



PROJECT REPORT
The control of violence and aggression in the night economy
December 2009 – January 2010

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Summary

This project sought to reduce the likelihood of harm to staff from work-related violence and aggression (WRV) in licensed and retail premises. Using information from CHIBAC (Chichester Business Against Crime Partnership) and advice from other local authorities, a list of businesses at higher risk of WRV was drawn up. Visits were made to raise awareness of best practice in WRV control as illustrated in new guidance from the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) and the Greater Manchester Retail Violence Initiative. Many businesses were found to have well developed procedures with a variety of approaches being adopted.

Method

Ten evening visits were made to late night take-aways and city centre pubs which were selected as being at higher risk of WRV. The history of incidents was discussed and their related procedures. Copies of the HSE leaflet "Managing work-related violence in licensed and retail premises" were given together with relevant advice on best practice. In some instances requirements were made for improvements in risk assessments.

A meeting of CHIBAC was attended to brief the managers of member licensed premises. The project approach was discussed with Sussex Police via our liaison officer.

Resources

The equivalent of three weeks of an inspector's time was spent on this project.

Good practice and other matters observed during visits

During the visits the following points were observed:

1. One bar was accredited to the "Best Bar None" standard for control of alcohol related crime. This is a scheme developed by the Greater Manchester Police and Partners. The standard has helped this licensed premises adopt many control measures.
2. In one premises a "Smoke Cloak" system is installed to deter and stop intruders by way of releasing large amounts of smoke. In particular, it is used to protect a cash dispensing machine.
3. Many small late night take-aways find the key to the control of WRV is to know their local clientele well. By making an effort to get to know their clientele, not only is business promoted but customers are much less likely to cause problems. This is because they know they are traceable and thus accountable.
4. The CHIBAC system of banning trouble makers from member premises works well.
5. The CHIBAC radio system is used to summon help from others in the trade who are close-by. A few premises share door supervisors as an emergency resource. Door staff record incidents in their note books and details are then often placed on a due diligence log.
6. It can be useful to keep a log of incidents where clients have been refused entry or ejected as drunk and disorderly. In some larger companies an online log of incidents is kept. Some pubs have a routine of monthly reviewing all incidents. One pub has "A Morning Huggle" when staff meet over coffee to discuss current

issues and mutually support each other. This sounds to be a most effective procedure when discharged by a caring manager.

7. A key control is the presence on the premises of an experienced manager who can deal with complaints and incidents. Rapid appropriate action will be taken by an experience manager which will resolve the vast majority of incidents. One incident which occurred elsewhere in the Country was described by a local manager. A young pub manager was unable to diffuse a dispute which lead to a drunk glassing another in the neck. The injured person died. The young manager was off sick a long time with stress and then left the trade.
8. The use of CCTV for both internal and external monitoring is widespread and effective. Following an incident the Police will use the CCTV footage to assist their investigation and rapidly resolve cases.
9. The provision of a secure safe location to cash up is important. In one premises last year, where a duty manager failed to follow company procedures and cashed up in a public area, an opportunistic theft occurred. The duty manager was held up at knifepoint.
10. Disputes sometimes occur where there is a language problem which can lead to a misunderstanding of an order.
11. At one licensed premises in the District an alleged rape occurred last year.
12. A well-established complaints procedure is vital. Essentially, most businesses ensure that any complaints are immediately referred to the manager who has the experience and authority to defuse the matter.
13. A number of larger companies use online computer interactive training packages to teach staff how to deal with WRV. The best of these schemes included induction training for new staff, half yearly refreshers and talking through various scenarios with the manager. Some smaller businesses use the NVQ in Hospitality supervision to train staff.
14. Large decorative mirrors placed in pubs can enable bar staff to see into recesses to monitor clients.
15. In some premises panic buttons are installed behind counters to call for assistance.
16. One pub has found that incidents can arise on Saturday afternoons where tired stressed shoppers can be most abusive if food service is not prompt.

Conclusions and opportunities for further development of this project

1. As a result of the visits undertaken many examples of local good practice have become apparent. Further visits could be used to spread ideas on best practice and raise awareness.
2. It has proved useful to be able to follow up on incidents information from the CHIBAC. There is scope for a routine referral system to be set up with the Police to enable follow up action after incidents.
3. Many premises are alert to the need to control WRV and have appropriate procedures in place.

Report by David Gibson, Senior Environmental Health Officer, 11 May 2010

Approved by Ian Brightmore, Environmental Health Manager, 21 May 2010

References

- (a) Chichester DC Health and Safety Enforcement Service plan for 2009/10
- (b) HSE Section 18 directions on planned interventions:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/section18/commitment.htm>
- (c) The HSE local authority service delivery plan for 2009/2010.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/fit3street/ata glance.htm>
- (d) HSE WRV home page - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/index.htm>

- (e) HSE leaflet “Managing work-related violence in licensed and retail premises. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg423.pdf>
- (f) Best Bar None Award. A scheme for accrediting the establishment of good standards of management in licensed premises. <http://www.bbuk.com/>