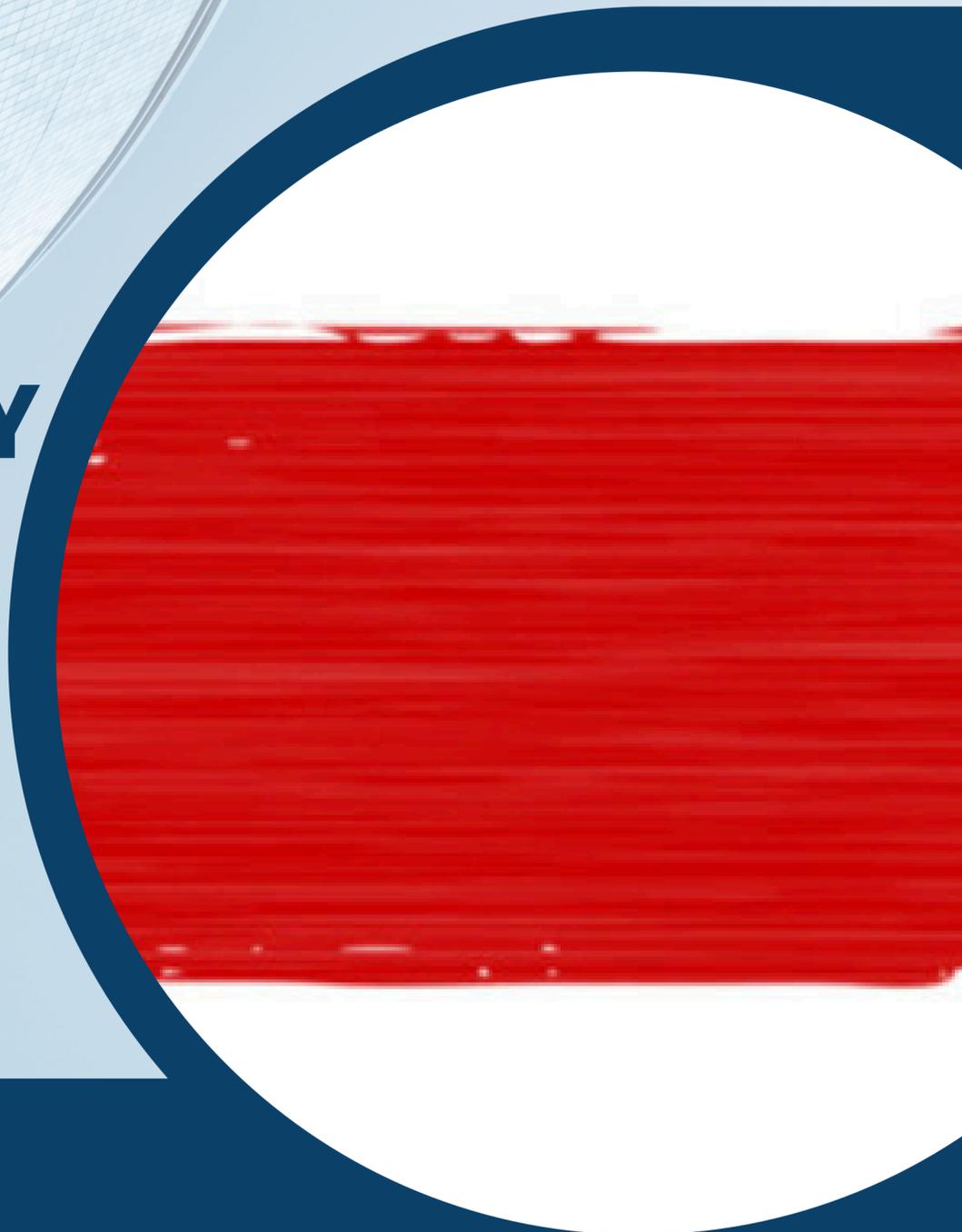Presented by WBII

PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

"Red Lines" Pledge —
Real-time Intervention
Against Incitement and
Intimidation

OCTOBER 2025

SHIELD OF DAVID

STOP THE HATE

WE BELIEVE IN ISRAEL

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Foreword

Britain's democratic settlement is built on two complementary duties: to facilitate lawful protest and to protect the public from intimidation, hatred, and the glorification of violence. In recent years, sustained, large-scale demonstrations have tested how well we meet both duties at once. Most people who march do so lawfully. Yet too often, when conduct crosses clear legal lines—outside places of worship and schools, on the steps of public institutions, or across our digital squares—intervention has come late, unevenly, or not at all. Communities then draw the only conclusion available to them: that intimidation pays and that reassurance is reserved for statements after the fact.

This briefing is offered as a practical correction. It does not ask for new laws, committees, or consultations. It argues for timely use of powers that already exist—applied even-handedly, recorded rigorously, and explained transparently. Its central claim is simple: the gap is not legislative capacity but operational timeliness, clarity of thresholds, and accountability for outcomes.

Three design choices run through the pages that follow.

First, clarity about the "red lines." The right to protest ends where incitement to racial or religious hatred begins; where support for terrorism or proscribed organisations is expressed; where eliminationist slogans are deployed to menace; where places of worship and education are targeted; and where weapons or their imitations are carried. These are content-neutral thresholds grounded in law. They are not a judgement on a cause but on conduct in a public space.

Second, real-time enforcement with evidential discipline. The briefing sets out a Gold–Silver–Bronze model in which red lines, sterile-zone policy, and intervention drills are pre-planned; conditions on route, timing, amplification and proximity are used dynamically; and breaches are handled through a clear WARN–SEIZE–ARREST ladder that prioritises principal offenders. Every action is logged with body-worn video references, time-codes, seizure records, and a short proportionality note. This is how we square facilitation with firmness, and how we make charges within 72 hours a norm rather than an exception.

Third, visible accountability. Weekly publication of protest-linked hate and terrorism outcomes—reports, arrests, charges, and disposals—builds trust, disciplines practice, and deters repeat offending. A standing Gold Group ahead of high-risk weekends ensures that police, prosecutors, councils, transport authorities, and communal security professionals are aligned before the first chant is heard. Universities and public bodies are expected to uphold enforceable codes: academic freedom and freedom of expression do not shield unlawful conduct or targeted intimidation.

None of this is a counsel of severity. It is a programme of governance: predictable rules, proportionate interventions, and equal treatment under the law. The measures are calibrated to be the least intrusive that are effective, and they are framed to protect all communities, including those who wish to protest peacefully. Where conditions are imposed, they are justified and time-limited; where arrests are made, they target organisers and agitators, not bystanders; where sterile zones are created, they are narrow in space and time and oriented to safeguarding access and dignity.

The prize is a return to confidence. Families should be able to attend services and collect their children from school without running a gauntlet of intimidation. Protestors should know in advance the lines they must not cross and trust that others will be held to the same standard. Officers should be empowered to act decisively on the day, supported by clear doctrine and swift prosecutorial pathways.

This document is written for those with responsibility as well as authority: ministers, mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners, chief officers, vice-chancellors, and civic leaders. It gives them a plan they can implement now. If applied faithfully, the approach will lower the temperature around sensitive sites, shorten the time from offence to charge, and restore the expectation—shared across all communities—that our public square is a place for argument, not intimidation.

The measure of a mature democracy is not how eloquently it regrets harm after the event, but how promptly and fairly it prevents harm while rights are being exercised. The time for timely, even-handed practice is now.

Catherine Perez-Shakdam - Executive Director We Believe In Israel

Executive Summary

This briefing translates the "Red Lines" Pledge into a full policy, legal, and operational framework for ministers, mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), chief constables, local authorities, vice-chancellors, and institutional leaders. It affirms that the right to protest is fundamental, while drawing bright statutory lines against intimidation, incitement to hatred, and support for terrorism. The emphasis is practical: real-time intervention, even-handed enforcement, and transparent accountability—using existing law.

Key deliverables:
- Clear, pre-announced triggers for intervention (the "red lines"), aligned with existing offences and policing powers.
- A same-day enforcement model under Gold–Silver–Bronze command: conditions, dispersal, seizure, and arrest where thresholds are met.
- A 72-hour charging pipeline with standardised evidential packs to CPS (body-worn video, time-coded transcripts, exhibits).
- Sterile zones near places of worship and schools during high-risk periods.
- Weekly public reporting on protest-linked hate and terrorism outcomes.
- Strengthened protection for at-risk communities, and firm expectations for universities and platforms.

1) Context and Problem Statement

Overview

Since late 2023, the UK has experienced sustained, high-tempo mobilisation around Middle East issues. The vast majority of demonstrators act lawfully. Nevertheless, the operating environment for policing and public authorities has become markedly more complex due to (i) a measurable rise in antisemitic incidents, (ii) intimidation in and around places of worship and schools, and (iii) the mainstreaming of chants and placards that cross— or skirt—the thresholds for stirring up hatred or encouraging terrorism. The legal framework is broadly sufficient; the principal deficits are operational timeliness, clarity of thresholds, and accountability for outcomes.

A. Features of the current protest landscape

1. Scale and cadence. National and city-centre protests recur weekly, with frequent mid-week "flash" actions. This cadence strains public order units, evidence-gathering teams, and neighbourhood resources responsible for reassurance patrols around sensitive sites.
2. Tactical fluidity. Organisers increasingly use late route changes, short-notice assemblies, and online mobilisation to exploit gaps in pre-event risk assessments.
3. Blended online–offline ecosystem. Messaging escalates online before appearing on banners, PA systems, and impromptu speeches. Digital content amplifies and normalises language that—once voiced in a crowd—can quickly tip into intimidation.
4. Proximity to protected sites. Even where formal routes avoid synagogues and Jewish schools, spillover—whether deliberate or negligent—brings large, loud crowds within intimidating range at sensitive times (Sabbath, school dismissal, holy days).
5. Narrative laundering. Slogans with eliminationist meaning are reframed by some organisers as "political expression," creating ambiguity that chills decisive intervention on the day.

B. Typology of harms

1. Immediate harms. Targeted harassment; fear induced by massed chanting near worship and education sites; obstruction of access; doxxing and hostile filming.
2. Medium-term harms. Withdrawal from public life by targeted communities; reduced school and synagogue attendance; normalisation of language that dehumanises Jews and other minorities; copycat events.
3. Systemic harms. Erosion of trust in policing and public authorities; perception that hate speech is cost-free; deepening communal polarisation.

C. Threshold confusion: where the line is, and who owns it

1. Eliminationist speech. Chants that, in ordinary meaning or usage, call for the eradication of a people or the destruction of the world's only Jewish state move from protected opinion into potential offences when intent, content, and effect are considered together.
2. Support for terrorism. Symbols, slogans, and speeches expressing or inviting support for proscribed organisations are prohibited; yet frontline officers frequently hesitate amid claims of "context" or "contested interpretation."
3. Intimidation versus inconvenience. Public order powers contemplate intimidation, not merely disruption. Crowds, amplification, and targeted presence outside a synagogue or school can objectively amount to intimidation even absent physical violence.
4. Operational independence v. strategic direction. Ministers, mayors, and PCCs set expectations and accountability; chiefs and Gold command take operational decisions. Ambiguity about roles leads to under-use of lawful, proportionate conditions when they are most needed.

D. Why timely enforcement fails in practice

1. Process inertia. Conditions are often drafted narrowly and late; commanders prefer "post-event investigation," which signals permissiveness and misses deterrence value.
2. Evidential anxiety. Officers worry about meeting prosecutorial thresholds for hatred or terrorism encouragement without immediate, high-quality recordings and transcripts.
3. Resource mismatch. Evidence-gathering (body-worn video review, transcription, exhibit handling) competes with core public order tasks; specialist teams are thinly stretched across multiple simultaneous events.
4. Perceived reputational risk. Fear of being accused of "politicising protest" leads to under-use of lawful powers—especially near sensitive sites or on holy days—precisely when swift action would be most legitimate and reassuring.
5. Inconsistent doctrine. Frontline understanding of what constitutes eliminationist or terror-glorifying speech varies by force, commander, and even serial, producing uneven enforcement and forum shopping by organisers.

E. Data picture and confidence effects

- Incident reporting. Police and community security organisations record elevated levels of antisemitic incidents since October 2023. Peaks correlate with major news events, mass weekends of protest, and high-profile online mobilisation.
- Under-reporting. Targeted communities report fatigue with post-event processes that rarely deliver timely charges; many choose not to report lesser incidents, suppressing the true baseline.
- Community behaviours. Increased use of private security, altered school runs, curtailed public display of religious identity, and route avoidance on protest days all indicate a climate of intimidation independent of arrest or charge rates.
- Trust and legitimacy. Communities infer a "cost-free zone" for certain chants and symbols. Conversely, some protestors interpret police reticence as tacit permission to push boundaries further.

F. Specific operational pain points

- Sensitive-site buffers. Absent pre-declared sterile zones, commanders must improvise ad hoc perimeters under high stress, inviting challenge and inconsistency.
- Amplification control. Without advance conditions, PAs and megaphones dominate public space; once an unlawful chant begins, halting it mid-crowd is harder and riskier.
- Principal-offender identification. Leaders on flatbeds or with microphones should be priority targets for evidential focus; too often, arrests concentrate on peripheral actors after the moment has passed.
- 72-hour evidential pipeline. Files languish due to lack of standardised templates, weekend CPS advice gaps, and slow BWV triage—blunting deterrence.
- Online accelerants. Platforms host calls to assemble at sensitive sites, glorifying imagery, and doxxing materials; without rapid preservation requests, evidential trails go cold.

G. The governance gap

- Strategy without follow-through. Authorities issue condemnations and appeals but rarely pair them with public, measurable enforcement benchmarks.
- Opaque outcomes. Limited public data on reports, arrests, charges, and disposals feeds a perception that nothing happens.
- Institutional buck-passing. Universities and public bodies sometimes reframe clear misconduct as "controversy," outsourcing decisions to committees and leaving targeted groups exposed.

H. Problem statement

- The law is largely adequate; the operational system is not.
- The decisive variable is time: interventions must occur during the conduct—when intimidation can be halted, evidence secured, and deterrence established—not weeks later.
- To deliver consistency and legitimacy, forces require bright, pre-announced triggers, pre-drafted conditions(including sterile zones), trained evidence pipelines, and transparent outcome reporting.
- Without these, the UK risks entrenching a culture in which hate-adjacent conduct is normalised, targeted communities self-censor and withdraw, and public confidence in even-handed policing erodes.

I. What success looks like

- Prompt, proportionate interventions at the point of breach;
- Consistent application of thresholds across forces and events;
- A 72-hour charge pipeline that makes deterrence visible;
- Calmer perimeters around synagogues and schools during high-risk periods;
- Weekly public data that reassures communities and disciplines operational practice.

Bottom line

This is not a legislative failure. It is a failure of operational clarity, speed, and accountability. Fix those three, and the UK can protect both lawful protest and minority safety—every weekend, in real time.

2) Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Public Order Act 1986 (POA): ss.12–14 conditions on processions/assemblies (route, time, place, amplification), and s.13 prohibition of a procession in defined circumstances.
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (PCSC): strengthens use of conditions, including noise impact where it causes serious disruption or intimidation.
- Public Order Act 2023 (POA 2023): introduces Serious Disruption Prevention Orders and clarifies protest-related offences.
- Terrorism Act 2000: s.12 inviting support for a proscribed organisation; s.13 display of articles signifying support.
- Terrorism Act 2006: s.1 encouragement of terrorism; s.2 dissemination of terrorist publications.
- Public Order Act 1986 Part III and Part 3A: stirring up racial and religious hatred.
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997: harassment, alarm or distress; relevant to targeted intimidation.
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: s.34–35 dispersal powers.
- Online Safety Act 2023: unlawful content duties, including terrorism and hate offences; duties to prevent, remove, and preserve evidence.
- Equality Act 2010 s.149: Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to eliminate harassment and foster good relations.
- Education (No. 2) Act 1986 s.43 and Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023: free speech duties balanced against criminal law; do not shield unlawful conduct.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 s.26: Prevent duty on specified authorities.
- ECHR Articles 10 and 11 (as applied domestically): protect free expression and assembly; interferences must be lawful, necessary, and proportionate.

Operational independence is preserved: elected leaders set strategy and expectations; chief officers decide tactics. The pledge aligns with the Policing Protocol and Strategic Policing Requirement: lawful protest and protection from intimidation are both public interests.

3) The "Red Lines" Triggers

Commanders should intervene immediately where the following are observed at an assembly or directly linked online content:

1. Incitement to racial or religious hatred against Jews or any protected group
2. – Potential offences: POA 1986 Part III/3A; threshold considers words used, intent or likely effect, context, and audience impact.
3. Support for or glorification of terrorism/proscribed organisations
4. – Potential offences: Terrorism Act 2000 s.12/s.13; Terrorism Act 2006 s.1/s.2. Includes banners, insignia, chants, and speeches.
5. Eliminationist slogans calling for the destruction of a people or state
6. – Depending on wording and context, may engage stirring up hatred (POA 1986) or encouragement of terrorism (TA 2006). Commanders apply necessity/proportionality but act on the day once thresholds are met.
7. Targeted intimidation of places of worship, schools, or community sites
8. – Includes surrounding, filming to dox, coordinated mass presence designed to deter attendance. Powers: POA conditions, ASB dispersal, harassment offences.
9. Weapons or imitation weapons; distribution of materials anticipating criminality
10. – Search, seizure, and arrest under general criminal law; for repeat serious disruption, consider post-conviction Serious Disruption Prevention Orders.

B. Command architecture and roles

Gold (Strategic)

- Sets strategic intent: protect protest and public safety; zero tolerance for intimidation and incitement near sensitive sites.
- Approves the Operational Order: red lines, sterile-zone policy, arrest priorities, transparency commitments.
- Confirms resources and mutual aid, authorises mounted/dog deployments where justified.
- Secures early CPS advice availability for the event window and the 72-hour pipeline.
- Chairs Gold Group with local authority, transport, institutional leaders, and communal security partners.

Silver (Tactical)

- Converts strategy into a Tactical Plan: route, timings, conditions, sterile-zone maps, evidence plan.
- Designs the intervention decision tree (see Section F) and allocates assets:
  - Public Order serials (PSUs) and Protester Removal Teams (PRTs)
  - Police Liaison Teams (PLTs)
  - Evidence Gatherers (EGs) with body-worn video (BWV) and audio capture
  - Perimeter/Bubble teams for sensitive sites
  - Prisoner handling, transport, and custody capacity
- Leads pre-event negotiation with organisers; serves conditions; records acknowledgements/refusals.
- Stands up a Real-Time Cell (legal adviser, CPS contact, social media monitor, evidence coordinator).

Bronze (Operational)

- Executes in three functional areas:
- Bronze Procession/Static (main crowd), Bronze Sensitive Sites (synagogues, Jewish schools, community centres), Bronze Transport/Hubs.
- Implements conditions and sterile zones, conducts direct interventions, makes arrests, and maintains decision logs.
- Ensures evidential discipline: time-codes, BWV references, seizure continuity, proportionality notes.

C. Pre-event timeline (illustrative)

- T-96h: Threat assessment; review of previous breaches; open-source/social media monitoring; draft sterile-zone options.
- T-72h: Gold Group meets; confirms red lines, arrest priorities, CPS rota; issues comms lines.
- T-48h: Silver serves conditions in principle (route, timings, amplification limits, sensitive-site buffers); agrees stewarding numbers.
- T-24h: Final Operational Order signed; sterile-zone triggers pre-authorised; PA warning scripts printed; BWV checks; prisoner handling plan rehearsed.
- T-6h: Brief all units; distribute Red Line Cards (trigger checklist), maps, call-signs; comms checks; assign Evidence Coordinator.
- T-0: Real-Time Cell live; PLTs in contact with organisers; EGs recording from first assembly.

D. On-the-day tools

1) Immediate conditions (dynamic and pre-served)

- Route: enforce agreed streets; auto-trigger re-routing if crowds approach sensitive sites.
- Timing: fixed start/finish windows; dispersal time announced an hour in advance.
- Amplification: prohibit powered amplification within defined distances of sensitive sites; cap number of sound systems; enforce "speech points" only at pre-cleared locations.
- Sensitive-site buffers: minimum 300 m around synagogues and Jewish schools during services, school opening/dismissal, and declared high-risk windows; adjust to crowd density and acoustics.
- Service of varied conditions: read via PA to the crowd; hand to organisers/stewards; display on A-boards; record service on BWV.

D. On-the-day tools (detailed)

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Sample condition wording

"To prevent intimidation and serious disruption, powered amplification is prohibited within 300 metres of [named site] between [times]. The procession must remain on the authorised route via [streets]. Breach may result in arrest."

2) Sterile zones (time-limited exclusion perimeters)

- When used: key holy days; funerals; immediately after serious incidents; credible intelligence of targeting.
- Design: signed perimeter with access for residents/worshippers; soft barriers with officers at gateways; vehicle mitigation where required.
- Duration: tightly bounded (e.g., 2 hours before to 1 hour after services); reviewed hourly by Silver.
- Communication: announced 24h in advance where possible; PLTs brief organisers and stewards; map published.

3) Direct intervention (WARN–SEIZE–ARREST ladder)

- **WARN:** PA warning identifying the unlawful conduct, time to comply (usually $\leqslant$60 seconds), and consequence.
- **SEIZE:** remove offending banner/PA unit; shut down power to amplification; record seizure on BWV; bag and exhibit.
- **ARREST:** target principal offenders—speakers on flatbeds, chant leaders with microphones, banner originators—before peripheral actors. Use snatch teams; extract to pre-positioned vans; minimise crowd friction.

Sample PA script

"Attention organisers and participants: the chant being used constitutes a criminal offence. Stop immediately. Powered amplification is now prohibited. Failure to comply will result in arrest and seizure."

4) Relocate or prohibit events (repeat non-compliance)

- Escalation criteria (illustrative): two or more substantiated breaches within 90 days; organiser refusal to comply with conditions; pattern of offences linked to the same assembly point.
- Actions: relocate start/end points away from sensitive sites; refuse authorisation for a procession on specified date/route; require static assembly with strict conditions.

5) Dispersal powers (targeted and documented)

- Apply where harassment, alarm, or distress is likely or occurring; specify zone, duration, and gateway (how to leave lawfully).
- Use for flash mobs forming near protected sites; for post-event tail drifting towards sensitive locations; or to split hostile counter-mobs.

D. On-the-day tools (detailed)

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E. Evidence plan and discipline

Roles and kit

- Evidence Coordinator (EC): allocates EGs, tracks exhibits, assures quality.
- Evidence Gatherers (EGs): BWV, high-gain mics, stills camera; one operator, one note-taker.
- Transcription team: pre-assigned to produce verbatim chant/speech transcripts within 24 hours.
- Seizure kits: evidence bags, labels, cable ties, tamper seals; marker boards for exhibit photos.

Capture standards

- Synchronised time across radios, BWV, and command logs.
- Clip protocol: start with "event/date/time/location/EG call-sign"; keep clips short and discrete; announce seizures/arrests on camera.
- Audio: position a mic at each PA/speech point; capture the first instance of a red-line breach and at least two repeats to show persistence.
- Still images: banner front/back, hands holding it, surrounding crowd, and location context (street sign, building).
- Seized items: photograph in situ, then bag; log exhibit ID, who seized, where, when, and to whom transferred.
- Chain of custody: every transfer signed; EC maintains master schedule.

Decision and proportionality logs

- For each intervention: record trigger observed, less intrusive options considered, chosen action, legal threshold, time, location, supervisors present.
- Attach BWV references and stills IDs; note any equality considerations (e.g., facilitating worshipper access).

F. Decision tree

1. Trigger observed (e.g., eliminationist chant near a synagogue).
2. Assess: Is intimidation or incitement threshold met? Can conditions mitigate?
3. Option A: Vary conditions (amplification off, route adjust). Warn via PA; PLTs inform organisers.
4. Non-compliance after warning: Seize PA/banner; Arrest principal offenders.
5. Crowd friction increases: Deploy PSU shields to create extraction lane; Mounted hold in reserve; keep sterile-zone gateways open.
6. Stabilise: Announce continuation of lawful protest; reiterate conditions; maintain evidence capture.
7. Repeat breach or organiser refusal: Relocate assembly; if necessary disperse with documented gateways.
8. Post-event: Secure exhibits; commence 72-hour CPS pipeline.

G. Sensitive-site protection package

- Perimeter team: dedicated Bronze with map of buffer; officers briefed on service times; liaison with site security/stewards.
- Access plan: signed pedestrian corridors for worshippers/parents; escorts on request; vehicle access control with Hostile Vehicle Mitigation where required.
- Acoustic management: amplification prohibition inside buffer; decibel checks optional but not essential—focus on effect (intimidation) rather than strict dB.
- Community comms: pre-event notice to sites; live updates if conditions change; post-event reassurance patrols.

H. Prisoner handling and 72-hour charging pipeline

- At-scene: primary offence articulated; BWV captures caution; search/seizure recorded; property bagged.
- Custody: fast-track queue; offence flagged "protest hate/terror-linked"; EC uploads priority BWV and stills with time-codes.
- Day 1 (≤24h): transcripts produced; schedule of exhibits completed; proportionality logs attached; victim/witness statements from site representatives (impact).
- Day 2 (≤48h): file quality-assured; CPS early advice sought where needed; further enquiries tasked.
- Day 3 (≤72h): charge decision aimed; conditional bail may include non-attendance near named sites and no amplification equipment conditions where proportionate.

I. Communications (before, during, after)

- Before: publish summary of conditions and sterile-zone windows; emphasise that protest is facilitated and red lines are content-neutral and law-based.
- During: live PA updates explaining why interventions occurred; social posts from force channels; PLTs keep organisers informed.
- After: same-day note on conditions imposed and arrests (numbers only); weekly outcomes (charges, disposals); invite feedback via Independent Advisory Group.

J. Training, drills, and readiness

- Scenario drills for WARN–SEIZE–ARREST, sterile-zone activation, and flash-mob dispersal.
- Red Line phrasebook: exemplar chants/placards that typically cross thresholds; laminated quick-reference for supervisors.
- EG masterclass: audio capture in noisy environments; time-coding discipline; exhibit continuity.
- PLT refreshers: negotiation scripts; organiser accountability; steward escalation pathways.
- After-action reviews within 7 days: lessons, threshold calibration, and updates to the Operational Order.

K. Metrics for command review (live and post-event)

- Time from trigger to warning; warning to intervention; intervention to stability.
- Number of conditions varied; sterile-zone activations; seizures; principal-offender arrests.
- Charge conversion within 72 hours; subsequent conviction rate.
- Incidents within buffers (trend downwards month-on-month).
- Community confidence scores and qualitative feedback from affected sites.

L. Annexes (operational templates)

1. Red Line Card (Supervisor): triggers, legal thresholds, discretion notes, PA script.
2. EG Capture Checklist: opening call-out, critical angles, audio priorities, stills list, exhibit labels.
3. Sterile-Zone Pack: map, gateways, signage text, resident access protocol.
4. Conditions Notice (route/timing/amplification/buffer).
5. Proportionality Log Sheet: necessity test, alternatives considered, equality impacts, authorising officer.

Bottom line: a disciplined, pre-planned model that moves from observe → warn → seize → arrest, underpinned by sterile-zones near sensitive sites and a 72-hour evidential pipeline, delivers timely, fair, and defensible outcomes—every weekend, in real time.

For further information, or to receive the full report, please contact:

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