less on visual and auditory displays and more on seeking either pre-arranged or spontaneous confrontations with other hooligan groups. These groups, dynamic by nature, have a major impact on the policing of football. The so-called 'hooligan culture' evolved in Sweden in the early 1990's but football related incidents is not a new phenomenon. The Swedish Football Association was founded in 1904 and in 1906 we see the first recorded incident of football related disorder. The incident is one in a long series of recorded incidents including the death of Tony Deogan, a Stockholm based member of Gothenburg's hooligan group 'Wisemen' in 2002, and in 2014 the death of a 43-year-old Djurgården Supporter in Helsingborg.

Prior to fixtures Göteborg supporters usually meet in pubs along the city centre's main boulevard *Kungsportavenyn* (commonly referred to as '*Avenyn*'). For

this event, the away fans were expected to gather at a pub in *Östra Larmgatan* just a few hundred meters from *Avenyn*. A bridge over a canal called the '*Kungsportsbron*' separates the two locations. For this event it was not possible for Djurgården fans to gather nearer the arena as damage had previously been caused to pubs in the vicinity of the stadium, which now refused to host them. In Sweden it is also normative for 'away' fans, particularly Ultras, to walk to the stadium together in a large group. In Gothenburg the city centre is only a short distance from the stadium so the gathering of Djurgården fans in *Östra Larmgatan* also meant that there would inevitably be a march to the stadium.

From a police perspective both during the planning phase - and the event as a whole - there was a clear and obvious commitment to a graded policing approach in line with the national strategy. However, their main concern was the physical segregation of Djurgården and Göteborg supporters in the city. This was going to be achieved primarily through surveillance of *Östra Larmgatan* and the *Avenyn*, preventing movement of fans across the bridge and in particular controlling the movement of the Djurgården supporters from the *Östra Larmgatan* to the stadium. The police imposed route of the 'march' was particularly contentious because Djurgården supporters were going to be required to walk a circuitous route around the stadium in order to avoid passing areas frequented by Göteborg fans that have historically been areas in which conflict had developed.



The majority of Djurgården supporters arrived into the *Östra Larmgatan* in the late afternoon on two organized busses and gathered at a pre-arranged pub called the '*Gamla Port*' around three hours before the fixture. There was a small pedestrian 'square' along with seats and tables in front of the pub, where the fans gathered. There were no obvious signs of tension and in line with the police tactical plan only a few uniformed police were visible. For a short while two 'spotters' from the Stockholm Police Department stood some distance away simply observing the fans before moving off to monitor other pubs for the presence of any 'risk' fans. The main uniform police presence were two Evenemangs police from the Stockholm Police (see page 7) together with a Bronze commander for the area from the Gothenburg Police. Also present were the two Djurgården Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs; see page 10). Both the commander and the Evenemangs police were proactively engaging with fans in positive and friendly conversation. The Bronze

commander played a significant role throughout this early phase ensuring his Delta Units were located out of sight and that there was a low profile and friendly attitude from the police towards the Djurgården supporters³. Shortly after their arrival a group from the Djurgården Ultras began to walk away from the pub but were 'stopped' by the Bronze commander and Evenemangs police who convinced them to return to the *Gamla Port*. There were no other incidents of note other than a situation in which a Djurgården supporter threw an empty glass into the Square, which smashed but did not hit or injure anyone.

During this period Göteborg fans had begun to gather in two pubs in the area of *Avenyn*. To deter movement of fans between the two areas the police had placed three large 'riot' vans plus other police vehicles on the *Kungsportsbron*. In one pub a large group of Göteborg *Ultras* had gathered and in another a smaller group of the '*Wisemen*', the latter the name attributed to the club's hooligan following. As with the *Gamla Port* there was a relatively 'low profile' police presence where small numbers of 'supporter police' had situated themselves 10-20 meters away from the pubs observing the fans⁴. What was evident is that throughout our observations in these early stages the supporter police sought little or no interaction with the Göteborg fans and as such there was a distinct contrast to the

³ This included a situation where a Djurgården supporter began choking on something they had eaten. The Bronze commander reacted quickly, grabbed the fan and performed the Heimlich manoeuvre. The supporter was picked up by an ambulance and sent to hospital for observation.

⁴ Although Delta units were observed driving through the area.

relative levels of interaction between police and the two sets of fans. It was also evident that the Gothenburg police were aware quite early on that there was no evidence to suggest that neither the Göteborg Ultras or *Wiseman* were actively seeking conflict with Djurgården fans. It was therefore evident that the major issue confronting the management of 'risk' in this context revolved around the march of Djurgården fans but that equally that it was also unlikely that the police would have to prevent Göteborg fans from confronting the march.

As expected and as was observed, sometime before the fixture, a group of Djurgården fans led by the Ultras moved from the pub giving clear indications they were forming the head of a march toward the stadium. Within minutes they began to move off with the remainder of the Djurgården supporters following behind them creating a crowd of around 200 fans. Instead of following a route provided to them by police the fans initially moved off down *Trädgårdsgatan* toward the *Avenyn*. A Delta unit was immediately positioned to create a cordon of officers to block *Stora Nygatan* preventing the march from accessing the *Kungsportsbron*. The Djurgården supporters faced the cordon but did not try to push through, turned away and moved in the opposite direction along *Stora Nygatan*.

At around this point, two smoke and a torch flare were ignited, both of which are illegal in that context. The individual who ignited the torch flare was challenged by the Bronze commander and detained by a

police Delta unit, but later released. In front of the march were the Evenemangs police who attempted to guide the fans in the agreed direction. Correspondingly Delta units blocked side roads and bridges to prevent the Djurgården supporters from deviating from a route acceptable to the police. The units moved ahead of the march in their vehicles, officers got out to create cordons, returning to their vehicles after the march had passed by and then driving rapidly ahead of it again to new areas of control. Throughout there was very little verbal interaction between police and fans and within the march fans were relatively free to act as they wished. For example, during the march one fan took the opportunity to urinate on the police station as the fans passed by but was not challenged or reprimanded by police.



As the Djurgården fans passed by each cordon there was little attempt by the fans to transgress through them. This changed when fans passed the bridge across the

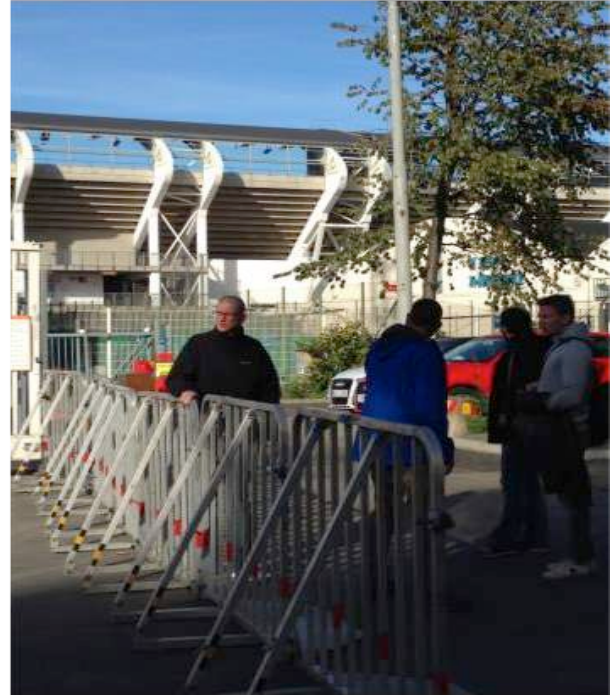
canal at *Polhemsplatsen*, as crossing this would have allowed them access to the more direct route to the stadium.



At this point a small group of Djurgården fans stopped and made a muted attempt to push through the police cordon. Police forcefully resisted, reinforced their deployment and the fans moved on.

Shortly afterwards a fan within the march threw a smoke flare across the canal toward a small gathering of Göteborg fans on the other side. The flare bounced off the roof of a car travelling along the road at that time narrowly missing its open window. There were no further incidents of note during the march and on arriving at the stadium fences were used to create a barrier around the away entrance to corral the arriving fans. A buffer zone of approximately thirty meters was created between the away entrance and the road used by Göteborg fans to access the

stadium. In that buffer zone three police vans were parked to inhibit visual contact between the two sets of fans and a number of Delta unit officers were positioned in the buffer zone behind the fences.



However, at that time there were very few Göteborg fans in the area and no signs of tension between the two fan groups. The fans were filtered into a holding pen and then accessed the stadium via turnstiles. Once inside the stadium the fans gathered together on the terrace behind the goal but the match kick off was delayed due to a pyrotechnic display initiated by the Gothenburg supporters. Part of the motivation for the “pyro show” was a marking of the 10th anniversary of Gothenburg group “Supras GBG”. The pyro was very coordinated and there seemed to be a high level of acceptance of the display among the supporters and security staff in all sections of the stadium. Police were present inside the stadium but no visible

action was taken despite the fact that the use of pyrotechnics in this context is illegal.



The use of pyro by the Gothenburg supporters was accompanied by a Djurgården supporters' singing "*pyrotechnics is not a crime*". Around and inside the stadium a specially equipped unit of stewards, referred to as "ordningsvakten", were also deployed. They receive special training in crowd control and are equipped with protective equipment and weapons including NATO helmets and batons. These are hired and paid for by the clubs and their presence is a statutory obligation. Whilst they refer directly to the head of stadium security any police officer can order them to act under their command. However, there seemed to be no clear command protocols for the ordningsvakten who appear to operate as a relatively autonomous 'security' unit.

The Evenemangs Police

Central to police deployments in Gothenburg for this event were the unit of four police officers from the Stockholm Police Department. As already noted two of these were 'Evenemangs' police, which are a derivative of the Department's 'dialogue' police – that itself is an integral component of the SPT⁵. Despite their consistency with national strategy the Evenemangs police are a unit that only currently exist in Stockholm. They have been deployed since 2012 as direct outcome of a national police strategy meeting, where a decision was made to develop a dialogue unit for the policing of football. It is not clear why these units have not been developed at a national level. They work in non-uniform, are unarmed and wear a fluorescent yellow tabard with "EVENEMANGSPOLIS" written across the rear. As with Dialogue police they work in a 'non-repressive' manner in that they are allowed to operate with a very high level of discretion. This is because their primary role is not coercion but to develop relationships of trust among the fan groups so that the police can communicate, influence, problem solve and mediate during crowd events. They therefore do not make arrests and do not gather 'intelligence' because to do so is understood to fundamentally disrupt their operational capability and utility.

This does not undermine, diminish or neglect police duties and responsibilities to detect and prosecute crime because partnering the two Evenemangs police officers were two 'spotters'. The spotters

⁵ The Special Police Tactic (SPT) is a national police strategy for the policing of public order developed following the Gothenburg riots of 2001.

also work in non-uniform but do not wear bibs or any other obvious visible sign. They are police officers and have a more covert surveillance orientation. The spotters' primary focus is on criminality, liaising with covert sources, securing evidence, prosecutions and stadium bans. The Stockholm police developed the Evenemangs police because they found it difficult to engage in dialogue with the supporters. They judged that the surveillance and intelligence role inherent within 'spotting' negatively influenced the supporters' willingness to engage positively with them, which in turn undermined their capacity to liaise between the fans and public order commanders in ways that assisted in proactively managing crowd dynamics to de-escalate tensions. Both spotters and Evenemangs police travel regularly to home and away fixtures of all Stockholm clubs throughout the season (but are only deployed at the invitation of the host policing operation for away fixtures) where they liaise as a unit with the host police. The inter-relationship and levels of collaboration between Evenemangs police and spotters within the unit remains unclear although operationally they had no observed direct interaction while working in the field.

Within the Stockholm policing approach there is therefore a strategic commitment to 'spotting', a role that is built around a commitment to sanction criminal action and intent among the fans. This spotting role is supported through a parallel, complimentary but separate liaison role that is oriented toward 'facilitation' and

dialogue. This liaison role is in line with Swedish national strategy and is also consistent with crowd theory and evidence on international good practice in the management of the dynamics underpinning conflict during crowd events. Correspondingly it is perhaps not surprising that the language the Djurgården fans use to describe their relations with the different police roles is quite juxtaposed. On the one hand it is evident that fans speak very negatively of their antagonistic relationship with spotters. On the other they describe the Evenemangs police in ways that convey a sense of legitimacy. Also we observed, as we would expect, a relationship between what appears to be a positive or legitimate inter-group relation with the Evenemangs police and the quality of the information that they are capable of providing about the behaviour and motivation of the Djurgården fans. In this case the improved quality of information enabled better prediction of fan behaviour. Their presence corresponded with an increased capability of the police to manage the relatively spontaneous dynamics of high 'risk' crowd events. This ability to proactively prevent disorder – as opposed merely to react to it – is of course a primary strategic goal of the police.

It would appear that the approach to supporter engagement in Gothenburg is different, since they do not have 'spotters' or Evenemangs police (despite the fact they have dialogue police within their SPT). Rather they have sought to implicitly combine these functions within a single unit referred to as the 'supporter police'.

The supporter police have their origins in the 1992 European Championships events held in Sweden, where the city hosted the most matches including the final. They are visibly different from the Stockholm unit in that they wear police uniform – but display a distinct form of red POLIS badge⁶ - and like Evenemangs police they work in close proximity to the supporters. However, despite being physically close in this context there was very little evidence that they were psychologically close to fans as there was very little interaction observed between them. Interestingly, the interactions that were observed were primarily initiated by female supporter police and toward the ‘Wiseman’ grouping rather than the Ultras. It was evident that the supporter police play an important role delivering a surveillance and low level deterrence capability much like the Stockholm ‘spotters’ but equally appear to operate with much less discretion than the Evenemangs police. For example, during an interview one of the supporter police monitoring the Ultras acknowledged that if he witnessed a low level offence he would see it as his responsibility to make an arrest.

It was acknowledged by supporter police that the relatively low level of interaction was to some extent due to their judgment that, in particular, the Göteborg Ultras did not want to engage with them. What is interesting is that officers’ felt their relationship to the fans was somewhat polarised and their role understood in terms of surveillance, identification and

deterrence. As one officer expressed “*they know who I am and I know who they are*”. Moreover, this officer felt that interaction with the fans in this context was simply not achievable “*I wont go and interact with them in public because they wont interact with me in public*”. However, this officer made clear that he would interact with individual fans outside of this context. This interaction would even go as far as visiting the home of younger fans to speak with their families in order to warn them about the dangers of involvement with the Ultra groups, who this officer saw in terms of an equivalent level of criminality and structure to ‘biker gangs’. This police perception of a polarised and antagonistic relationship was reflected in the views of the Göteborg fan representatives who reported that many of the Ultras saw these forms of intervention as “*harassment*”. The supporter police are very rarely understood to engage in any kind of dialogue. They describe individual supporter police as becoming involved in vendettas against fans and were “*spreading lies*”. Regardless of the underlying reality of the situation it would appear the supporter police are embedded in an antagonistic relationship, in particular with the Göteborg Ultras, in much the same way as the Djurgården Ultras appear to perceive their relationship to ‘spotters’.

In this sense the data conveys a sense that relationships between Göteborg supporter police and Göteborg fans is very hostile. This stands in stark contrast to the Djurgården fans’ apparent relatively positive relationship the Evenemangs police. This does indicate that the collective

⁶ The badge is identical to that now being used in Stockholm for the newly developed Event Police. Note that the new Event Police are different and distinct from the Evenemangs police.

psychology and behaviour of fans is embedded in an intergroup context with the police and that the form of supporter engagement has a profound impact. It is also evident that the intergroup relationship in turn has a historical dimension, across events. The tactical deployment of Evenemangs police by the Stockholm Police Department therefore has some longevity and consistency to it and the positive relationship they have constructed with fans has developed over time. As the Djurgården SLO stated *"its taken some time but people have begun to realise they are there to help and not to get them in trouble."* This does suggest that this antagonism could be overcome if an Evenemangs police was adopted in Gothenburg. As a supporter representative within ENABLE who is close to the Gothenburg Ultras argued they would be open to engaging in dialogue with the police but suggested that: *"Yes, I think they would be open to it. But probably not if it would be the supporter police that is now. The supporter police in Gothenburg have stepped over a line where it has become too personal. A lot of trust has been lost."*

Supporter Liaison Officers.

The apparent effectiveness of the Evenemangs police appears to be linked directly to the SLOs from Djurgården who throughout the event played a very active and apparently significant role. They describe, and acted in terms of, a very a close but subtle and complex form of partnership with the two Evenemangs police. In parallel the SLOs have close working relationships with the fan groups, the SLOs operating among the 'opposing'

fan groups, the host police as well as club security officials. Djurgården employ two SLOs, one of whom is a former affiliate of their 'hooligan' following. The second SLO orients more toward the Ultras and liaising with police and club officials. Together they appear to have a great deal of legitimacy and credibility among the fans and where necessary can impose a strong influence on their motivations and behaviour. They are part of the broader international SLO network and linked to the UEFA supported SLO organisation 'Supporters Direct'.

Like the Evenemangs police their primary role is to facilitate the movement of fans to and from the event and to de-escalate emerging tensions where it possible to do so, either through effective planning or more immediate forms of action. For this event they were in a position to make arrangements for the fans' to access Gamla Port and liaised with police indicating that there was potential for a march to take place. Equally, they were in a position to help the police to understand the motivations among the Djurgården fans along with the sense of illegitimacy many of them held about the circuitous route. This information assisted both the Evenemangs police and the Gothenburg police commanders to understand, plan for and respond to the potential eventualities that did subsequently materialise. They also played an important role in liaising with the fans before the event to make sure they were aware of the police concerns plans and restrictions, in particular regarding the route. For example, the SLOs printed and distributed maps detailing the route and liaised with influential Ultras to

try to ensure leadership was in place to direct the march along the route acceptable to the police.

The SLOs hold an ethically informed position in relationship to low-level criminality. Their understanding of the culture of the fan group enabled them to predict when fans were going to act in ways that might pose risks and to work with the Evenemangs police to act in ways that deescalated the situation. Importantly, they did not and would not liaise with the spotters in a similar way because they held the view, apparently widely shared among the wider fans base, that the spotters acted in illegitimate ways. Thus, throughout the event it was primarily the SLOs, closely linked to the Evenemangs police, who played the primary role in liaising between police and fans during the event, intervening and mediating solutions as well as imposing minor forms of reprimand. For example, they were present within the march and one SLO witnessed the fan that threw the smoke flare following the minor altercation with police at the bridge. Whilst no police action was taken, the SLO acted to impose an informal sanction. *“We communicated, believe me. I let the guy know he is in deep shit”*. But this did not and would not extend to sharing the identity of this individual, even to the Evenemangs police. *“No. I will handle it myself. That’s the agreement we have. It’s not my job as an SLO to identify anyone because then I will lose trust right away. But that doesn’t mean I won’t act on it... I can’t testify in that sense because then I can’t work.... Let’s put it this way. I made the guy aware of it already there and I will make*

him aware of it when I’m back in town as well and he is sober”.

The breakdown of communication and the shift toward coercion

The Gothenburg Police were committed to the SPT concept. During briefings and interviews Bronze, Silver and Gold commanders all stressed the importance of following the strategic conflict reduction principles. The police commanders therefore emphasized the centrality of communication and dialogue and the importance of a low profile and graded tactical approach. In the early stages of the policing operation this strategic commitment was to some extent realised with a relatively low profile and the primary intervention being with supporter and Evenemangs police. This tactical profile remained in place until the Djurgården fans left the *Östra Larmgatan*. The Gothenburg Police were aware that this march was going to take place for at least one week beforehand. They were also aware of the view among the fans that restrictions imposed by the police were unreasonable. It was apparent from our observations that there had been no attempts by the police prior or during the gathering to influence the march through dialogue. As the fans began to form up there was no attempt by police to communicate to the crowd which direction should be taken. In the absence of any verbal direction a group of Ultras moved off down *Trädgårdsgatan* and the crowd followed.

A Delta unit was placed as a cordon in *Stora Nygatan* and as such there was a

rapid escalation of police tactics toward coercion. In this context police facilitatory communications essentially disappeared. Instead the communications that did take place were assertive such as “*You’re not coming this way*”. There was little if any sign of other more facilitatory communications, proactively defining the situation for the fans and indicating to them which way they should go if they wanted to walk safely to the stadium. It was evident from our observations that the majority of the fans were simply unclear about which route they should take and were on the march either because they felt they would be vulnerable to attack from Gothenburg fans should they be alone or in small groups or because they wanted to feel empowered and express their collective identity. It may have been the case that small numbers of the march may have been seeking confrontation but this could not be said of the majority. It was also the case that none of the fans on the march were known as active ‘hooligans’.

In the absence of any form of direction the ‘active’ Ultras were therefore free to define the route. The police were then reliant from that point forward on the rapid movement of large numbers of police officers ahead of the march to coerce the entire crowd away from the city centre and then prevent anyone from crossing the bridges to access the stadium. While the Delta units achieved this very effectively and professionally it took the mobilisation of large numbers of officers to achieve this. Moreover, there were no large gatherings of Gothenburg fans in the vicinity and therefore it was not obvious why it would

be a problem to let the Djurgården fans take the more straightforward route. The only people using communication to guide the march or explain why the crowd was being directed away from the stadium were the SLOs and Evenemangs police, both of which are of course resources not directly employed by the Gothenburg police. It is therefore unclear how this role would be delivered for those that do not have SLOs or Evenemangs police. This absence of communication was particularly evident at the bridges where there were strong lines of Delta police supported by dogs making visibly clear they had the capacity for high level use of force. However, at no point did these units make any attempt to use loud hailers or any other form of communication to explain or define the situation for the fans. Moreover, having escalated tactically in this way the police stayed at this profile for the rest of the fixture despite the fact there was no obvious sign of any threat to public order.

Observation 2: Hammarby v Djurgården *13th April 2015.*

Summary of the event

The Stockholm Police have a small group of three well-trained and experienced public order commanders who will take on the role of Silver at high-risk matches. Each of the Silver’s acts as a contact point for each of the Stockholm clubs. The Djurgården SLO therefore had a high level point of contact to the senior tactical commander and took advantage of this relationship some two months ahead of the fixture. This route of communication enabled the SLO to liaise with the commander about the likely

behaviour of the Djurgården fans, in this case planned gatherings in the En Arena and Gamla Stan. The SLO was also in regular contact with the Evenemangs police “talking about everything including preparing the choreography” and the difficult relationship SLO encounters with Hammarby fans. The SLO was also invited to the first MIKE-project information meeting. The SLO speaks of the positive experience of the planning process.

As the ‘away’ team for this fixture the Djurgården supporters including ultras had made the decision to gather in Gamla Stan, an area in the city centre traditionally frequented by ‘away’ fans attending matches at the Tele2 arena. Fans had begun to congregate from the early afternoon and the situation was calm with Djurgården supporters gathering in and around the various available pubs. At around 3 pm. a unit of MIKE-police arrived in two vehicles. They got out of their vans and patrolled across the Gamla Stan walking in pairs. There was very little interaction between MIKE and supporters, primarily because the MIKE officers did not go into the bars where majority of the fans had gathered. There were no Evenemangs police or SLOs present in the Gamla Stan. The level of interaction increased somewhat when an apparently well-known, easily recognised MIKE officer arrived whom some fans approached and engaged with.

By approximately 5 pm the crowd in the Gamla Stan has grown in number to around 1000 fans. There was lot of singing and some ‘bangers’ were exploded. While the situation remained calm the observers’

judgement was that a ‘normal’ citizen or local resident would probably feel uncomfortable walking through the area. At around 5.30 pm the fans walked en masse towards the nearby metro station accompanied by the MIKE officers. During this short march along the street the fans lit pyrotechnics and exploded a number of ‘bangers’. As the fans arrived at the metro station the train stewards did nothing to guide the fans and as such the entire crowd entered via a single entrance – rather than utilising the three that are available. As such the front area of the platform became unnecessarily very densely crowded and our observers judged this situation posed some risk to public safety.

In the planning phase there had been unsuccessful attempts to organise a special train for the fans to travel to a dedicated ‘Djurgården’ metro station, thus avoiding stations that would be used by Hammarby fans. The metro company had refused and as such police commanders were of the view that a special train could not be provided. Nonetheless shortly after the fans reached the station a single empty train did arrive exclusively for the Djurgården fans, which had its first stop at the metro station closest to the ‘away’ turnstiles. The MIKE officers accompanied the fans on the train and rejected an offer from the Tunnelbana police to accompany them. No bangers were exploded or pyrotechnics lit during the period when the fans were on the metro system and the fans were largely compliant with police instructions to calm down when they became physically boisterous by collectively jumping up and down.

Nonetheless on arrival at their allocated station some fans were search by a Delta unit and a few arrested for possession of pyrotechnics.

In addition to the Ultras gathering in Gamla Stan there was a second large gathering of Djurgården fans at the En Arena pub from around mid-day. By 5.00 pm this crowd grown to some 500 in number, a large proportion of whom were known to affiliate with the 'hooligan' group Djurgårdens Fina Grabbar (DFG). Social media had advertised the gathering and as such the crowd also included significant numbers of fans who would normally affiliate with the Djurgården Ultras. Nonetheless the police described this as the largest single gathering of Djurgården risk fans they had ever experienced. Indeed, there were some minor altercations involving some of these fans toward passing Hammarby supporters, but otherwise there were no issues of significance. Throughout this period the Evenemangs police were located in the area outside the En Arena and were liaising between the public order commanders, SLOs and fans.

By late afternoon large numbers of Hammarby supporters had gathered in another bar called the Slakthuset, which is located adjacent to Rökerigatan only a few hundred metres away from the En Arena. At around 5.30 pm a group of around 150 Hammarby fans left the Slakthuset and attempted to head in the direction of the En Arena via Hallvägen. The police rapidly mobilised some of the nearby Delta units along with an 'arrest team' of non-uniform

officers who were operating in the vicinity. As the Hammarby fans arrived at the junction with Palmfeltsvägen the Delta units formed a cordon, which prevented the Hammarby fans from walking along the road that would have taken them directly in front of the En Arena. The Hammarby fans then took an alternative route via Bolidenvägen, along a pedestrian walkway into Konstgjutarvägen, a road parallel to Palmfeltsvägen that was still visible to the Djurgården fans in the En Arena but much further away and separated by the railway line. However, it would have been relatively easy for fans from either group to confront each other as the two roads were connected via the Globen T-bana station immediately opposite the En Arena. While the two fan groups exchanged insulting gestures and chants, as the Hammarby fans passed the station there was no serious attempt by either to get past the few police officers separating the two groups. These Hammarby fans continued walking and presented no further issues for the police.

At around 5.45 pm as expected, fans in the En Arena began to gather outside the pub and prepared to march toward a previously agreed route to the Tele2 Arena. As approximately 500 supporters grouped up outside the bar six or seven of these fans started to play a clearly influential role marshalling and choreographing the fans. It was evident that this group had obvious authority among the rest of the fans. Given the route had been pre-arranged along *Rökerigatan* the police had placed low plastic fencing, which created a physical and symbolic barrier across each and every access route into the area where the

Slakthuset was located. Behind the netting in each roadway police 'riot' vans had been placed and DELTA police were present in full riot gear but were facing away from the march toward the area where Hammarby fans were gathered. There was also a unit of plain clothed police within the Hammarby area moving around on foot trying to intercept any Hammarby fans attempting to confront the Djurgården march.

Despite these control measures there were various points at which Hammarby fans did move into the controlled spaces and gesture toward the Djurgården fans to come and confront them. One incident in particular involved a well-known and prominent Hammarby hooligan who came out of the rear of the Slakthuset and approached the fence. There were initially no police in this area so he stood for some time defiantly gesturing toward the fans on the march to come across and confront him. This had the effect of provoking a number of the Djurgården fans who made serious attempts to cross and pull down the netting. As a consequence DELTA units did turn to confront the Djurgården fans. However, at this point the influential fans that had been marshalling and leading the march walked back from the front of it intervene and aggressively compelled the Djurgården fans to continue toward the stadium. Those fans that had previously been confronting the police lines fans complied and the situation rapidly calmed.

There were no further incidents and the large march arrived at the away turnstiles at much the same time as the group arrived

from the Gamla Stan. The rapid influx of fans into this area led to significant pressure on the entry point. This was amplified by the fact that the fans all sought to gain entry through a single entrance into the lower tier rather than make use of another two to either side that gave access both to the lower and upper tiers of the stadium. The entry point was subsequently overwhelmed making it difficult for the stadium stewards to check for the possession of valid tickets and conduct searches for pyrotechnics. Once inside the stadium there was no regulation of movement within the 'away' section. As such fans were free to populate the area as they wished. As a consequence, the lower tier became extremely densely crowded and as a consequence all fans in the lower tier were required to stand. At points fans unable to get into the 'seating' areas were forced to block the isles and exits. Fans were even standing on the handle rails in the stairway exits in order to see the match.

At two points during the match there was a very well organized and choreographed pyro display by the Djurgården fans. Groups wearing masks come onto the lower tier and front row of the upper tier in a highly coordinated fashion. There were no police present within the 'away' section but the ordningsvakten who were there did not seek to intervene, instead placing smoke masks over their faces they sat and observed events develop. The fans ignited the pyros and the ones in the upper tier held them aloft out and over the crowd in the lower tier. During the first pyro display we observed that one of the fans holding a

pyro in the upper tier was forced to drop it because it was too hot hold. Luckily this ignited pyro fell to the floor of the upper tier but it could have easily been dropped into the crowd in the lower tier below. Given the density of the crowd in the lower tier the potential for dangerous surges to escape the heat subsequently causing crushing and physical injury was apparent and obvious. There were no further incidents during or following the match that are of direct relevance to this analysis.

Pre-event planning

There can be little argument that this event posed some very serious threats to public order and that in this respect alone the policing of the event act also acts as a model of good practice. The key objectives set by the Gold commander included ensuring that the fixture was played at the time it was intended. It was also an aim to ensure that the policing approach should be based upon the national strategic model of the conflict reducing principles and graded police profile. Third, a core objective for the police was to ensure the effective handling of disturbances and to prioritise dealing with these firstly around the arena, secondly on the transport infrastructure and thirdly at other gathering places. The fourth goal of the policing operation was to ensure the rapid dissemination of information about police action – particularly in situations of conflict – so supporters will be aware as quickly as possible why police were acting in the way that they were.

Stockholm Police department have a small group of three commanders who will

regularly take on the role of Silver at high-risk matches. Each of the Silver's acts as a contact point for each of the Stockholm clubs. The Djurgården SLO therefore had a point of contact to the Silver, which they took advantage of some two months ahead of the fixture. This route of communication directly to the senior tactical commander enabled the SLO to liaise with the police regarding the planned gathering of the DFG at the En Arena and the intended gathering of the Ultras in the Gamala Port. The SLO was also in "constant" contact with the Evenemangs police "talking about everything, including preparing the choreography". They also were able to discuss the difficult relationship she and the police have with Hammarby fans that remain reluctant to negotiate. Reflecting the depth of trust that exists between them the SLOs were invited by the police to a MIKE-project information meeting and it was clear that the SLO speaks of the positive experience of the planning process. This dialogue and formal relationship of communication appears to have set an important context for pre-event planning. It demonstrates a good level of commitment, partnership and infrastructure that enabled an effective working relationship between the fans and police via the SLO. This in turn enabled the police to better predict behaviour and understand the potential risk scenarios that they were possibly going to confront.

The MIKE police

An important development in this operation was the deployment of the newly formed MIKE units. These officers are based directly upon the Danish 'Event

Police'. As with the Evenemangs police the MIKE units have a 'non-repressive' dialogue focused and facilitatory orientation. They have a lower level of discretion than the Evenemangs police but are not briefed to make arrests or use force. The units have been created to fill perceived gaps between the Evenemangs police and the Delta units. The Gold commander was aware that there had been tensions between DELTA and MIKE units who were being widely referred to by police colleagues using a derogatory term, the "*hugging police*". The Gold commander sought to deal with this tension within this operation. Given the novelty of the MIKE unit there was also a specific issue about a lack of clarity around the MIKE role. This was classified as a high-risk fixture and as such there were between 350 and 400 hundred police officers and of these 19 were MIKE units.

The event: a structural commitment to a dialogue approach.

'Non-risk' supporters and Ultras.

The MIKE units were deployed to the Gamla Stan as the primary tactical response to the Djurgården Ultras. It was apparent that there were relatively low levels of interaction. One of the observers interviewed MIKE officers, who expressed to that they felt they needed the SLO and Evenemangspolis to act as 'bridge' in opening up communication to the non-risk fans and Ultras. However, the SLO was had prioritised other support activities elsewhere so did not attend the area. Also the Evenemangspolis had been deployed to the En Arena to help deal with the large

gathering of 'risk' fans. The difficulty they encountered may in some part be due to the piecemeal configuration of the MIKE unit. On this occasion the unit was drawn together and included some Delta officers who lacked the necessary skills and lacked confidence in the dialogue concept. Moreover, the deployment is relatively new and according the SLO it will take some time to build the necessary trust and positive relationships necessary for interaction to be forthcoming from the fans in the manner that is currently enjoyed by the Evenemangs police. The increased levels of interaction that developed on the arrival of the more experienced MIKE officer does suggest that where those skills and relationships do exist over time, interaction does flow as a natural outcome.

It was evident that the MIKE officers deployed in a manner consistent with their role and walked with the fans to the station. However, with such a large crowd arriving at the subway one observer noted a concern at the inactivity of the train stewards. A more active stewarding response would have enabled the crowd to enter via the full length of the platform and avoided this problem. This incident exemplifies the importance of multi-agency cooperation. Moreover, while the concentration would seem have been focused around the potential risks to public order what actually materialised was an issue of public safety. It is also evident that public safety does not appear to have been a salient feature of the police strategy surrounding this fixture. The issue of multi agency cooperation also appears again in relationship to the train that was provided

for the Djurgården fans to take them directly to Blasut station. Had this train not materialised then the supporters would have taken a regular train and could have alighted at prior stations and thus walked directly through areas considered as 'home' locations by Hammarby fans. The arrival of 1000 supporters, among them a large group of Ultras, in such a location would have needed to be managed by the Delta units who at that time were already busy dealing with the march involving the DFG. Thus, the availability of the train had major implications. Given what was known and predictable beforehand it is not clear why this train wasn't openly provided and agreed beforehand and this seems a major vulnerability to multi-party collaboration that it seems self evidently must be addressed.

Once the train arrived the MIKE commander took the decision to accompany the fans. He placed his officers individually at every door. At this time a Delta unit commander from the Tunnelbana police offered to accompany them and openly questioned the MIKE commanders decision, arguing that this was dangerous. This incident demonstrates a set of judgement processes on the part of the MIKE commander that led him operationally and professionally to take risks. Taking these risks was evidently important because it opened up opportunities on the train for very positive interactions with fans but at the same time highlights the perceived risks that dialogue oriented officers are exposed to in these contexts and the pressure they experience from their colleagues to shift toward more

coercive tactical orientations. It is worth noting that following this decision the Ultras did not light any flares or explode bangers anywhere on the metro network and were compliant with MIKE officers' requests to curtail their boisterous behaviour. Indeed, there was no evidence these fans posed any direct threat to public order and as one of the police observers commented they were "*gentle young guys. They stepped on your shoe and they said sorry*".

Managing 'risk' supporters

One of the key areas of concern for the police revolved around the large gathering of Djurgården 'risk' fans in the En Arena. The gathering had taken place in that location because the fans had requested to go there. The good links through the SLO to the police permitted a negotiation to be undertaken that ultimately located the 'risk' fans in a single location that was known to and could be relatively easily managed by the police. The Hammarby fans were in such close proximity partly as a function of very poor communication between the police and Hammarby fans that arises as a result of Hammarby fans on going refusal to engage in dialogue. There was no legal basis for preventing the either gatherings. Consequently, both groups ended up gathering in close proximity. However, there is an important issue with the fact that the gathering had been publicly 'announced' rather than kept secret. As one of the SLOs from Denmark commented, in the Scandinavian context when 'risk' fans are so public about their intentions this is a direct sign that they are not intending to actively seek out disorder.

“When it is announced there is usually no trouble and it is much easier to police, as it is a ‘non-offensive’ gathering”.

A critically important sequence of events developed when a large crowd of Hammarby fans walked out of the Slakthuset. This group eventually walked within sight of the DFG but their attempt to move toward the En Arena was rapidly blocked by a Delta unit and no disorder materialised. This was a home match for Hammarby so the gathering of Djurgården supporters including the DFG at the En Arena was in a location that would be considered by Hammarby fans on that day as ‘their territory’. Given the nature of ‘hooligan’ culture, the gathering of the DFG itself would be considered an illegitimate affront to and by Hammarby ‘risk’ fans. Indeed, it is likely that the Hammarby fans would see an obligation to at least symbolically challenge their presence. Thus, it is perhaps unsurprising such symbolic gesturing took place and that despite the apparent high levels of ‘risk’ to public order there was actually very little likelihood of events escalating. This was reflected in the views of the Danish SLOs who were in the crowd at the En Arena at this time. They described the situation as calm. They noted that some fans tried to make a ‘show’ by pulling down the barriers on the roadway, but their judgement was that there was no serious attempt to get to the Hammarby fans. *“It seemed like Hammarby wanted to put on a show, and not seek a confrontation. The same goes for the guys from Djurgården. They gathered at the En Arena to say this is our area also, we are many guys and you can see how many*

we can gather. It wasn’t an attempt to seek confrontation as much as it was to show that they weren’t afraid, just to show and to boast”

An experienced Silver commander that has trust and confidence in the dialogue concept controlled this policing operation. There were also two experienced Bronze Commanders who have good relationships of trust and confidence with the highly experienced and respected Djurgården SLOs. This seems particularly important because it was through these relationships that the command team made a decision to allow the DFG to define the route that they wanted to march to the Arena. According to the SLO *“the key to success for the SLO is to get the fans to make the decision you want them to make”*. Thus, there is an issue of a structural commitment to the dialogue concept and an investment by the police and by Djurgården IF in developing a team that is capable and effective at building links to the ‘risk’ fans and in constructing dialogue with them via the SLOs. This demonstrates that the ‘graded’ concept was not just a policy but being actively applied and properly understood by the command team at all levels from the planning stage onward. It also important to acknowledge that the Evenemangs police were observed working in this area, interacting with the ‘risk’ fans and SLOs and acting as a link between them and the public order commanders.

Moreover, given the negotiated agreements that were in place to facilitate the march the Silver commander took a decision to police the march as he would if it were a

protest. The subsequent 'outward' facing nature of the police tactical response rather than 'inward' control approach led them to focus on preventing Hammarby fans from initiating conflict. Indeed, we witness a negotiated agreement to hold the gathering, police willingness to negotiate with and through SLOs, a command team who remain committed to the dialogue concept even within high 'risk' scenarios. This combines with particular 'conflict reduction' model of SLO by Djurgården. A police decision to facilitate the march and to actively protect these rights of freedom of peaceful assembly despite the fact that this was one of the largest gatherings of Djurgården risk fans that had ever been experience in Stockholm. It is perhaps unsurprising therefore that we see corresponding evidence of a strong 'self-regulation' culture within the march, which may itself be an outcome of this structural commitment to dialogue. There was effective and strong leadership in the crowd that was pushing the supporters – and regulating behaviours – in ways that were in the interests of both the crowd and the police. This leadership may be linked to a sense that the DFG had ownership of the march and therefore saw a responsibility to 'steward' it.

Crowd safety & Pyro.



There are issues related to the lack of regulation within the stadium which stands in stark contrast UEFA guidelines and safety standards elsewhere in Europe, specifically the UK which is regulated by the Green Guide. In the Tele2 Arena there is a lack of regulation across the seating area in the entire away end. There was also an apparent lack of communication and coordination between the stadium manager, ordningsvakten and the police. The police did not discuss the situation inside the arena at their half-time briefing. The SLOs raised the issue of a different cultural perspective who described the dense crowding as normal for the Scandinavian context. In UK 47 people per 10 square metres is maximum density. It was clear that the situation in some areas

of the stadium exceeded this and posed significant dangers of crushing and injury.



Preliminary considerations.

While our findings at this stage are preliminary we feel that it would be useful to draw out the following considerations from the preceding analysis. There is a clear and obvious commitment among police commanders and staff in Gothenburg and Stockholm to the police national strategy for facilitation, dialogue and graded tactical deployment. This commitment is delivering good practice in relationship to the effective management of risk to public order in the context of the observed events. The study raises some preliminary issues regarding the delivery of a liaison-based approach, which we outline here:

- Maintaining graded tactical deployment, which is by definition dependent upon ensuring the presence of a communication capability, is difficult in situations

defined by police as high risk. In such scenarios there is an obvious capability to escalate police tactical profile but a less evident capability to deescalate.

- There is variability in the approach adopted by police in different cities toward supporter engagement. While one city divides criminal intelligence and liaison functions another combines these in a single unit. There is some requirement to consider the viability of local variability in supporter engagement under a single national strategic and organisational approach.
- Liaison based public order policing is built around the development of police competencies. These competencies are currently being delivered in various forms in the Swedish context and this variability appears confusing. In terms of supporter engagement there are Evenemangs police, spotters, MIKE police, and Supporter police, the latter two performing different functions but sharing the same uniform. Each of these roles displays different competencies and skills.
- The new MIKE concept is in early development but appears to add to the graded concept. However, there is currently a lack of clarity leading to confusion among police staff and fans about the nature of the role. The units have little if anything in the way of specific training and

were, in our observation, put together in a relatively piecemeal fashion. There was no clear match between skills and roles, in some cases Delta officers were used. Given the confusion and resistance to this change the unit's development might benefit from a clear programme of communication, both internally and externally, and a coherent structured process of change management.

- The study suggests the Evenemangs police can play an important function in building relationships of trust and confidence with fans - both 'risk' and 'non-risk'. Their consistent deployment across events combined with a capacity to operate with high levels of discretion appears to improve dynamic risk assessment and police capability for dialogue-based solutions to risk management.
- The deployment of Evenemangs police is consistent with national strategy - both specifically to football and more generally to the SPT - and with respect to crowd theory. The function they provide and associated outcomes are consistent with research and international good practice. Their operational deployment appears to compliment rather than undermine any criminal intelligence capability delivered by 'spotters'. It therefore remains unclear why similar units have not been developed elsewhere.
- There is a prima facie case that 'supporter police' struggle to construct and maintain consistently positive relationships with those groups who regularly present 'risk'. There are clear indicators of antagonistic relationships with some supporters, particularly those that might pose spontaneous (as opposed to premeditated) risk to public order. Their capability to assist in the management of risk appears to be limited to providing a surveillance, intelligence and deterrence function similar to that provided by 'spotters'.
- Swedish fan culture has a specific form the nature of which will continue to present police with scenarios of risk on an on-going basis for the foreseeable future. It is evident that a fuller understanding of that culture and its underlying values and symbolic interactions will assist police to comprehend and predict risk and therefore empower them to create efficiencies and capability to promote among fans 'self-regulation' in otherwise 'high-risk' situations.
- The effective management of 'risk' in the football context in Sweden is not merely an issue for the police. In particular it appears to be linked to the presence of a particular model of 'Supporter Liaison Officer', focused around conflict prevention and de-escalation. This SLO role is

- one funded by the football club and therefore represents the importance of a strategic investment by football clubs in providing this function across the Swedish context. It appears to be critically important that SLOs work to a particular code of ethical conduct, operate with high levels of discretion, have credibility among fans (including those that present risk) but also an effective working relationship with the police. Such relationships can be empowered if they are mediated through Evenemangs police. It may be useful to have more than one SLO in the same club with different specialisms in this respect. The Djurgården approach is evidently a model of good practice.
- It is evident that some clubs and fan groups in Sweden do not have effective channels of dialogue with police. This study suggests that where such channels do not exist that it is important for both the police and the relevant clubs to invest in overcoming existing barriers to effective communication. This is precisely the challenge confronted by Dialogue police in the protest context, which therefore suggests that Evenemangs police could undertake this role with support from senior colleagues. Any such investment should be matched by a parallel development among clubs of their SLO function.
 - It is evident that the partnership model achieved with respect to specific clubs in Stockholm is particularly effective. The selection of a cadre of experienced public order commanders committed to the national concepts combines well with the SLO function and strategic investment in Evenemangs police. This model appears to be capable of creating effective channels of communication and enables a structured commitment to and delivery of a facilitation and liaison-based approach that can be maintained even in high-risk scenarios both inside and outside Stockholm.
 - The overwhelming focus in this context is on the management of threats to public order. However, substantial risk was evident on a number of occasions with respect to public safety. There should be strategic consideration given to public safety issues some of which relate to the management of crowds in transport hubs and inside stadiums. This does require clubs to address their stewarding arrangements and protocols regarding safe capacity. There is also some requirement to address the role, function and command structure of the ordningsvakten.
 - There is an apparent de facto decriminalisation of the use of pyro technics inside stadiums. In particular the organised displays,

combined with poor crowd management practices inside stadiums, are potentially posing a threat to public safety. The current situation of criminalisation is not effective and appears to make little if any impact on pyro-technic use. It may be helpful to address the issue in terms of a Health and Safety response that could work to facilitate the development of safe practice in the use of pyro.

For correspondence contact: Dr Clifford Stott, University of Leeds c.stott@leeds.ac.uk; Jonas Havelund, University of Southern Denmark JHavelund@health.sdu.dk and Filip Lundberg, Djurgården IF filip.lundberg@dif.se