

PUBLIC ORDER MANGEMENT

Crowd Dynamics in Public Order OPs



Background

Successful outcomes that follow crowd control operations are based on proper planning, police officers and equipment employment, and on-the-ground decisions that are made by leaders and members of the FPU who are face-to-face with an unruly, or potentially unruly, crowd.

In the recent past, there have been countless examples of civil disturbance situations around the world. The size and scope of these civil disturbances varied from small gatherings of people who were verbally protesting to full-blown riots that resulted in property destruction and violence against others. Over the past decade, law enforcement and professional experts have come to understand crowd dynamics. A better understanding of human behaviour and crowd dynamics has led to improved responses to crowd control.

This module covers crowd dynamics and human behaviour, crowd types and tactics that are used within the various crowds, in order to give the commanders and operators a clear perception of the operational threats they may face with in the contest of a Crowd Control Operation.

Aim

To understand crowd dynamics and to know how actions or inactions carried out by Stability Police Forces in Public Order Operations can affect the potential for threats.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module participants will be able to:

- Describe the differences between various mass gatherings and the dangers they might present;
- Be familiar with the potential development of mass gatherings;
- Explain the common tactics used by protesters during a riot;
- Describe the main behavioural theories;
- Describe the factors that may affect the escalation of tension and outbreak of violence.

Training sequence

The material in this module is designed to be delivered over two 45 minute classroom based theory lessons.

Additional 45 minutes are recommended to display and comment on operational situations through video and images.

This is based on the assumption that the students have received no previous training in this subject. .

Duration

Minimum Session time	Lecture/Presentation	Question/Assessment	Session Activities
2 hours	2 x 45 mins	45 mins	
Additional Options	Mission Specific	Optional display of pictures and video	Optional activity

Methodology

This module contains a PowerPoint theory presentation to explain and show the various contents.

The instructor should inform participants of the content, format and timing. Knowing what to expect, participants can improve their ability to focus on the subject and benefit better from the session.

- Theory of Crowd Dynamics (2 x 45 minutes classroom lesson),
- (Optional) Display and comment operational situations through video and images (45 minute classroom lesson).

Instructors are encouraged to add practical examples and mission specific information related to the specific deployment of participants, if known.

The participants should be given the possibility to relate their experiences.

This can be done in the classroom it is for the instructor to select the appropriate method.

Instructor Profile

This module is best presented by an instructor who has practical experience in operational leadership in peacekeeping operations and who could share his/her experience with the group. They must be practiced and skilled to be able to explain the concepts correctly. If there is more than one instructor, at least one should have practical experience as trainer in either domestic policing or a peacekeeping mission.

Instructor Preparations

Required Readings

- FPU Training Handbook

General Preparations

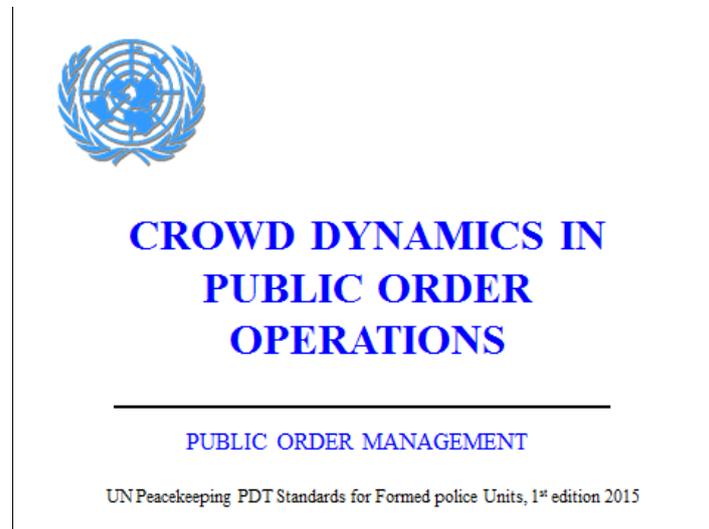
Equipment:

1. Computer and PowerPoint slides for lesson 1
2. Projector and Screen for lesson 1
3. Video and images Display (PPT slide show)

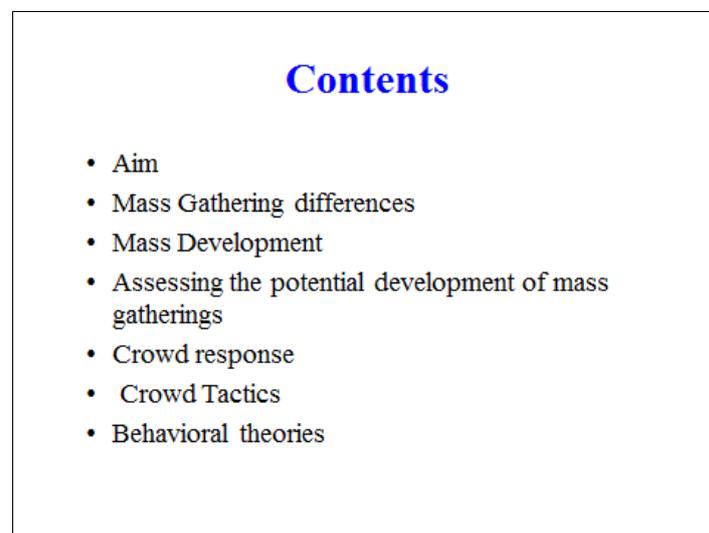
Session notes

Lesson 1 – Crowd dynamics in Public Order Operations (Theory)

Contents:



Slide 1



Slide 2

Aim

- To understand crowd dynamics and to know how actions or inactions carried out by Stability Police Forces in Public Order Operations can affect the potential for threats.

Slide 3

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module the students will be able to:

- Understand the differences between various mass gatherings and the dangers they might present;
- Be familiar with the potential development of mass gatherings;

- Understand the common tactics used by protesters during a riot
- Understand the main behavioral theories
- Acknowledge and figure out the factors that may affect the escalation of tension and outbreak of violence

Slides 4 and 5

Mass gathering differences

- **A crowd** is a lawful gathering of people, who are organized disciplined and who have an objective.
- **A mob** is a crowd who have gone out of control because of various and powerful influences, such as racial tension or revenge

Slide 6

FPU personnel must consider how the individuals and small groups are assembled and how they are interacting during the gathering process. Crowds are a gathering of a multitude of individuals and small groups temporarily assembled in the same place. These small groups are usually composed of friends, family members, or acquaintances that represent a group belief or cause. People in small groups are known only to companions in their group and to others in the gathering that have come from the same neighbourhood or community.

The slide 6, gives an example of different kind of Mass gathering

The crowd

- **Casual** (ex. Shopping mall),
- **Sighting** (ex. Sport events),
- **Agitated** (sense of unity, emotionally involved).

Slide 7

CASUAL

Casual crowds are identified as individuals or small groups with nothing in common to bind them together. If they have an agenda, it is their own. They arrive separately and leave separately. Casual crowds are made up of individuals or small groups occupying the same common place, such as a shopping mall where these individuals or small groups meet.

SIGHTING

Sighting crowds are similar to casual crowds with one additional element—an event. There are numerous events that cause people to come together as a crowd, such as; sporting events, fires and accidents, music concerts, labour strikes, demonstrations, and protests. Individuals or groups gather at these events for the same purpose. It is the event or one's curiosity that compels a sighting crowd to come together.

AGITATED

Agitated crowds are generally casual or sighting crowds with the addition of strong emotions expressed verbally. As more people within the crowd become emotionally involved, a sense of unity can develop, causing changes in the overall demeanour of the crowd. Yelling, screaming, crying, and profane name-calling are all associated with an agitated crowd.

Three types of mob

- **The mob** who have a definite aim i.e. to destroy, damage private property or symbols, to kill
- **The escape mob**, who are escaping from a perceived physical threat, such as guns, fire or CS gas.
- **The acquisitive mob**, who are out to loot or rob

Slide 8

Slide 8 gives an example of different kind of Mob.

Extreme acts of violence and property damage are often a part of mob activities. Mobs consist of (or involve) the elements of people and groups being mixed together

and becoming fluid. Mobs have all the elements found in the first three types of crowds (slide 7), with the addition of aggressive, physical and, sometimes, violent actions. Under these conditions, individuals within a crowd will often say and do things they usually would not.

Mass development

Assembly process, Gathering, Dispersal

1. Assembly Process:

- Spontaneous
- Organized

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SPONTANEOUS PROTESTS/DEMONSTRATIONS

Usually develops informally and is mostly done by word of mouth (one person to another or one group to another). Participants spread information by telling one another when, where, and what Spreading information via electronic means text messages or social media

ORGANIZED

An organized assembly involves individuals and groups passing on information to one another in preparation for a long-term event, some group organizers have the means to provide logistical support, such as transportation, food, and water for the participants. Rarely is only one group responsible for pulling together a gathering. Organized assemblies rely heavily on established groups that attract people to gather. Examples of well-organized assemblies are groups representing extreme religious faiths, ethnic organizations and labour unions. Organized-gathering processes rely more on centralized planning and organization. One or more groups offer the organizers lists of individual names and groups from which they contact as potential participants.

2. Gathering (crowds, groups, individuals)

➤ Crowds

- Not to be considered as an homogeneous group
- Not consisting of isolated individuals, but normally small groups who may or may not be acquainted with each other.
- Crowds are generally not unique or distinguished by violence or unlawful conduct.

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➤ Groups

- Groups and individuals in the crowd are not unanimous in their motivation.
- Groups within a crowd will often act in unison in an attempt to achieve their goals.
- Groups consist of individuals that usually are not anonymous to each other.
- Presence of groups acting with different modalities must be carefully considered

Slide 11

➤ Individuals

- Tends to be considered as part of a group rather than being considered individual actors.
- they do not participate in unique, emotional displays.

Slide 12

Slides 10, 11, 12 explains the second phase of mass development process (gathering) for what concern Crowds, Groups and Individuals.

3. Dispersal Process

- Routine
- Emergency
 reaction to an unexpected crisis (not to confuse group dispersion from an attack or regrouping tactics)
- Coercion (not necessarily the best way to disperse a crowd)

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The dispersal phase ends the gathering process or begins its deterioration. It involves the movement of people from the initial location where they assembled to one or more alternate locations. Dispersal can occur on a routine, emergency, or coerced basis.

Routine: is when the crowd leaves on its own with no outside influence - maybe specified in advance and can be included in the assembly instructions given by the organizers of the event.

Emergency: when people abandon an area as a result of an unexpected crisis (fire, explosion, bomb threat, terrorist act). Individuals in such an emergency quickly recover from the initial shock and often find improvised ways of extricating themselves and their companions from the dangerous situation. Therefore, it is critical that Police on the scene follows carefully the situation not to confuse group dispersal from a violent act.

Coercion: Coercion dispersal is characterized by use of force . Therefore as to be considered as the last resort. Consequently FPU commanders on the spot should carefully consider the negotiation option. This infact is the preferred method to be adopted and has proven to be highly successful in creating the right conditions to anticipate the potential for incidents .

Assessing the potential development of mass gatherings

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FPU's Commanders in conducting Crowd Control Ops must carefully consider:

- The operational environment
- Crowd attitude
- Presence of factors and elements that can affect the demonstration

Crowds occur, usually without serious problems. Occasionally venue inadequacies and deficient crowd understanding result in injuries and fatalities. Extreme crowding results in individual loss of control, and both psychological and physiological problems.

Assessing crowds/mobs

Take account of:

- Size
- Behaviour or attitude
- Area of occupation
- Static or moving
- Direction and purpose
- Weapons
- Advice from other sources i.e. local authorities
- Danger to persons and property

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Slide 15 shows what are the factors to be taken in consideration to better understand the kind of crowd and threats we may face with.

Reasons for a crowd to get out of control

- Trigger action
- People are not sure what is happening or do not agree with what is happening.
- There is a feeling that time is running out.
- The crowd has no internal organization.
- People are tired of waiting.
- There is deliberate sabotage.
- Poor planning/cultural insensitivity by organizers.
- Action of police or members of a counter demonstration.

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Under most circumstances, peaceful gathered crowds do not represent a risk for public order, however there are some circumstances that can generate the potential for dangers. Crowds consist of people who, although very motivated and passionate, are also subject to their own needs. Rainy or cold weather has a way of disheartening all but a few individuals who are highly motivated and disciplined. Other factors may act as trigger elements such as sabotage, lack in organization phase, contact with a counter demonstration and overreactions by law enforcement agencies.

Crowd response

- Motivations
- Public Disorder
- Public disturbance
- Riot
- Panic

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Commanders must be aware of the possibility that some individuals or groups within an organized demonstration may intend to cause disruption, incite violence, destroy property, and provoke authorities. The attitude and behaviour have an impact on the overall situation on the ground therefore have to be carefully monitored by commanders on the ground. Presence of agitators as well as criminal infiltrations within the crowd can lead to the eruption of violence. Police response must be carefully considered to limit the escalation of violence.

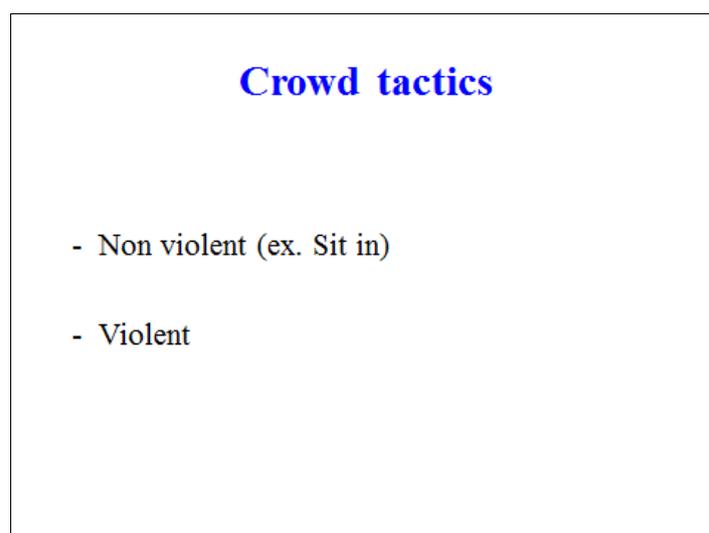
The level of violence is determined by the willingness of demonstrators to display and voice their opinions in support of their cause and the Police response. Violence can be the result of action taken by demonstrators.

During a public disorder, there is a basic break of civic order. Individuals or small groups assemble and have a tendency to disrupt normal order.

During a public disturbance, there is turmoil on top of the initial disruption. Usually Individuals and groups assemble and begin chanting, yelling, singing, and voicing individual or collective opinions.

During a riot, we have the development of an extremely volatile environment. One or more groups or individuals within a crowd threaten or act violently toward other people or property.

In the transition from crowd to mob there is a concrete risk of panic reactions among the participants. Individuals can easily have the perception that their safety is at risk. This may generate fight-or-flight situation. Individuals in a mob in the attempt to escape from the area may find escape routes blocked. This can often lead to violent reactions. The use of riot control agents by authorities adds to the panic and confusion.



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Individuals and small groups within a crowd use any number of tactics to resist authority, disrupt, and add turmoil to achieve their goals. These tactics can be planned or unplanned and violent or nonviolent.

Usually most gatherings of individuals and small groups into a crowd do not involve violent behavior. Nonviolent actions of a crowd may create problems to the authorities because they are in direct conflict with what authorities want them to do, such as refusing to leave when directed, locking arms, and sitting in front of or around areas and buildings that the authorities are attempting to clear.

The transition from a crowd to a mob can be very violent and destructive. Violent crowds strike out physically at bystanders, others in the crowd, or members of the Police Forces on the scene. They may destroy private and public property, set fires, throw molotov cocktails, or use other weapons or projectiles at their disposal. Some violent tactics, are put in place to create confusion or to distract the attention from another activity. The only limitations for violent elements are given by their capabilities, the ability of their leaders, and the resources readily accessible.

Crowd common tactics

- Constructing barricades.
- Using weapons and projectiles.
- Feinting and flanking actions.
- Participating in verbal abuse.
- Using vehicles or other objects.
- Setting fires.
- Perceived Innocent or Weak People
- Barricades setting

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Organized mobs try to defeat, disrupt, confuse, and deter the Police by using different tactics. Violent crowds may erect physical barriers to obstruct the movement and prevent authorities from entering certain areas or buildings. Women, children, and the elderly are often used as counters in riot events and positioned in the front of the crowd to limit the police response. With the innocent and the weak directly facing authorities, aggressive and violent individuals or groups behind them attempt to provoke authorities to react. Often, this tactic is to exploit the situation in the eyes of the media to misinform. Despite the first impression of sometimes being weaker, women, children, and the elderly can be just as committed to the cause as those behind them.

- Intense object throwing
- Car crashes
- Devastation / debris rubble areas
- Stabbing
- Use of firearms
- Panic reactions
- Suffocation
- Crushing
- Molotov Cocktail
- Violence for the sake of violence
- Destruction of property
- Looting
- Running out of supplies
- Sniping
- Explosive

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Sniping or massing fire from within the crowd, in buildings, or other covered positions can, at times, be effective tools for terrorists or other belligerent rioters using a crowd to cover their acts. Hand-thrown explosives can be used by rioters in many ways. In worst-case scenarios, explosives can be used to kill, injure, or undermine the authorities that are guaranteeing the public order.

Threat analysis and crowd assessment

- Who are they and what is the overarching identity of the crowd?
- What are their goals?
- What is the composition of the crowd and are there any known factions?
- What are they capable of doing?
- What are their traditional behaviors or cultural repertoires?
- When and where will they assemble?
- Where will they go?
- What are the possible targets of violence?
- When and where will they disperse?
- Are there plans for subsequent gatherings?
- What is the worst-case scenario?

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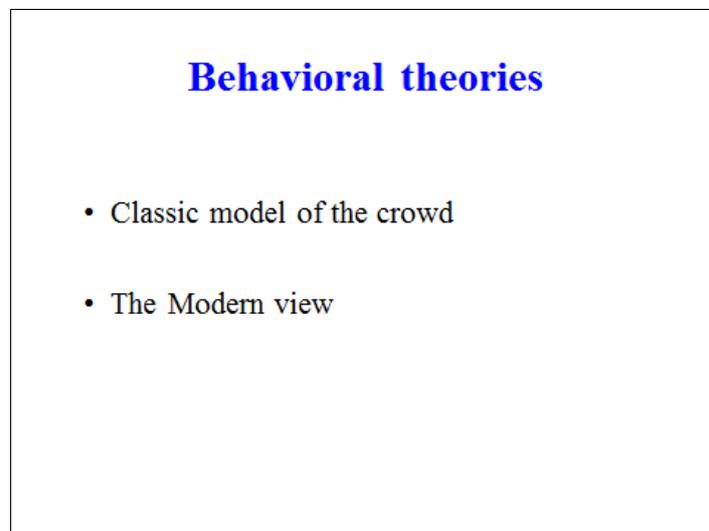
Gathering and analyzing information about an event is crucial to increase the effectiveness of an FPU planning and response to incidents involving crowd management. When estimating the impact of an anticipated event, it is central consider the need to:

- Protect the rights of persons to lawfully assemble and express their opinions

- Maintain a peaceful situation
- Deploy officers to acquire information and eventually to acquire evidences
- Facilitate event-related activities
- Assist local authorities in providing a public safety response
- Address unlawful conduct—either past, present, or anticipated

A pre-event assessment may include:

- Determining the time of assembly, duration of event, location, and type of activities planned



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During the planning and conducting process the understanding of crowd behavior is fundamental. The combination of information related to crowd behaviour along with the known facts, lead to a more detailed plan. With this information, contingencies can be considered so that the FPU actions will be proactive instead of reactive. There are multiple theories on crowd behavior, some of which are discussed in the following slides.

Classic Model

Gustave Le Bon, a French social psychologist born in 1841, is considered to be the founder of crowd psychology, which explains why people do the things they do in groups. Le Bon's 1895 book, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, attributed crowd behavior to the 'collective racial unconscious' of the mob overtaking individuals' sense of self and personality and personal responsibility. According to Le Bon, relieved of individual responsibility, individuals will behave in a more primal

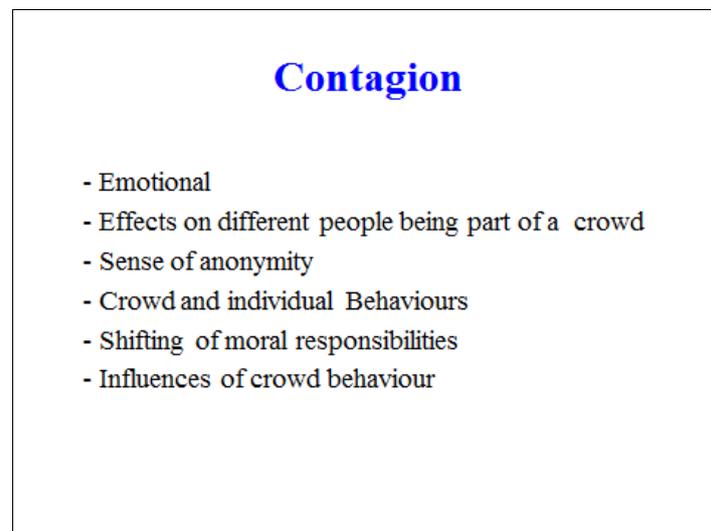
fashion. He asserts, 'by the mere fact that he forms part of an organized crowd, a man descends several rungs on the ladder of civilization.'

The modern foundation of crowd behaviour.

Three important concepts are formulated and represent the modern view on crowd behaviour :

- Crowd behaviour is generated by individuals: Each individual responds and process the information following his own unique pattern, generating a heterogeneous crowd.
- Crowd behaviour is context dependent: Behaviour is characterized by the perception of the context (physical and social) and the interaction with external factors and affects individual choices in any given context.
- Crowd behaviour is dynamic: Behaviour in a crowd continuously changes and it is based on a continuous interaction between individuals and the environment over time.

In that sense, crowd behaviour is a complex system with a multitude of potentially interconnected factors that play a role. Every time-step represents a unique picture.



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Le Bon also formulated the contagion theory. According to this theory crowds generate a kind of influence on their members similar to hypnotic effect. This effect combined with the anonymity of belonging to a large group of people, even just for that moment, results in illogical, emotionally conditioned behavior. In the end, the crowd has assumed a life of its own, stimulating emotions and driving people toward irrational, even violent action.

Two - Crowd

- Protesters and uniformed people
- Action, reaction and counteraction
- The actions and reactions of the control force play a significant part in the subsequent development of the situation
- Metaphor of a dance

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ESIM model

The Elaborated Social Identity Model (ESIM) (Reicher, 1996, 1997, 2001; Drury & Reicher, 1999; Stott & Drury, 1999; Stott & Reicher, 1998) is a social psychological explanation of crowd behaviour that incorporates group interactions, e.g. the police versus the crowd. ESIM describes crowd behaviour based on the way people perceive themselves as group members, in terms of their social identity (Tajfel, 1981) and self-categorisation (Turner & Killian, 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). These concepts explain how a person that feels like a football supporter, will act as a football supporter. According to the model, the responsibility for violence must be shared between the gathered crowd and the control force. It states that the actions and reactions of the Crowd Control Unit play a significant part in the levels of violence that occur and places the blame on law enforcement. For this reason members of the FPU's must be fully aware of their actions, reactions, and behaviors and how they affect the gathered crowd and its participants' actions and behaviors.

The interaction between the two crowds can be described using the metaphor of a dance. The escalation of tension and the potential for violence begins when one side or the other violates the steps rules. Through the violation of the implicit rules, one crowd or the other triggers entry of both into an ever-escalating cycle of action, reaction, and counteraction.

Critical factors that can help predicting outcomes of crowd events

- Adopted strategies and tactics
- Diplomatic restraints and political influences
- Implementation of less-lethal options
- Lack of communications
- Public Pronouncements

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- Tactical and strategic choices (for example, containment versus coercive dispersal) may increase or decrease the potential for tension and violence.
- Political intervention or diplomatic restriction affects the tactics and strategies used by the Police by limiting the options available. (e.g., the use of chemical irritants is restricted).
- Arbitrary and uncontrolled application of less lethal options, such as spraying a crowd composed of participants, media, spectators, and passersby with a chemical irritant may increase tension, may put focus on those involved, and may result in counterviolence.
- Orders given by the police (e.g. an order to disperse) could not be understood/received by individuals or groups because of language barriers, garbled amplification, or inadequate projection.
- public pronouncements and and Media reporting predictions by officials may create expectation of violence that can be reflected in overreacting to minor incidents

- False claims
- “Line in the sand”
- Magnification of the sense of the threat
- Adjusted response
- “Police perception”

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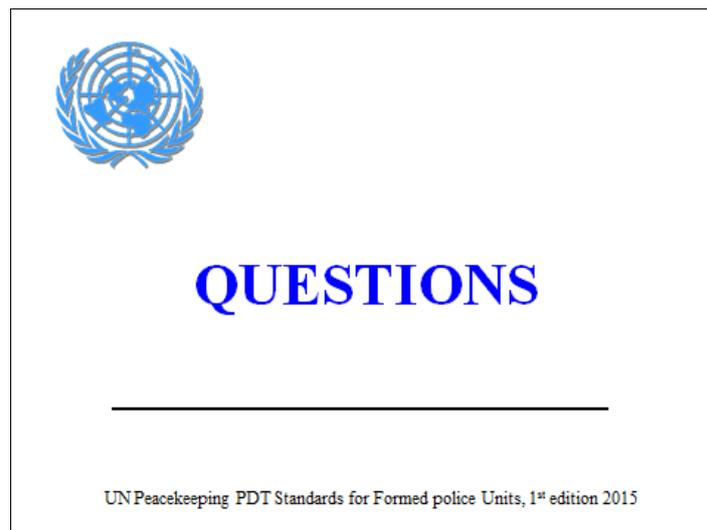
- These are apparent random instances of hostility which give emphasis to the behavior of marginal participants increasing tensions among core participants. This behavior is considerably more aggressive than the behavior of others with similar responsibilities in the same group.
- A boundary line randomly creates an artificial border not to be passed by one of the opponents.
- The depersonalization of the opposing crowd leads to the magnification of the sense of threat. Deprecation and denigration are the dehumanizing and stereotyping of opposing crowds.
- Future events may be characterized by a not calibrate use of forc based on previous similar experiences rather than responding to the situation as directed by planning, and DUF.
- Prejudices, personal stereotypes, perception of legitimacy; and commitment to perform the assigned tasks may affects/influence the way how the police analyze the situation upon which strategic and tactical decisions are made.

Summary

- Mass Gathering differences
- Mass Development
- Assessing the potential development of mass gatherings
- Crowd response
- Crowd Tactics
- Behavioral theories

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The participants should be given a summary of the key points of the lesson before being asked if they have any questions.



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