



## MANAGING SAFETY IN BARS, CLUBS AND PUBS



## INTRODUCTION

**The on-trade licensed retailing industry is vibrant, dynamic and continually changing to meet the needs and aspirations of its customers. The broad range of outlets, ranging from small traditional pubs, to large pub restaurants, hotels and nightclubs, play a vital role in the hospitality and leisure sector of the UK economy. Most venues trade to different customer requirements and occasions at different times of the week and throughout the day.**

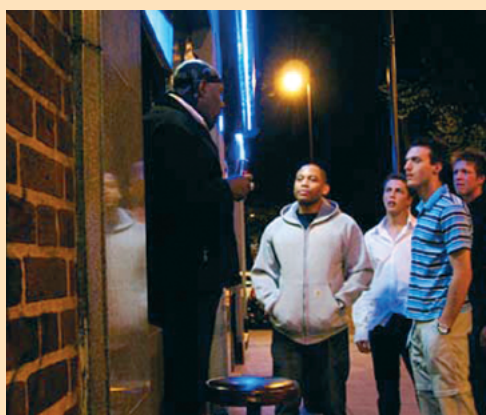
The industry operates in a highly regulated environment and through the licensing objectives must ensure the responsible operation of its premises at all times for customers, staff and the local community. A key priority of the industry is to ensure that both customers and staff feel secure, comfortable and relaxed in all licensed premises.

Unfortunately human nature dictates that there is a very small minority of people in some communities who have a propensity to resort to violence in certain situations or act in a way that elicits violence in others, which can occur in, or in the vicinity of, a licensed premise. Violence and aggression can occur for any number of reasons, e.g. an individual could be annoyed or upset by someone, be seeking revenge or even be acting in self-defence. Bar staff and door supervisors might also be targeted whilst enforcing policies on under-age sales, drunkenness, smoking, refusing entry and closing time. The form of violence that might take place could involve pushing and the use of fists or improvised weapons such as bottles, glasses, pool cues and furniture. In extreme cases customers may deliberately carry guns and knives with the deliberate intention to cause injury.

Regrettably incidences of violence do sometimes occur but most disturbances or incidents are diffused quickly and professionally by staff. In order to mitigate the menace of some individuals' behaviour towards staff or other customers, it is important that a full assessment of the risks from intentional violence is undertaken.

This guide seeks to set out the salient factors to be considered and to identify preventative measures that can be taken where appropriate. The risk assessment should be reviewed on a regular basis, particularly in the light of any incidents that do occur, and in any event to ensure that the assessment is kept up to date. The guide may also be used when preparing an operating schedule for a licence application or variation.

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## RISK FACTORS

The following may be significant factors in the occurrence of violent incidents in pubs and other late-night venues:



- Social tension and rivalry (sporting, territorial)
- Romantic rivalry (past and desired relationships)
- Frustration – waiting to get served
- Over-crowding and discomfort – pushing to the bar and lavatories
- Intolerance – bumping on dance floor/busy area, spilled drinks
- Influence of drugs taken before entry
- Smoking restrictions
- Queues at the door and refused entry (ID checks)
- Staff (lack of intervention or too aggressive)
- Refusal to serve those underage or drunk
- Removal of glasses with drinks remaining
- Failure to clear tables

## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Existing premises should review their operating schedule on a regular basis to ensure the licensing objectives continue to be met. A number of preventative measures can be taken to assist in keeping premises secure and safe:

### **Design and layout of premises:**

Premises should be designed and planned to provide an environment that minimises opportunities for violence and disorder.

*(See BBPA Guidance - Security by Design)*

### **Increase staff awareness and training so they can work towards reducing risks:**

Staff Training

*BIIAB Qualifications:*

- Drug Awareness
- Award in Responsible Alcohol Retailing
- Award in Conflict Management
- Physical Intervention: Reducing Risk

Mystery Shopper programmes

Electronic devices

- CCTV cameras in operation and recordings saved
- Radio links to Pubwatch members

Industry guidance and good practice

- BBPA Guidance on Drinks Promotions
- BBPA Drugs in Pubs
- BEDA – dispersal policy



## ASSESSING THE RISK

A key factor in assessing the level of risk is the profile of the business. Premises should continue to be assessed on a regular basis:

### LEVEL OF RISK

Location	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Town centre			
Urban community			
Rural community			
Destination			
Sports/concert arena near by			
Leisure complex			

Clientele	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Families			
Age profile 18-24			
Students			
Regulars/local			
Out of town visitors			
Predominantly female			
Predominantly male			
Mixed age and sex			

Offering	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Energy levels			
Music			
Dance venue			
Regulars/local			
TV sports/live matches			
Food – mix of trade			
Cocktails/wine			
Traditional ales			
Bottled beers and RTDs			
Theme bar with promotions			

Layout and design	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Proportion of seating			
Density – ratio of customers to space			
Gardens			
Patios/pavements			

Any previous violent incidents
Details of any incidents and subsequent action taken:

INHERENT RISK LEVEL:	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW

## SOLUTIONS

Indicate which of the following measures apply at the premises (✓)  
If they do not - indicate (\*) where these might further enhance safety.

	✓ / *		✓ / *
Door Supervisors		Table service	
CCTV		Frequent collection of glasses/bottles	
Fixtures & fittings secured		Bottle banks in consumption areas	
Internal patrols by door supervisors/staff		Toughened glass	
Member of local Pubwatch		Plastic glasses – all areas, some /all hours (delete as applicable)	
Best Bar None accreditation		Plastic glasses outdoor areas	
Member of Town/City Safe Scheme		Plastic glasses special events	
Business Improvement District		Plastic bottles	
Mandatory licensing conditions		Decant products in glass bottles	
Challenge 21 policy implemented		Refusal buttons	
Search on entry for drugs/other items		Food served until 11pm or beyond	
Sports/concert arena near by		Staffing levels sufficient	
Implement BBPA promotions code		Soft drinks promotions	
Frequent circulation by management		Dress code	
Staff trained in conflict management		Dispersal policy	
Experienced management		Cool down music policy	
Entry by ticket		Other:	
Toilet attendants/regular checks			
External smoking area			
Zero tolerance notices			
Point of sale material			
ID scanners			
Reduce opening hours (i.e. open later or close earlier)			

## SUMMARY

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION (see * above)	
Signed:	Date:
Date of next review:	

**Further information:**

**British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA)**

Market Towers  
1 Nine Elms Lane  
London SW8 5NQ  
[www.beerandpub.com](http://www.beerandpub.com)  
Tel: 020 7627 9191

**Bar Entertainment and Dance Association (BEDA)**

5 Waterloo Road  
Stockport  
Cheshire SK1 3BD  
[www.beda.org.uk](http://www.beda.org.uk)  
Tel: 0161 429 0012

**BII**

Wessex House  
80 Park Street  
Camberley  
Surrey GU15 3PT  
[www.bii.org](http://www.bii.org)  
Tel: 01276 23045

“Last Orders for Alcohol Related Violence:  
exploring salient factors in the occurrence of violent  
incidents in UK pubs and other late night venues”

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