

FOREWORD

I

On the evening of December 3, 1979 in front of Cincinnati Riverfront Coliseum and amid a compacted crowd of thousands of anxious rock concert fans, eleven people died and a nearly equivalent number were injured. Even though the exact details of that night are disputed, it is generally acknowledged that the crowd of youthful patrons attempting to enter a main entrance at the Coliseum was not riotous or violent.

The term stampede has been inaccurately associated with that tragedy. A more insightful description came from pedestrian planner John J. Fruin, Ph.D. who referred to the December 3 incident as a craze, "where no apparent danger is perceived (by members of a group) but (where) the group is given direction . . . by an induced sense of urgency." Regardless of how the tragedy is labelled, the senseless deaths and injuries are a painful lesson in the necessity for thoroughly planned and implemented safety procedures for events that attract large crowds.

As a result of the tragedy, City Council quickly passed emergency crowd safety ordinances and the City administration established rock concert guidelines. At the same time, City Manager Sylvester Murray was asked by Mayor J. Kenneth Blackwell on behalf of City Council to establish a task force, "to make recommendations to the City relating to public safety and crowd control at large public and private gatherings."

The charge required the Task Force to focus on the problem of managing crowds attending all types of events rather than just rock concerts. Many of

the examples used in this report refer to rock concerts. However, the crowd management principles and techniques mentioned in regard to rock concerts are in practically all cases relevant to other events.

During the six months of meetings held by the Task Force on Crowd Control and Safety, as it was named, its members interviewed over sixty people including local facility operators, law enforcement officials, rock concert fans, promoters and those directly and indirectly involved with the events of December 3. To gain a broader perspective on the management of major events and crowd dynamics, Task Force representatives visited seven multi-purpose facilities, solicited help from crowd and pedestrian planning experts, and traveled to locations in the east, west and midwest to confer with facility operators, promoters, performers, law enforcement officials and security personnel.

While the exact incident that occurred on December 3 may not happen again, the continued potential for similar crowd problems remains. Since the tragedy in Cincinnati, other serious problems resulting in injury and death have occurred elsewhere at a variety of events - sporting, entertainment, religious, etc. The contrast in occasions, crowds, and sites emphatically underscores the point that, regardless of the attraction, when large assemblages of people gather effective crowd management is essential for minimizing or preventing crowd disorders.

Some risk to public safety is inherent in any activity in any place. No one can anticipate all of the elements in an event that might lead to danger, but cooperative efforts among and between facility or site owners, event

promoters, agents, entertainers, ticket sellers, security, police, government, health and safety personnel, etc. can be made to identify and reduce that risk. The Task Force report recommends steps that should be taken in Cincinnati to help assure citizens' safety in places of assembly.

These recommendations, many of them new, others of which have been advocated previously by citizens and government officials, and still others which are proven crowd management techniques, represent the consensus of the members of the Task Force. The recommendations, along with the findings from which they are drawn, are presented and explained in the body of this report. Furthermore, the Task Force believes that a periodic review of the implemented crowd management standards be conducted by an ad hoc committee appointed by City Council. At that time proposals for modification of existing standards or advocacy of new techniques could be presented.

The Task Force expects that many of the issues that it addresses will hold national interest as well. Crowd management planning and standards, seating, police policies, emergency medical service, pedestrian processing and architectural design standards are among the subjects that the Task Force considers in this report. The recommendations, of which there are over one hundred, are directed to all parties who are responsible for and participate in events.

Neither this report nor its recommendations can change the events of December 3. They might, however, help to prevent us from reliving them.

II

The following is a chapter by chapter compilation of the recommendations of the Task Force.

Chapter I - Crowd Management

Effective crowd management requires a thorough understanding of crowd behavior and a coordinated effort to plan safe environments to accommodate all kinds of audiences at all kinds of events. Facility management, event promoters and participants, government and law enforcement personnel must work together to assure the safe, successful management of people. The Task Force recommends the following:

1. City Council should study and implement new and equitable methods of enforcing all laws governing events.
2. The sale of alcoholic beverages should be prohibited at events where unruly audiences are expected or where a high percentage of the audience is under the legal age for consuming alcohol.
3. The roles and responsibilities of parties involved in an event should be specified in writing and made known prior to an event.
4. Facility management must accept responsibility for the safety and enjoyment of the people who patronize its facility. Management should coordinate its efforts with police, fire and medical personnel.
5. Facility management should train its personnel in crowd management and provide manuals for staff and security.
6. Entertainers should cooperate with public safety laws.
7. The entertainment media should promote special features, programs, and public service announcements relating to crowd safety and individual and group responsibilities.
8. Ushers should remain at their posts until an event is completed.
9. Patrons should be encouraged to report situations that threaten their safety to the facility personnel, promoter, local government officials and/or media.

10. Public education in crowd dynamics should be afforded equal importance to other safety programs by government, educational and public service agencies.
11. Facilities should educate their public by publicizing and enforcing their house rules, local laws, and by setting a courteous, professional standard of conduct by their personnel.
12. The date that tickets to an event will go on sale should not be announced until the tickets are available for sale.
13. When the demand for tickets to an event is expected to exceed the capacity of ticket sales outlets to accommodate ticket buyers or to pose problems for ticket sales sites, a mail order system for ticket sales should be implemented.
14. When more than one entrance to a facility is to be used, tickets should specify the particular entrance the ticket holder should enter.
15. Tickets should be printed with a clear warning against contraband such as, "Alcohol, drugs, and weapons are not permitted on premises."
16. A facility should separate crowds by using multi-entrances, queueing, and by providing a proper ratio of doors and ticket takers to patrons.
17. Facility security personnel should screen patrons for contraband, not City police officers.
18. The City should require facility managers and/or event promoters sponsoring events that are expected to attract more than 2,000 people to file crowd management plans. Copies of such plans filed with the City should be available to the public so citizens can know the levels of crowd management to expect.

Chapter II - Seating

The arrangement of seating at an event determines safe movement and orderly placement of patrons at an event. Festival, reserved, and general admission seating have appropriate and safe uses. The Task Force recommends the following:

1. Festival seating should be banned in all enclosed and restricted facilities at events accommodating more than 2,000 people.
2. Festival seating should be allowed to continue in unconfined, outdoor areas.

3. General admission seating should be permitted for events that are expected to attract a disciplined and orderly audience.
4. Reserved seating should be the only seating allowed for those events that attract excitable and competitive crowds.
5. Special accommodations should be provided by facilities for handicapped patrons.
6. The legal capacity level of each facility should be prominently displayed for public viewing and enforced by the City in all facilities.

Chapter III - City Policy on Police Services

Use of City police officers at public events is an important element in assuring public safety. The conditions and costs of police protection are important policy issues that City Council must decide. The Task Force recommends the following:

1. The City should not charge facility management or event sponsors for police personnel assigned to public property.
2. City Council must determine as a matter of policy the Cincinnati Police Division's role at major events.
3. City Council should allocate funds for the Safety Department to establish a training program in crowd management for its police officers and/or a special crowd management detail or enable them to attend training programs.
4. City Council should adopt an ordinance prohibiting contraband at events and require that a contraband warning be posted at entrances to events and that reference to contraband be printed on tickets.
5. City Council should study options for reducing the use of uniformed police officers at public events by supplementing them with other types of personnel that could reduce costs.
6. City Council should research alternative funding sources to finance police crowd management personnel.

Chapter IV - Architectural Planning and Design

The architectural design of a facility, its exit and entrance doorways, turnstiles and other elements associated with pedestrian circulation greatly

affect crowd safety. Their relationship to each other and their capacity determines the number of people that can be accommodated and the rate at which they can be processed through an entrance or exit. The Task Force learned that some standards for design are outdated while others are non-existent where high density crowd ingress is concerned. The Task Force recommends the following:

1. The National Bureau of Standards should review existing regulations concerning pedestrian and crowd processing in, through and out of buildings, and embark on new studies directed at establishing new regulations where appropriate.
2. The National Bureau of Standards should initiate new research into the changing pedestrian flow patterns with emphasis on, but not limited to, high density rates, ingress flows, ticket processing, entrance configurations, the influence of environmental variables and crowd dynamics in high density situations.

Chapter V - Emergency Medical and Ambulance Services

Emergency medical and ambulance services should be available at all major events so that timely, effective treatment is available to those who need it. To assure such service, the Task Force recommends the following:

1. A medical emergency service section should be included in a crowd management plan.
2. City Council should require places of public assembly to maintain first aid rooms and should set minimum standards for first aid rooms and on-duty medical personnel.
3. City Council should adopt an ordinance that sets standards for ambulance personnel and equipment.
4. Direct radio and/or telephone communications should be established between first aid rooms and local hospitals, law enforcement agencies, and interior and exterior security.
5. Facilities should install telephones for patron use that will enable direct contact with medical staff in an emergency situation.
6. The location of first aid rooms should be publicized so they are known to patrons.
7. When ambulances are on standby at a major event, their personnel should be qualified to perform emergency medical care.

8. Training should be provided for all interior security personnel in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and in transportation of disabled patrons.

Chapter VI - Successful Crowd Management Techniques

The Task Force studied crowd management techniques used by facilities in other cities and found many that could be used locally to assure successful planning and management of events. The recommended techniques are listed in this Chapter. A selection of these techniques are highlighted here to illustrate some of the steps that should be incorporated in local crowd management. The Task Force recommends the following:

1. Local facilities should study the crowd management techniques and plans of other facilities to help them in formulating a comprehensive crowd management plan.
2. The crowd management techniques in this section when applicable should be employed by facility management for the safety of their patrons.
 - a. The facility management works cooperatively with Fire Division personnel on the inside and with law enforcement officers on the outside to help develop appropriate safety plans.
 - b. A formal chain of command for both exterior and interior crowd management personnel is developed and shared with concerned parties.
 - c. Adequate communication is maintained between interior and exterior security.
 - d. Special notices and prohibitions for an event are publicized in advance.
 - e. Crowd management plans and techniques are periodically reviewed for effectiveness.
 - f. The facility management assumes responsibility for interior patron behavior.
 - g. The facility is well maintained and clean at all times, including the time when an event is in progress.
 - h. Facility staff members are trained in crowd management.

- i. Facility lights are not turned off completely during a performance if there is no secondary lighting for aisleways and corridors.
- j. Facility security is familiar with emergency plans and building layout.
- k. The door opening time is advertised but if circumstances require doors can be opened earlier.
- l. A crowd of ticket holders is queued and its entry into the facility may be controlled by metering.
- m. Whenever possible, more than one entrance is used by a facility.
- n. The local government assumes responsibility for exterior crowd management on public property.
- o. The size of a police detail for an event reflects the anticipated crowd size and behavior.
- p. A facility's public address system has adequate volume and clarity for outside and inside use.
- q. The exterior security commander, the inside manager, security chief and the medical care unit can communicate directly with each other.
- r. Crowds outside a facility or event site are afforded the necessary accommodations while waiting (water fountains, portable toilets, waste baskets, musical broadcasts, etc.).
- s. Facility security has appropriate crowd management training and is familiar with the facility and emergency procedures.
- t. Under normal conditions a facility employs one ticket taker per 1,000 patrons.
- u. Event tickets indicate which entrance the patron is to use.

Chapter VII - National Crowd Management Standards

Cincinnati's crowd management problems are similar in many ways to those of other cities. Technology, training policies, and techniques used in crowd management and facility operations should be studied and shared. The Task Force recommends the following:

1. The International Association of Auditorium Managers should develop national crowd management standards for facility operators and event promoters.
2. The International Association of Auditorium Managers should develop incentives or sanctions to encourage its members to meet these standards.

Chapter VIII - Existing and Proposed Laws and Guidelines

In the aftermath of the December 3 tragedy City Council, the Safety Department, and the Ohio legislature adopted or proposed requirements for crowd management. The Task Force recommends the following:

Ordinance No. 582-1979

1. City Council should expand the list of exemptions for general admission seating and should establish written criteria for exemptions.

Ordinance No. 583-1979

2. The responsibility of the facility or event promoter to cooperate with City personnel in protecting the safety of patrons, whether on private property or on surrounding public grounds should be specified.
3. In an emergency situation, City police should, whenever possible, consult with the facility manager or event sponsor etc. before acting.
4. The requirement necessitating two hour advanced preparedness for door openings prior to the publicized door opening should be deleted.

Ordinance No. 388-1976

5. City Council should amend the Amusement Tax ordinance to allow the City Manager access to admission tax data to permit verification of a facility's compliance to occupancy capacity standards.

Safety Department Rock Concert Guidelines

6. City Council should enact a law requiring a facility management to open their doors ninety minutes prior to showtime.
7. The number of police personnel assigned to an event should be determined by the Police Division and based on the individual requirements of each event.

8. The City should not charge facility management or event sponsors for police personnel assigned to public property.
9. The City should provide equitable and consistent enforcement of safety codes at all facilities and events.
10. When police and/or fire personnel are assigned by the City to a facility, that facility should not be required to pay for their services unless they required said services.
11. Tickets for seats with obstructed views should be sold if tickets for such seats are clearly marked to identify that fact.

Major Events and Special Events Policy Proposals

12. City Council should adopt a policy for special events.
13. City Council should consider a licensing or permit requirement for events.
14. City Council should establish by law the appropriate ratio of door entrances to anticipated crowd attendance.

Ohio Revised Code Section 2917.40

15. The State legislature should establish by law the appropriate ratio of door entrances to anticipated crowd attendance.
16. Public service such as police should be provided without charge for the safety of the citizenry on public property regardless of the attraction.
17. There should be expanded written criteria for general admission seating applications.