

MPS Disorder Update for Businesses

Wednesday 10th August 2011

Historical Context - Updated

As you will have seen, incidents of disorder have continued to spread across the country, with new incidents reported in other UK cities including Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool.

Overnight Developments - Updated

Last night London did not see the levels of disorder we saw over the previous nights, and it was much quieter.

Large numbers of officers on the streets prevented incidents occurring, however minor incidents were reported in Tottenham and Canning Town, with individuals arrested and the disorder contained.

Over the last 24 hours period we have taken almost double the 999 calls that we would normally see (10,000 compared to a normal 5,300).

In some areas of London people have gathered in small groups on the streets to publicly

discourage any further disorder or looting. We have not had any reports of vigilante activity.

We continue to receive support from business and community leaders who have been out on the streets encouraging calm to allow police and emergency services to do their job.

Current Policing Resources - Updated

The MPS have had a large number of officers on duty during yesterday and overnight.

This included significant numbers of public order trained officers along with dog units, marine and air support, the mounted branch and armed response units. This also included significant numbers of detective officers.

Officers and staff continue to work long hours at short notice in very challenging circumstances.

Every borough is working closely with their communities and businesses to assess the impact of the disorder.

Ongoing resilience and contingency planning is in place to ensure a proportionate policing response can be maintained.

Key Meetings Today - Updated

COBRA (Chaired by the Prime Minister) has taken place again this morning.

At 15:00 hours today, Commander Rodhouse will be chairing a meeting hosted by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

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At 15:00 hours today, Commander Rodhouse will be chairing a meeting hosted by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

The purpose of the meeting is to expand on discussions from a previous meeting with business leaders, as well as seeking feedback on the measures that have been implemented so far.

In attendance will be senior representatives from business groups including the Business Retail Consortium, Association of British Insurers, CBI and British Chamber of Commerce, along with Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State for Business and Enterprise, and representatives from London Councils, the Greater London Authority and the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Update from the Investigation Team

The following update has been received from the Operation Withern team:

- There have been 776 arrests since Saturday.
- This includes 89 arrests overnight.
- So far 238 people have been charged.
- 290 remain in custody awaiting processing.

The following update has been received from Her Majesty's Court Service:

- 47 people remanded in custody.
- 2 have been committed for sentencing.

We have 450 detectives working to identify, arrest and put before the courts all those responsible for these disgraceful criminal acts.

The investigation team has been receiving useful information from the public which is being acted on.

A 21-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of starting the large fire at a furniture store in Croydon. The family-run 'House of Reeves' business was destroyed in a fire on Monday evening (8th August).

Those involved in criminality should be under no illusion that the MPS will pursue them. We have been making arrests all evening and have a team working during the tirelessly examining CCTV images. We will follow up evidence in the coming days in order to bring anyone else responsible for criminal acts to justice.

How can my business assist the investigation?

In order to assist with the reactive investigation we ask that you consider the following points:

Businesses should do all they can to ensure that the premises are as secure as can be.

Victims of looting can expect police to seize CCTV footage. Businesses should ensure that footage is not erased and should be kept out of sight should looters gain access to premises and take the opportunity to destroy the recording equipment.

If you have any information that may help us please get in touch with the Investigation Team on 020 8345 4142.

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Disorder Suspects Wanted - Update

Operation Withern is investigating the serious disorder and violence that has been affecting parts of London. We are releasing the first of many images of suspects, which can be viewed at www.met.police.uk/disordersuspects/

We are also publishing images of those wanted in connection with the looting on: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/metropolitanpolice/>

Visit the link to see if you recognise any of the people we wish to speak to. **Anyone with information should call our incident room on 020 8345 4142.**

Neighbourhood Link - keep in touch with the latest information - Update

You may wish to consider subscribing to the official police messaging system 'Neighbourhood Link'. To subscribe to this service please visit:

www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk

Those who wish to make a comment about the policing of the disorder can do so online at www.met.police.uk/contacts/

You can also follow live updates from the Police via Twitter on www.twitter.com/metpoliceuk

Regular updates will also be published on the MPS website www.met.police.uk

In the event of an emergency, call the police on 999. If you do not require an emergency police response, please call 101.

When to contact the Investigation Team - Update

We are appealing for members of the public only to contact the Operation Withern Investigation Team number **(020 8345 4142)** if they have specific information about those individuals who have been involved in the violence and disorder that has occurred across London over the past few days.

However, the team are receiving a significant number of calls that are not directly related to their investigation. These calls are impeding the ability of those with relevant information to get through to officers.

Types of Premises/Businesses targeted

Whilst criminal activity has taken place across a number of areas, there is no intelligence of specific targeting of identified business premises. We continue to carefully monitor any intelligence available, ensuring that we have our resources in the right places to support the ongoing policing plan. We will continue to respond to the needs of London's communities and deal with any incidents of criminality.

During the disturbances, all types of businesses within the locations have been targeted. However, looting appears to be concentrated on easily transportable items of high value such as TVs/Phones etc.

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How can my business help protect itself?

Helpful 'Crime Prevention' advice has already been disseminated. This can be found on our website at www.met.police.uk. You may wish to take the following precautionary measures:

1. Where possible retail premises should be suitably staffed with security guards.
2. Ensure staff report any suspicious activity to security and/or police.
3. Consider regular checks of the building and surrounding area.
4. Identify areas that are vulnerable to forced entry.
5. Make sure all service doors are kept locked and secure when not in use
6. Ensure your CCTV system fully operational.
7. In case of an emergency is there a record of the names of keyholders who can be contacted.
8. Consider removing high value goods from display windows overnight.
9. Consider keeping as little cash as possible on the premises.
10. Ensure that your premises are secure and if fitted your alarm systems are fully operational.
11. In the event of a situation that does not require an emergency police response, call 101.
12. In the event of an emergency, call the emergency number 999.

In addition we would ask all businesses to consider their local environment. Where rubble, builders skips, flammable liquids, gas canisters etc are visible these should be locked away or removed completely from the area. It would

also aid some investigations if lighting in the area is well maintained and working, with brightness levels set to higher levels than normal.

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Fire Risk - Update

Fires are used as a tactic to provide a focal point for protesters seeking to attract extensive media attention. They are also used to destroy evidence of criminality and distract emergency services, drawing them into confrontational situations.

Fire risk assessment and arson prevention arrangements should be reviewed accordingly. Simple good housekeeping measures such as the removal of any flammable and combustible materials stored adjacent to the premises, for example, stacks of pallets or waste materials, can reduce risk as these items can be easily ignited and any fires started in them can quickly spread to your building.

Reduce the storage of flammable materials and stock near to windows and entrance.

Ensure that first aid fire fighting equipment and extinguishers are maintained and available to

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deal with any small fires. Staff should be properly trained to use any equipment provided and instructed to avoid unnecessary risk. If there is any doubt, evacuate all persons from the building immediately.

Particular attention should be given to arrangements to secure the safety of staff and customers from fire. Fires started using accelerants such as petrol bombs can spread very quickly, cutting off escape routes. Accelerants can cause very rapid fire spread and increase the risk that the entire building will become involved in fire, especially where there is a delay in any fire service response due to the security situation.

Past experience suggests that in these situations some people consider remaining on their property to protect it from looting and damage. However, due to the risk of rapid fire spread, this can be extremely hazardous and has led to fatalities in previous events. Refuge in the upper floors of a building that has been targeted should be avoided as it is easy to become trapped.

For information surrounding fire safety and prevention, as well as the response from the London Fire Brigade to the disorder, businesses are advised to visit the website www.london-fire.gov.uk or follow their tweets on Twitter @Londonfire

Reasonable Force

Anyone can use reasonable force to protect themselves or others, or to carry out an arrest or to prevent crime. You are not expected to

make fine judgements over the level of force you use in the heat of the moment. So long as you only do what you honestly and instinctively believe is necessary in the heat of the moment that would be the strongest evidence of you acting lawfully and in self-defence.

This is still the case if you use something to hand as a weapon.

As a general rule, the more extreme the circumstances and the fear felt, the more force you can lawfully use in self-defence.

If you are in your own home or business and in fear for yourself or others, you do not have to wait to be attacked before using reasonable force for protection.

How can businesses report a crime?

In an emergency always call 999, otherwise you can contact us by:

- Calling 101 to report a crime that has already happened, seek crime prevention advice or make us aware of any policing issues in your local area;
- Via our website at www.met.police.uk; or
- Via your local police station

If you find that your Business has been damaged by disorder then you must ensure the police are called at the earliest opportunity. It is vital that you preserve the premises, and don't touch or move anything if possible so we can consider any forensic opportunities.

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If the matter is urgent then you should ring 999 or otherwise the new 101 number. A police officer will attend and discuss with you the best course of action for us to secure evidence to afford us the best chance to catch the criminals and the timescales to get your business back up and running at the earliest opportunity.

If your Business is behind police cordons or otherwise secured by us then you should contact the investigation team on

020 8345 4142.

How can your business receive more information?

In response to a request made to Commander Rodhouse at the Strategic Business Meeting on Monday 8th August 2011 at Empress State Building the MPS have introduced a 24/7 capability to receive and where feasible, to disseminate information.

Neighbourhood Link is a community messaging service from the MPS that provides news and information about policing activity or initiatives, crime prevention advice as well as major incidents affecting your area.

Through this service you can receive messages from your local Safer Neighbourhoods team, borough police or, in the event of a major incident or event affecting the whole of London, from other Met teams. In order to receive messages you will need to register your details.

To get the latest information you can sign up to Neighbourhood link via:

www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk/registration/

You can follow live updates from the Police via Twitter on www.twitter.com/metpoliceuk

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How can you and your business help the police?

Through the MPS Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team at:

CommunitiesTogether@met.police.uk

This email address is staffed 24/7 but they will not routinely respond to emails unless additional information is required.

You can also help us by assisting in the identification of people that have been looting, rioting and committing crime.

Anyone with information should call our incident room on **020 8345 4142**. Alternatively you can

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call the Crimestoppers charity anonymously on
0800 555 111.

We are also publishing images of people wanted in connection with looting. You can find the pictures at:

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