OPCC
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) response to inspections of Gloucestershire Constabulary published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) requires local policing bodies to respond to recommendations in inspectors reports within 56 days

Title of inspection:	An inspection of the police's role in safety advisory groups: planning for major public events			
Link to inspection report:	https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/publications/inspection-of-police-role-in-safety-advisory-groups-for-public-events/			
Date of publication:	04/09/26			
Type of inspection:	Gloucestershire Specific		Regional	
	Follow up		National	✓
	Partner inspection		Thematic	✓
	Spotlight report		Joint inspection	
Is Gloucestershire quoted in the report?	Yes		No	✓

Summary of report

This national thematic inspection examined how police forces assess and manage risks associated with major public events and how they work with safety advisory groups (SAGs). It was commissioned by the Home Secretary following controversy surrounding the Aston Villa v Maccabi Tel Aviv fixture in 2025. HMICFRS reviewed 28 major events, surveyed all 43 police forces and made 37 recommendations.

HMICFRS found that the framework for managing safety at major public events is fragmented, inconsistent and increasingly inadequate. While safety arrangements at football stadiums benefit from legislation, regulation and oversight, most other major public events rely on voluntary arrangements, non-statutory guidance and inconsistent local practices. HMICFRS warned that without reform it is a question of "when, not if" a major public safety failure occurs.

Key findings:

Key finding	HMICFRS found
1. Safety Advisory Groups have no statutory basis	• SAGs are voluntary and have no legal status. • Different local authorities operate them in different ways. • Some local authorities do not operate SAGs at all. • There is no consistent approach to which events should be reviewed. • Many SAGs have moved beyond an advisory role and are effectively making decisions.
2. Public event safety arrangements are inconsistent across England and Wales	Substantial variation in: • Governance arrangements. • Membership and chairing of SAGs. • Risk assessment practices. • Escalation procedures. • Communications protocols. • Oversight and auditing.
3. Chairs are often not independent	Many SAG chairs were employed by local authorities that: • issue licences; • own land used for events; or • benefit financially from events. HMICFRS considered this creates real and perceived conflicts of interest which can undermine public confidence.
4. Police training is inadequate	• Many officers attending SAGs had received no specific SAG training. • Working with SAGs is not covered sufficiently in command training. • There is no mandatory training requirement for SAG participants. • Many events are planned by officers with limited understanding of SAG responsibilities.
5. Police frequently assume greater responsibility than intended	• Police often chair planning meetings. • police-led planning groups sometimes replace independent SAGs. • Forces increasingly carry risk that should sit elsewhere in the system.

Key finding	HMICFRS found
	• Confusion exists about responsibility for public safety.
6. Intelligence and risk assessment arrangements need strengthening	• Inconsistent use of intelligence processes. • Poor quality assurance in some cases. • Inappropriate use of AI-generated material. • Limited attendance by intelligence professionals at SAGs. • An absence of a national public events risk matrix.
7. Community, business and equality impacts are poorly considered	• Inconsistent use of community impact assessments. • Almost no use of business impact assessments. • No use of people impact assessments. • Limited consideration of wider social and community effects when making decisions.
8. Critical incidents are under-used	• Forces often avoid declaring critical incidents even when criteria are met. • Commanders frequently misunderstand critical incident processes. • PCCs are not routinely informed. • Opportunities for learning and escalation are missed.
9. Funding arrangements are unclear and inconsistent	• Confusion around Special Police Services (SPS). • Concerns about informal payments from event organisers. • inconsistency in funding support. • Difficulties recovering costs associated with public safety operations.
10. The governance framework outside football is inadequate	HMICFRS considered that football benefits from: • legislation, • safety certification, • the Sports Grounds Safety Authority, and • clear governance. Comparable arrangements do not exist for most other major public events

Recommendations

The report **contains 37 recommendations in total**. They are directed at a range of organisations, including:

Organisation	Approximate number of recommendations
Chief Constables / Police Forces	11
College of Policing	11
UK Resilience Academy	5
National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) / National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC) / UK Football Policing Unit	5
Home Office / Government	3
Health & Safety Executive	1
Cross-government bodies	1

The recommendations most relevant to Gloucestershire Constabulary are:

- R. 8 - SAG training for police attendees
- R. 9 - Use of crowd and event safety template
- R. 12 - Review demands on gold commanders
- R. 14 - Event command handover arrangements
- R. 19 - Intelligence products and quality assurance
- R. 20 - Intelligence representation at SAGs
- R. 22 - Community, business and people impact assessments
- R. 24 - Silver commander attendance at SAGs
- R. 27 - Charging and payment arrangements
- R. 31 - Use of national events portal
- R. 33 - Adoption of national event risk matrix

Recommendation 26 is also relevant to the PCC's oversight role, given its focus on critical incident declarations and communication with PCCs.

PCC response

I welcome this inspection by HMICFRS and the focus it places on ensuring that major public events are planned and delivered safely through effective partnership working.

Gloucestershire hosts a number of significant events that attract large numbers of visitors and require close collaboration between the police, local authorities, event organisers and other partner agencies. Effective Safety Advisory Groups have an important role in supporting public safety, facilitating information sharing and ensuring that risks are appropriately identified and managed.

I have reviewed Gloucestershire Constabulary's assessment of the recommendations arising from this inspection and am satisfied that the Constabulary has carefully considered those recommendations that apply locally. I note that many of the recommendations are dependent on the development of national guidance, products and training by the College of Policing and other national bodies. Where recommendations apply directly to the Constabulary, I am assured that appropriate plans are in place to address them within the timescales set by HMICFRS.

The inspection highlights the need for greater consistency nationally in relation to the police contribution to Safety Advisory Groups, including training, governance arrangements, intelligence processes and command structures. I welcome the Constabulary's commitment to strengthening these areas and adopting national products and guidance as they become available.

As Police and Crime Commissioner, I expect Gloucestershire Constabulary to work effectively with local authorities, emergency services and event organisers to support the safe delivery of public events across the county. I also expect the Constabulary to ensure that learning from this inspection is fully embedded within operational planning and partnership arrangements.

I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for the implementation of the recommendations relevant to Gloucestershire through my established governance and scrutiny arrangements. Progress will be monitored regularly until all required actions have been completed.

Having reviewed the Constabulary's response, I am satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place to address the findings of this inspection and to ensure that Gloucestershire remains well placed to support the safe planning and delivery of major public events.



Chris Nelson
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire

The policing response to the inspection of the police's role in safety advisory groups: planning for major public events 4th August 2026

Recommendation No 8 (RC- 24713)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should provide specific safety advisory group training for police safety advisory group attendees who aren't public order public safety trained.

Within our Operational Planning Team 2 Operational Planners are SAG trained and any new member will be trained. All other officers in Operational Planning are POPS trained.

Scoping is ongoing to ensure NPT Inspectors and nominated deputy NPT Sgts are trained by 31st August 2027 as they attend SAGs but this is co dependant on recommendation 7 from the College of Policing.

Recommendation No 9 (RC- 24717)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

With immediate effect, all chief constables should satisfy themselves that their officers always use the crowd and event safety template when they engage with event organisers.

The event safety template (below) has been obtained and adopted within Ops Planning and is used on all occasions.

SAG chair(s) has been advised that this is the form we will share with them for future events.

Microsoft Word - Crowd and Event Safety Template QA.doc

Event organisers reporting into the organisation can do so via the Constabulary website by completing an online form (example below). Ops Planning will extract the relevant information from this form to complete the Crowd and Event Safety Template.

Static event notification.pdf

We are committed to being an anti-discriminatory organisation. This means not only acting in a non-discriminatory way, but addressing systemic inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination.
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Recommendation No 12 (RC-24721)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should satisfy themselves that the demands on gold commanders are manageable and support public safety, especially where public safety events and other responsibilities happen concurrently.

Gold Commanders are allocated for POPS events where there is a requirement. The capacity of a commander is taken into consideration, as is the operational competence of the commander.

We are currently increasing our Gold Commanders and by March 2027 there will be 4 within force with varying levels of operational experience.

Where responsibilities happen concurrently this is reviewed and addressed as required dependant on the nature, size and scale of the event. Mutual Aid is also a consideration as a contingency. Examples of this happening include the Cheltenham Festival (March 2026) for which an ACC from an external force was utilised from mutual aid and Operation Crex (Fairford protest and other activity) which had a dedicated gold commander, separate from duty gold.

Guidance will be followed with regard to recommendation 11 once issued.

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Recommendation No 14 (RC-24719)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 August 2027, all forces should have a documented handover protocol between the police and event organisers for command responsibility for all public events. This should state that forces may need to take command, to meet the core responsibilities of the police under common law (long-standing custom, based on previous legal cases).

Currently Gloucestershire Constabulary does not issue a police handover of command for all events.

This is available for events that have a GSB POPS structure and is also incorporated in pre-formed statement of intent (e.g. Gloucester Rugby, March Races and RIAT).

This will need to be agreed and standardised with introduction and distribution via SAGs and event organisers.

There are a high proportion of events within the county that do not require a police presence.

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Recommendation No 19 (RC-24712)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should take steps to make all intelligence products and risk assessments for public events, including football fixtures, comply with the refreshed College of Policing guidance for intelligence management. They should have robust quality assurance checks for processes using artificial intelligence technology.

All intelligence documents for events are reviewed by FIB sergeants within the constabulary. Where an event has a POPS structure a DI from FIB will ordinarily review the intelligence document (e.g. RIAT and March Races).

The revised College of Policing guidance doesn't impact the documents as we follow the guidance as required. The new changes document general intelligence management.

FIB does not use AI for any intelligence included in our products. FIB makes efforts to confirm and parallel any information in the documents that comes from sources not attributed to AI; however, this is increasingly difficult when reviewing social media posts. Where AI is suspected FIB add this to our over assessment brief when presenting the documents.

This is co dependant on recommendation 18 from the College of Policing.

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Recommendation No 20 (RC-24728)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should make sure a force intelligence representative attends safety advisory groups for those public events where a formal intelligence command structure is in place and shares any risk assessment in line with information sharing protocols.

Currently FIB do not attend SAG meeting but do attend planning meetings for protests and larger events.

Measures will be put in place by 31st March 2027 for FIB to attend the SAG when a formal intelligence structure is in place.

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Recommendation No 22 (RC-24709)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should make sure their forces complete community impact assessments, business impact assessments and people impact assessments for events on a proportionate basis, in line with College of Policing guidance.

CIAs are completed and stored on NICHE these are created proportionality balanced against threat, harm, risk and commissioned by the Silver Commander in large scale events.

PIAs and BIAs are internally focused; however, clearly as part of any CIA people and businesses are considered.

This is co dependant on recommendation 21 from the College of Policing.

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Recommendation No 24 (RC-24704)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should make sure the silver public order public safety commander (or their nominated deputy) attends all safety advisory groups that consider the events they command.

This isn't currently standardised within Gloucestershire Constabulary. Each silver commander assesses the need for attendance at the SAG.

This will be implemented by March 31st 2027 and shared with all Silver Commanders as to this new requirement.

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Recommendation No 27 (RC-24708)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

With immediate effect, all police forces should decline any payment from private individuals or companies for the provision of police services at public events unless it complies with section 25 of the Police Act 1996.

The Constabulary does not receive payment from private individuals or companies for the provision of police services at public events other than in accordance with Section 25 PACE.

All SPS provisions are costed in line with the chargeable rates which are updated annually in consultation with Finance. SPS for each event is tracked by Operational Planning staff and signed off via the event gold commander.

The Constabulary has no corporate knowledge of instances whereby it may have been offered and refused payments outside of Section 25 PACE.

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Recommendation No 31 (RC-24693)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 August 2027, all chief constables should have the events portal available on their force website. They should submit relevant information and intelligence, collected via the portal, to the National Police Coordination Centre strategic intelligence and briefing team.

Gloucestershire Constabulary has a template the external facing website

How to tell us about an event, procession or protest | Gloucestershire Constabulary

There is no collection of data via this portal; however, Gloucestershire Constabulary report into NPoCC weekly via the weekly protest returns.

This is co dependant on recommendation 30 from the College of Policing.

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Recommendation No 33 (RC- 24715)

The constabulary provides the below response in relation to the recommendation:

By 31 March 2027, all chief constables should make sure their force uses the new National Police Coordination Centre events risk matrix in operational planning for all public events.

This is not currently available and is being developed by NPoCC.

We have a current internal event risk matrix that we use for all events, and this will be amended once the new matrix is available.

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