

Best Practices Handbook For Public Entertainment Establishments

2017



**SINGAPORE
POLICE FORCE**

Best Practices Handbook For Public Entertainment Establishments

2017

The Best Practices Handbook for Public Entertainment Establishments is published by the Singapore Police Force. All Rights Reserved. Materials in this publication may not be reproduced in part or in whole without written consent from Singapore Police Force. © Copyright 2017

The information and telephone numbers published in this handbook are accurate at the time of printing.

Contents

Contents	3
Introduction	4
Scope	5
Guiding Principles	6
Environment	8
Staff – Roles and Responsibilities, Appearance & Conduct	10
Premises Responsibilities	12
Incident Procedures	16
Conclusion	18
Annex A	19
Useful Information	21



Introduction

Singapore enjoys a low crime rate and this is key in maintaining our attractiveness for all to live, work and play. Much of this success is built on a foundation of strong Police-Community partnership. Operators of Public Entertainment establishments thus play an important role in preventing, deterring and detecting crime. By creating a safe environment for their patrons, operators help to ensure that patrons are able to enjoy and experience Singapore's vibrant entertainment and nightlife scene without worrying about their safety.

This handbook guides operator to implement policies and procedures in managing incidents, handling patrons and adopting adequate safety measures in and around their premises. It also sets out the best practices for the staff in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. It is the official Police guide to industry-led regulation.

Scope

1. This handbook gives recommendations to Public Entertainment establishments which employ staff in managing and controlling patrons at their premises.
2. This handbook recommends incident management procedures, premises policies, and infrastructural improvements that Public Entertainment establishments can adopt to create a safe 'clubbing' environment.
3. For the purpose of this handbook, "staff" refers to Security Officers (include bouncers), door supervisors, customer service officers, customer relations officers, service staff, and any personnel who have the authority to decide who may be admitted into the business premises.

Guiding Principles

The recommendations stipulated in this handbook are based on five main guiding principles that will affect the probability of undesirable incidents occurring at or around Public Entertainment Establishments.

1. **Cheap alcohol** – Alcohol leads to intoxication, and highly intoxicated patrons are more likely to be aggressive with a higher probability of committing violent crime. Establishments which impose a cover charge or charge more for drinks are more likely to keep patrons' drinking volume in check. Likewise, Establishments with 'happy hour' promotions or with longer liquor licenses are more likely to have a high number of over-intoxicated patrons.
2. **Patron profile** – This is largely confined to the age and 'type' of patrons. Establishments which impose minimum age requirements (e.g. at least 23 years old for males), together with a set of good house rules, would discourage any immature and rowdy behaviour.
3. **Physical environment** – The physical environment of the Establishments such as theme, type of music played, lighting levels, structural layout, and presence of competitive games (e.g. pool / darts), physical proximity among patrons can all affect the propensity for crime to occur. Overcrowding may also lead to injuries or even death in the event of a fire or other emergencies requiring mass evacuation.
4. **Immediate precinct vicinity** – The immediate vicinity of the Establishment is public-facing and is also a common space especially in nightlife clusters. Establishments that only guide drunk, rowdy, violent patrons out of their premises and leave them in the immediate vicinity will likely continue to experience spill-over effects of fights and crime (i.e. property and reputational damage). This is further exacerbated in nightlife

clusters where there is a concentration of such rowdy behaviour in a small space. In such instances, collaboration amongst operators is crucial to establish precinct safety and safe party zones.

5. **Management model** – This refers to staff training, staff-to-patron ratio, and good house rules. Staff training and ratio are not just confined to Security Officers, but all other staff such as waiters / waitresses, bartenders, and service staff. The assumption is that well-trained staff, in adequate numbers, would recognise early signs of trouble and take steps to diffuse these situations.

Environment

Lighting

1. Establishments should ensure that the levels of lighting inside and outside (i.e. entrance, exits and narrow alleys) the premises are sufficient for staff to observe the crowd.
2. Establishments should ensure that the levels of lighting outside the premises discourage the loitering of undesirable characters or intoxicated patrons (e.g. the deployment of bright lights after closing hours).

CCTV Installation and Maintenance

3. As a rule of thumb, the lighting within the licensed premises should be maintained at levels adequate for CCTVs to reasonably record the facial features of patrons.
4. Working CCTVs should be mounted at all entries and exits and covering both directions. It is also recommended for working CCTVs to be mounted at the following locations which are susceptible to crime and conflicts:
 - a) Outside bathroom doors
 - b) Dance floor
 - c) Seating areas
 - d) Walkways with high human traffic flow
 - e) Locker areas
5. CCTVs should be of adequate quality to record the actions and facial features of patrons. CCTVs should also undergo regular maintenance to ensure that they are in proper working condition.
6. CCTV recordings should be kept for a minimum of 28 days from the date of recording. For further details of Video Surveillance Standards (VSS), please refer to the below link:

http://police.gov.sg/img/advisories/misc/vss_standard_for_buildings.pdf

7. When an incident requires the viewing of CCTV footage, a staff should be on scene to facilitate Police investigation.

Furniture Arrangement

8. A cramped environment may increase chances of disputes or crimes such as theft and outrage of modesty. Thus establishments should ensure that sufficient space is catered for walkways, seating areas and dance floor through furniture arrangement.

Noise Management

9. If establishment is situated in a location near residential area (including hotels), establishment should consider necessary noise management measures (e.g. to install double doors) to prevent noise disturbance to nearby residents. Establishments may consider seeking advice from noise control consultants, if necessary.

Miscellaneous

10. It is recommended for establishments to provide lockers for patron's usage.
11. Establishments should display crime prevention and responsible drinking posters at the entrances of clubs and toilets or to have such messages displayed through electronic mediums (e.g. Television screens) periodically.
12. Establishments may collaborate with precinct managers (i.e. management of building, location or place) or neighbouring establishments to enhance the security environment outside establishments.
 - a. **Annex A** includes suggestions on how precinct managers and neighbouring establishments can contribute to provide a safer entertainment environment to patrons.

Staff – Roles and Responsibilities, Appearance & Conduct

1. Staff should be well-trained and it is strongly recommended that they have attended training courses conducted by recognised training service providers in the following areas:
 - a) First Aid
 - b) Conflict Management
 - c) Communication Skills
 - d) Crowd Control
 - e) Drug Awareness
 - f) Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA)
2. Staff should at all times maintain agreed standards of personal appearance, conduct and deportment.
3. Staff should be distinctly and uniformly attired for easy identification. It is recommended that they don name tags indicating their names and positions.
4. Staff should use moderate language at all times when dealing with members of the public and avoid threatening or abusive words.
5. Staff should act fairly and not discriminate against any person, and should always be prepared to justify their actions.
6. Staff should never abuse their position of authority.
7. Staff should only use minimal force to restrain difficult patrons or in self-defence.

8. Staff should never use unlawful or dangerous equipment whilst performing their duty, e.g. stun gun, pepper spray, baton, baseball bat, handcuffs and knife.
9. Staff should be consistently vigilant and aware of the safety of their surroundings and their patrons at all times. They should cooperate fully with law enforcement authorities or precinct managers to safeguard law and order in the area.
10. Staff should not conduct bodily search on individuals of the opposite sex.

Premises Responsibilities

Exit and Entry Control

1. Establishments should adopt appropriate 'door' policies by screening (e.g. screening of bags and IDs during entry and re-entry) and denying entry to patrons who may potentially create trouble.
2. Establishments should have a search policy on patrons seeking entry and adhere to it consistently.
3. Establishments should ensure patrons awaiting admission are placed in a line and not blocking any sidewalk. Patrons should be notified that they could be refused entry if they fail to comply with in-house entry requirements.
4. Establishments should refuse entry to anyone whose presence or behaviour might contribute to the occurrence of incidents, e.g. intoxicated persons who may be the source of crowd disturbances or fights, persons believed to be under the influence of drugs, persons armed with weapons, or persons whom may likely commit a criminal offence (e.g. violence or outrage of modesty) on premises due to establishment's past experience(s) with such persons.
5. Establishments should refuse entry to anyone who has been evicted from a neighbouring establishment who is believed to have caused or contributed to the occurrence of incidents.
6. Establishments should conduct checks on patrons to ensure no weapons, drugs or any other prohibited items are brought into the licensed premises.
7. Establishments may consider keeping a record of the identity of their patrons (especially potential troublemakers). The record list will be useful for quick identification of suspects arising from an incident.

Operating Procedures and Records

8. Establishments should consider having their Operating Procedures incorporating the guidelines suggested in this handbook. The Operating Procedures, which should be distributed to all staff, should cover situations which arise frequently and which can lead to the following:
 - a) Illnesses or injuries
 - b) Fights or disputes
 - c) Disorderly / Intoxicated patrons
 - d) Use of false ID
 - e) Drug use

9. The Operating Procedures should also include:
 - a) Emergency evacuation plan
 - b) Exit plans
 - c) Management of public order incidents outside the premises
 - d) Plans for communication and cooperation with precinct managers (if applicable)
 - e) Police Best Practices Handbook for Public Entertainment Establishments
 - f) Relevant contact list of important personnel (e.g. Precinct Manager, Fire Safety Manager, Security team, SPF NPC and SCDF Fire Station liaison)

10. Establishments should spread staff throughout the premises to attend promptly to any situations.

11. Establishments should assign staff to conduct occupancy count throughout the operating hours and ensure that the number of patrons admitted is within authorised limit. This is important for the purpose of ensuring public safety in case of evacuation during emergency.

12. Establishments should report the presence of Secret Societies members or their activities (e.g. shouting of SS slogans or hand gestures) to Police for follow up actions.
13. Establishments are required to ensure that all openings, such as doors and windows, are kept closed during operating hours to minimise any noise nuisance. Installing only curtains at such openings would not suffice in meeting this requirement.
14. Establishments should adopt responsible alcohol serving policies. Patrons showing signs of intoxication should be denied further drink orders in a tactful fashion. This reduces the chance of an incident such as dispute or theft from an intoxicated person.

Deployment of Notices

15. It is recommended that a signage containing patrons' code of conduct be prominently displayed inside or outside the establishment. Examples (depending on varying business policies) may include:
 - a) No drinks allowed on the dance floor
 - b) Stipulated attire or dress code
 - c) No smoking
 - d) No photography
 - e) No swearing / rowdy behaviour
16. Establishments should make it clear that the possession of offensive weapons or concealed arms (e.g. knives, knuckle dusters) is strictly prohibited.

Record of Permits and Licenses

17. All permits must be kept up-to-date and made readily available for inspection if so required.

18. Establishments may consider keeping a record of the certifications of their staff, relevant to the operation of the establishment (e.g. copies of bartender's RSA training certification, Security Officer's valid Security Officer Licences).
19. Establishments must ensure that all their Security Officers possess valid Security Officer licence issued by the Singapore Police Force. A Security Officer refers to an individual who performs security duties such as security manager/staff, bouncer, or persons who screen individuals seeking entry into an establishment.

[Definition of a Security Officer can be found under Section 13 of the Private Security Industry Act, Cap. 250A]

20. Establishments are to ensure that the relevant authorities are notified on the employment & cessation of all Security Officers. Information on Security Officer licence is available at www.police.gov.sg/e-services
21. Establishments should ensure that their staff do not have any affiliation with the Secret Societies.

Incident Procedures

Handling Disputes or Fights

1. Staff should stay calm and use tact.
2. Staff should quickly separate the involved parties before the situation escalates. Directing the disputes or fights out of the premises may escalate the situation as the issue continues.
3. Lightings within the establishments should be switched on and the music stopped to facilitate the handling and assessment of the situation. Failure to do so may worsen the situation and result in injuries and heightened tension.
4. When leading involved parties out of premises:
 - a) Staff should not eject all the involved parties through the same exit as this will likely result in the dispute or altercation continuing outside the premises.
 - b) Staff should separate the parties, and if the situation permits, lead them out of the premises via different exit points. If there is only one exit, then they should be led out at different times.
 - c) Security Officers should follow the groups and ensure that at least one group has left the precinct before resuming their security duties.
5. Security Officers should alert the precinct's security of the incident so as to monitor the movements of the involved parties through CCTVs.
6. Staff should call in the Police if they assess that the dispute may escalate further.

Handling of Intoxicated Patrons

7. Upon identification of an intoxicated patron, staff should advise the patron to limit his consumption and to provide sufficient hydration.
8. Further service of alcohol to the patron should be stopped and attempts should be made by staff to assist the patron in their recovery.
9. Should the intoxicated patron show signs of becoming violent/ abusive/ incapable of managing oneself, staff should guide the patron with calmness and tact out of the establishment.
10. Staffs should make an effort to ensure that the intoxicated patron is subsequently exited from the precinct or has received the necessary assistance (e.g. deployment to precinct sick bay / accompanying friends).

General Procedures for Incident

11. Perpetrators should be detained by staff until the arrival of the Police. Witnesses should be encouraged to wait for the arrival of Police to assist in the investigation.
12. Incidents taking place within the licensed premises as well as identities of involved patrons should be noted in a record for future reference. This will be useful for the management and regulatory agencies.
13. Evidence relating to any crime must be preserved until the arrival of the Police. This includes broken glasses, blood stains, and CCTV footages.
14. Staff should readily render assistance to Police and SCDF Officers in whatever way they can and not obstruct them in any manner.
15. During a fire or other emergency situations, staff should be familiar with evacuation procedures at the premises.

Conclusion

1. Establishment owners / operators have an important role to play in creating a safe entertainment environment within and around the establishment.
2. The guidelines are meant as a best practice guide for establishments and not as licensing conditions which have been separately issued. Following SPF's security recommendations will likely lead to a reduction in the probability of crime (i.e. violence and outrage of modesty cases) within and around the establishment.
3. The guidelines should be adapted to your establishment's operating environment.

Annex A

Collaboration with Precinct Manager

Cooperation and collaboration between security management within establishments and precinct manager (i.e. management of building, location or place) can provide significant enhancement to the security and operating environment of establishments as well as law and order in the precinct. Precinct management can contribute by:

1. Installing CCTVs and displaying signs informing the public on working CCTV surveillance in common areas for crime prevention and deterrence.
2. Ensuring sufficient lighting in common areas for crime prevention and deterrence, and to support the image visibility of CCTV images.
3. Deploying Security Officers for queue management at nearby taxi stands or drop-off points which are heavily used during peak operating hours. Their presence would not only help to regulate traffic and prevent congestion, but also prevent the occurrence of fights or disputes by intoxicated patrons at taxi queues.
4. Deploying Security Officers within the precinct to perform patrols, crowd control, respond to incidents, administer first aid and containment of situation while waiting for response by Law Enforcement Authorities. Deployment of SOs should be congruent with expected crowd size at the precinct.
5. Establishing a rendezvous point for the administration of first aid and quick access of SCDF paramedics.
6. Encouraging establishments to form a security watch group by sharing information on problematic patrons, security observations at the precinct and enhancements on security measures as a community.
7. Establishing a clear protocol / code of practice and communication network with establishments to ensure their fullest cooperation on matters relating to safety and security of the precinct.

Collaboration with Neighbouring Establishments

For establishments situated in locations with a cluster of establishments, it is useful to collaborate with neighbouring establishments to prevent and deter crime through:

1. Sharing real-time information (e.g. through instant messaging applications) on problematic patrons whom establishments may want to refuse entry. This shall prevent problematic patrons from continuing to cause issues at other outlets.
2. Regular meeting and sharing on security skills and tactics to enhance security measures adopted by respective establishments.

Useful Information

Ang Mo Kio Division	1800-218 0000	Police Hotline	1800-255 0000
Bedok Division	1800-244 0000	Traffic Hotline	1800-547 1818
Central Division	1800-224 0000		
Clementi Division	1800-774 0000	Police Licensing & Regulatory Department	
Jurong Division	1800-791 0000	6835 0000	
Tanglin Division	1800-391 0000	SPF_Licensing@spf.gov.sg	



SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE

