

Near enough is not good enough: An initial report on the protection of crowded places in Western Australia.

Marcus Canning. CEO FRINGE WORLD Festival.

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- *The dispersion of cameras in relation to identified or potential risks.*

The pop-up Festival sites that FRINGE WORLD Festival will directly manage, produce and have responsibility for during the 2019 Festival season in January and February include The Pleasure Garden in Russell Square, Ice Cream Factory, Yagan Square and Perth Cultural Centre. Apart from Yagan Square, which is a new hub site for Fringe this year, these are sites that FRINGE WORLD has used in the past. Although they fall under the jurisdiction and management of a range of different authorities and private interests including the Department of Local Government, Sport and Creative Industries and Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, they are all in the Northbridge entertainment precinct and consequently are all under the approvals compliance of the City of Perth. The City of Perth is also the key body that oversees the CCTV cameras in use throughout the precinct.

Over the eight years FRINGE WORLD has occurred throughout the precinct, the number and placement of CCTV cameras has mostly been adequate to cover all and any incidents as they have occurred. The only 'black-spots' or 'holes' in coverage worth mentioning

When an incident involving individuals has occurred, the operators in the City of Perth control centre have been able to track the individuals concerned and coordinate Police where appropriate, but individuals have been 'lost' from coverage when they have passed through these 'black-spots'.

- *How an overarching, state-wide CCTV strategy could be better coordinated to improve coverage and mitigate risk.*

For the purposes of risk mitigation in the context of the multiple FRINGE WORLD Festival sites throughout the Northbridge precinct and Perth CBD, it is our perspective that coordination of coverage and realtime responsiveness is excellent and the City of Perth CCTV control team could potentially have their effectiveness compromised by involvement in a new overarching, state-wide CCTV strategy. They do an excellent job across an area that is relatively high risk right across the year and their work could and should be looked to as a possible best-practice model for other precincts through-out metropolitan Perth and through-out the state.

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Feedback as to which agency is best placed to act as a coordinating body to assist event managers navigating the various compliance and approval processes.

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Comment as to whether numbers-based definitions of a crowded place are useful in identifying risk in what is a dynamic and rapidly evolving space and in the context of broader definition contained in the Strategy.

Because FRINGE WORLD Festival occurs in multiple pockets of activity spread right across Perth, it might not be framed as an event that conforms to some definitions of high-risk crowded place. Although attendances across the Festival are close to one million over the month, the largest capacity foot print of any FRINGE WORLD Festival site at any given time is 5,000, with this crowd then broken up into smaller numbers inside pop-up venues seeing different shows as well as those enjoying the general Festival atmosphere and free entertainment.

Numbers will always need to feature in definitions of crowded place in some way, shape or form although it appears from reading the report that the definitions differ wildly, and that this leads to inconsistency of understanding and approach across not only people responsible for crowded public spaces, but also the agencies who are responsible for ensuring safety within those spaces. A more consistent definition, or set of definitions would be useful.

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Comment as to whether WA Police is applying adequate resources to carry out the engagement required under the Strategy and how this could be independently assessed in a security context.

FRINGE WORLD Festival has had a very positive working relationship with WA Police over the course of the last eight years of FRINGE WORLD production but it must be noted that it was only in reading this draft report that we became aware of WA Police running quarterly Crowded Places Forums. We have never been informed about or invited to one. Nor have we had any knowledge about the Interagency Events Approval Committee until reading this report.

FRINGE WORLD's Police contacts and engagement have been very precinct driven. We have a direct working relationship with the Officer in Charge of the Perth Police Station and they are the key Police representative involved in the pre-planning, management of foot patrols and response to incidents during the Festival and post-event debriefing. This has proved very effective to date, although it should be noted that specific focus on the threat of terrorism has not been part of the scope of planning between FRINGE WORLD and Police representatives.

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Comment on how protective security measures funding could be best sourced, managed and distributed.

The management of a funding program for additional protective security measures in the event industry in WA should be close to the coal face and as such is probably best handled by the local government authority responsible for event approvals. In the case of the City of Perth, this would be relatively easy to trial as there are existing processes in place that could be used and strong capacity and expertise in this area. After reading the report however, it would appear other local government authorities are not in a similar position. Perhaps given the large numbers of events that occur in the City of Perth, it would be appropriate to trial a program within this jurisdiction and then apply the model elsewhere if successful.

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Information about any additional legislative requirements for risk assessment and risk management processes or protective security measures.

Legislation aside, in a working practical sense, it would be advantageous for event organisers to have access to and be using more consistent risk assessment and management processes and procedures that include guidelines as to appropriate security measures for the sites being used. Often across multiple agencies including DLGSCI, MRA and City of Perth, there is a lack existing materials being made available that relate to risk and security issues associated with specific sites as well as a lack of materials across different agencies about what constitutes appropriate levels of security preparedness within these sites.

For whatever reason, whether it be liability avoidance, or simply the slow moving nature of bureaucracy at all levels, it is often by default the absolute responsibility of event organisers to create their own plans related to public sites under the jurisdiction of government agencies each and every time. This is not a large burden for a well-established and large event company such as Fringe World Festival, but for smaller companies and those starting out in the industry it can be overwhelming and can lead to compromised results.

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Comment on whether event organisers should be required to consider terrorism risk as part of the event approvals process and whether the Health (Public Buildings) Regulations 1992 would require amendment for this to occur.

Terrorism risk should be a consideration in event approvals and some amendments to the regulations may need to be ultimately implemented to ensure this occurs.

Comment on whether, given the rapidly changing security environment, terrorism mitigations are best enforced through the existing event approvals process or whether a new regime is required.

The existing event approvals process is the logical means by which terrorism mitigations are best enforced. A new regime would be burdensome, potentially cumbersome and would compromise rather than align with and strengthen existing processes.