

Calais: the police harassment of volunteers



Study of 1st November 2017 to 1st July 2018



CONTENTS PAGE

Introduction.....

I. Constant pressure.....

(A) Surveillance of volunteers.....

(i) Observation.....

(ii) Photographing and filming of volunteers

(iii) Tailing.....

(B) Systematic use of identity checks.....

(C) Body searches and pat-downs.....

II. The Obstructions Faced By Associations.....

(A) Abusive use of ticketing/fines.....

(B) Banning of distributions.....

(C) Prosecution of volunteers.....

(D) Intimidation of associations.....

III. Daily police violence.....

(A) Physical violence.....

(B) Verbal violence.....

(i) Abuse of power.....

(ii) Threats.....

(iii) Insults.....

Conclusion: between '*laissez-faire*' and the impunity of the law enforcement

Introduction

More than a year and a half after the clearance and destruction of the Calais Jungle in October 2016, hundreds of displaced people, including unaccompanied minors, are still living on the streets of Calais. Neither EU nor French authorities are willing to take responsibility or to guarantee the dignity and fundamental rights of displaced people. Recently, the lack of access to water and sanitation services has prompted Léo Heller, UN special rapporteur, to describe conditions for migrants and asylum seekers in Northern France as "inhumane."

France is bound to two key declarations of human rights. The 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789' set out "the natural, inalienable and sacred rights of man", and in modern times the European Convention on Human Rights restated its' member states "profound commitment to these fundamental freedoms that constitute the very foundations of justice and peace in the world." There is little evidence of these commitments on the ground in Calais. Every day France ignores its obligations to international human rights laws which promise access to housing, education, health care, sanitation, justice and effective aid.

The lives of displaced people are interrupted regularly by police violence, destruction and frequent evictions. The large number of police deployed in Northern France demonstrates that the French authorities treat immigration as a security threat, much to the detriment of fundamental human rights. In January 2018, the British government gave France £44.5 million for additional security measures to prevent the reconstruction of refugee camps in Calais. The funding provided by the United Kingdom for security and police in Calais since 2015 comes under the French-British Touquet Agreement, and amounts to 150 million GBP. Felipe González, UN special rapporteur on migrants rights, has described the eviction and dismantlement of settlements as "regressive migration

policies” that perpetuate “substandard” living conditions rather than offering any long-term solution.

In response, volunteers and activists have been providing humanitarian aid that aims to provide for their essential needs in accordance with their basic human rights. Eight organizations work together in the Calais warehouse to provide people with food, water, clothing, sleeping bags, tents, Wi-Fi and legal assistance, as well as access to medical care and child protection services. The people who volunteer with these organisations face obstruction on a daily basis, including active intimidation by police forces. Ostensibly, the French authorities are not satisfied with simply ignoring their obligation to observe human rights, but also feel obliged to actively restrict volunteers efforts to do so.

From 1st November 2017 to 1st July 2018, 646 incidents related to the intimidation of volunteers by the French police were identified and reported. This intimidation ranges from systematic identity checks to parking fines, threats, insults and physical violence. The following report outlines the intimidation and daily harassment experienced by volunteers in the field in Calais.

Methodology and data collection

The data used in this report come from testimonies of volunteers who have experienced police intimidation. These testimonies have been collected as part of the Human Rights Observers (HRO) project, a collaboration between the organisations working in the Calais warehouse which began in November 2017, with the aim of monitoring and documenting the human rights violations of displaced people and aid workers in Calais.

Interactions between volunteers and police officers in Calais and Dunkirk have been divided into the following categories:

- surveillance, which includes all incidents concerning images of volunteers (photos, videos), police following volunteers or police observing volunteers during their work
- ID checks and traffic controls
- searches, which include pat-down safety searches, vehicle searches, body searches and searches of personal belongings

- obstruction of voluntary activities through fines, immobilisation of vehicles, summoning volunteers to the police station, confiscation of personal belongings and bans on distributing
- verbal abuse including threats, insults, and emphasising their position of power
- physical violence

In some cases, these intimidations are the subject of official complaints, reports to the General Inspectorate of the Police Nationale (IGPN) or referrals to the Human Rights Defenders. On 3rd August 2018, a general referral to the Human Rights Defenders was made by the organisations concerning police intimidation and police harassment of volunteers from Calais and Dunkirk. As part of this referral, the report was sent to the Defender of Rights along with 50 testimonies about numerous incidents involving volunteers.

I) Constant pressure

According to the Code of Ethics of the National Gendarmerie and the Police Nationale, police officers in France are obliged to "[refrain] from any act, intention or behaviour likely to harm the consideration shown to the Police Nationale and to the national gendarmerie" and must "be careful not to bring, by the nature of their relations, any attack on their credit or reputation." They must also do their utmost to "perform their duties in an irreproachable manner". Police practices in Calais do not meet these standards.

Volunteers working in Calais with organisations helping displaced people are monitored and filmed on a daily basis. Most are subject to identity checks several times a week and are, on occasion, even patted down and their belongings and vehicles are searched. Although these measures can be carried out legally on a case by case basis, they constitute a form of police harassment and reflect a desire to intimidate volunteers working in Northern France when enforced systematically.

A) Surveillance of volunteers

Volunteers are constantly monitored by the police in Calais. Our data collected between 1st November 2017 and 1st July 2018 count 214 cases of surveillance of volunteers by police forces in Calais and Dunkirk. Among these 214 identified cases of surveillance, 136 report police officers observing volunteers, 57 report police officers taking video or photographic recordings of volunteers, and 21 report police officers following volunteers.

i) Observation

It is very common for one or more CRS vans or a Police Nationale vehicle to park close to distribution sites or slowly drive past these distributions. During these different methods of observation, the police often question volunteers about their activities. Youssoup Pachaev, a volunteer with the organisation Utopia 56, said that, during food distributions at the end of April, several police vehicles observed volunteers and asked them questions:

The first CRS car watched us while we were giving out food at one of our usual distribution sites. After watching us, the police asked us which organisation we were with and asked about distribution schedules. Later on, at another distribution point, another CRS car parked nearby and watched us for an hour. The same evening, at our third point, other officers monitored us and came to ask us which organisation we were with and how many meals we were distributing.

Anaïs Vialan reports that CRS officers were working out a schedule of voluntary activities when they interrogated her during a distribution:

I saw a CRS van park in front of the distribution point. They asked us which organisation we belonged to and asked us about the distribution schedules. They compared them with times written on a paper, saying they did not have the right hours.

At other times, this surveillance takes place on a much greater scale, mobilising a large number of police officers at the sites. Eléonore Vigny, intern at l'Auberge des Migrants, reports that, at the end of January after a confiscation of tents that had taken place earlier in the morning, the police remained on the site and observed the volunteers and beneficiaries for more than an hour:

Nearly twenty police officers were on top of a hill, equipped with shields and helmets, and watched us while we were installing our generator to allow our beneficiaries to charge their mobile phones. The beneficiaries were very scared and many came to ask me what was happening and if the police would come over. It lasted more than an hour.

This constant surveillance of volunteers has a direct impact on their ability to provide humanitarian aid to displaced people in Calais. Many beneficiaries prefer not go to food or clothing distributions if there is a strong police presence, thus depriving them of access to basic services such as food.

ii) Photographing and filming of volunteers

The police photograph and video volunteers daily in Calais. Between 1st November 2017 and 1st July 2018, there have been 57 situations in which police officers took photographs or videos of volunteers.



Police officers use their mobile phones and personal cameras to obtain these images while they are in possession of a professional recording device (cameras or go-pros). When asked why they choose to do this, the police systematically refuse to respond. Questions about what they want to use these images for are almost never answered, so that volunteers

have no idea what will become of these recordings. However, the fact that they are carried out with their personal phones allows police officers to access them outside the scope of their duties and therefore raises the issue of the misuse of the police uniform for personal information purposes. However, when questioned on one particular occasion, a Police Nationale official told a volunteer: “No, for me it does not pose any particular problem” that the police use their mobile phones to film volunteers and he added that they were doing this “for the same reason as you. You film, they film you.”

Most of the time, these recordings of volunteers are taken in response to volunteers documenting police activities. Many volunteers report that the police began to film them after they filmed the police, and that the officers expressed their dissatisfaction with the documentation of their operations. A volunteer from l’Auberge des Migrants reports that they were filmed by the police because they were recording identity checks of other volunteers:

We arrived at a distribution point and three CRS vans were present, controlling the distribution team. We started filming the CRS officers and two of them filmed us back on their personal phones. We told them that they were using their phones abusively to intimidate us. They told us that we could not film them either, and while we were contesting this statement, they asked us to provide them with the legislation allowing us to film them. I told them that I did not have it on me and an officer told me “shut up then.”

Ruby Brooksman with the organisation Refugee Community Kitchen reports that she too was filmed by police while filming CRS officers chasing beneficiaries with batons in their hands:

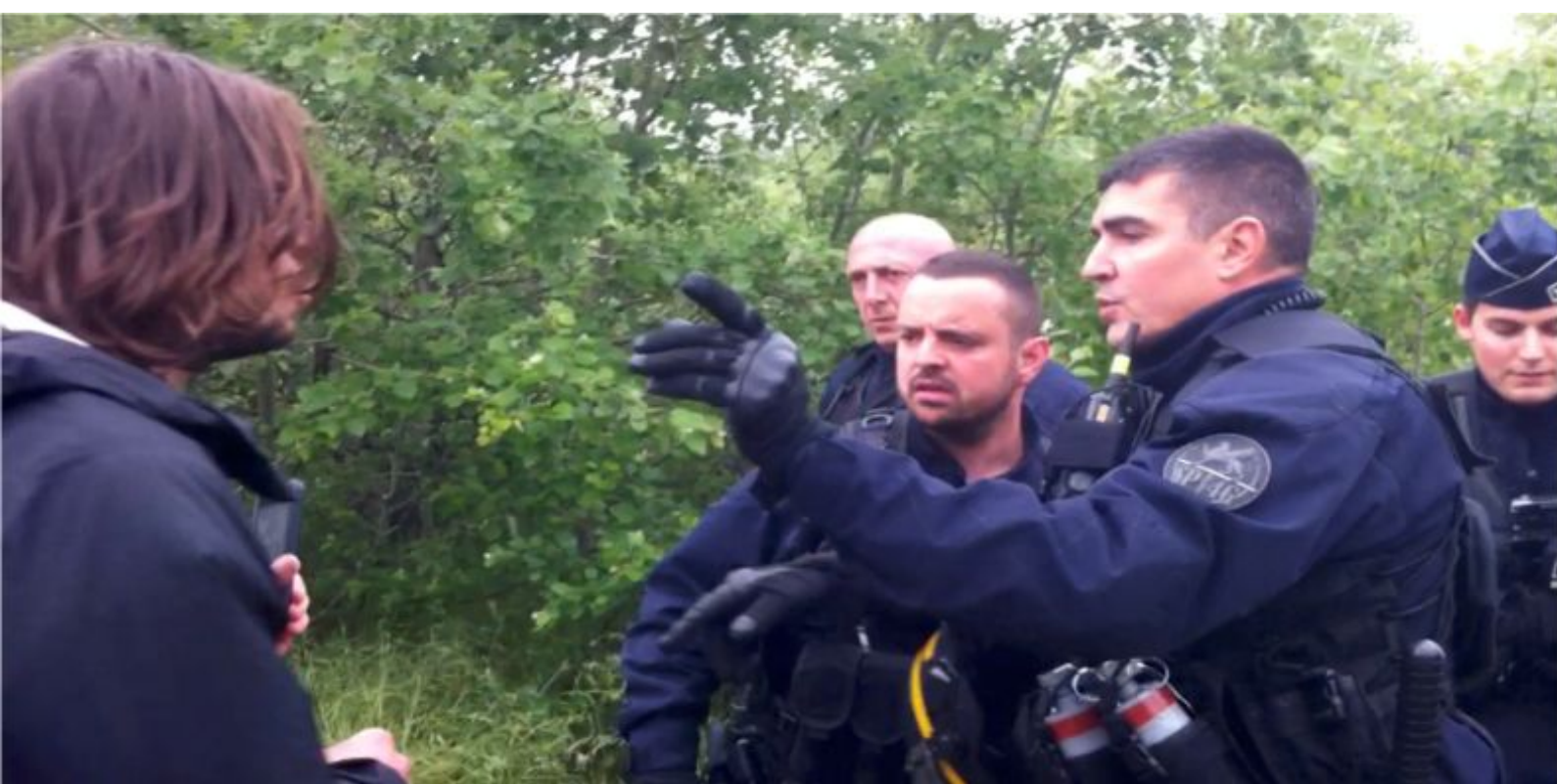
As we were going to distribute lunch, we saw 3 CRS vans on a roundabout, running after beneficiaries with batons and chemical agent canisters in their hands. We drove around the roundabout several times to film. The CRS officers then stopped us. They asked for the vehicle’s papers and driver’s driving license. They also searched the back of our van and made me move to the side as they checked the papers on the van. They took pictures of our papers and another officer arrived and filmed us. They were very rude and told us that because we filmed them, they could film us back.

This practice of police intimidating volunteers by filming them immediately places police officers and volunteers in an abnormally hostile situation given that, according to their code of ethics, the police are “at the service of the people”.

The Pas-de-Calais Prefecture themselves employ this tactic during forced evictions, using prefectoral representatives to film volunteers documenting these operations.



On the other hand, even though they take pleasure in filming volunteers, police officers refuse to let themselves be filmed during police operations. While the circular n° 2008-8433 of 23rd December 2008 clearly states in bold that “the police do not profit from particular protection regarding the right to one’s image” and that “police officers cannot therefore oppose the recording of their image while carrying out a mission”. Nevertheless, most officers order volunteers to turn off their mobile phones during a police operation.



A volunteer from Help Refugees says police tried to stop him from filming while he was capturing the license plate of a CRS van whose occupants had just used a chemical agent on a displaced minor:

As I returned from distribution, I saw CRS officers using a chemical agent on a displaced minor. I then started filming the officers in order to capture the license plates of their vehicles. They approached our van and surrounded us with their cars. Four officers were around our van and were very intimidating. They had chemical agent canisters in their hands and other weapons. They asked us why we were filming them. They tried to stop us from filming several times while asking us the purpose of these videos.

Similarly, police officers systematically order volunteers and members of organisations to turn off their mobile phones during police checks, without explanation of how the person recording is hindering their ability to carry out this task, as is required by the law. A Utopia 56 volunteer reports that a police officer snatched the phone from her hands while filming:

I was filming a police intervention when a CRS officer cursed behind me. He caught me up, jostled me and grabbed my phone. I

asked him to give it back to me, but he ran off with my phone. I followed him, he kept my phone for a few minutes, and finally gave it to me when I asked him which section of the law allowed him to keep it. He prevented me from filming what was happening by moving away from the scene with my phone and I think that if I had not followed him, he would have kept my phone.



This attitude demonstrates a disregard for the law by the police in Calais and is part of an evident desire to prevent volunteers from documenting the police violence that they witness.

These orders not to film are so aggressive that volunteers often co-operate and turn off their mobile phones, even though they are legally entitled to record police operations. A volunteer reports that when he had just started filming, a police officer violently opposed a recording:

I started filming as we approached CRS officers. In less than a minute, a CRS grabbed my phone and threw it to the ground. He then grabbed me by the jacket and pushed me away from the police operation. Another officer kicked my phone as I picked it up. Later, the police officer who threw down my phone said, “You really have balls to take footage of us for hours. If I dared, I would shove your phone up your ass.”

iii) Tailing

We also noted 21 cases of police tailing volunteers doing whilst out on shifts, distributing tea to displaced people, finding emergency shelter for vulnerable people, or documenting violations of the beneficiaries' rights. A Utopia 56 volunteer reports that while he was on shift distributing tea at around midnight in late April, the police followed him round the roundabout 8 times.

We were filming arrests when a CRS van started following us. It started at 23:42. We went round the same roundabout eight times to make them stop following us. They left us alone after 20 minutes. Later in the evening, we were again followed by the Police Nationale, this time for almost 10 minutes. It happens regularly to me to be followed by the police while I am on out on shift. I do not understand why they follow volunteers but I think they do this to intimidate us.

This practice does not meet the ethical standards that CRS officers and members of the Police Nationale are obliged to meet. These tailings are not carried out on any legal basis and do not fulfil any legitimate objective. Their only purpose is intimidation. The aforementioned Utopia 56 volunteer added: *"We are simply observers and humanitarian volunteers so I do not understand this harassment."*

B) Abusive use of identity checks

Since 1st November 2017, we have counted 205 identity checks. More recently, the number of these checks has increased to such an extent that, in May alone, 66 identity checks were carried out. Although an identity check itself is legal, the amount of identity checks carried out constitutes police harassment. While most checks take place where displaced people live or during distributions or on morning and night shifts, Eléonore Vigny and Mathilde Robert report that they were both controlled in the city centre of Calais, on Place d'Armes at around 8pm while walking with a friend:

We were walking on the pavement in the city centre when a Police Nationale car, driving up rue Royale towards Place d'Armes, drove past us. The police officer in the passenger seat stared at us, then turned around to watch us as the car passed us. The police car

stopped in the bike lane a dozen metres away, and three officers came out of the vehicle and walked in our direction. One of them then said to us, “Ladies, let us see your IDs.” I asked what the legal reason for this control was, to which they answered, “Police officers can control who they want when they want, it is the law. Come on, ladies, your papers.” We both felt very strongly that the police had recognized us – it turns out that one of the police had controlled one of us before.



In France, police officers justify identity checks with requisitions from the public prosecutor. Article 78-2 of the code of criminal procedure states that, "Upon written requisition provided by the public prosecutor, for the purposes of investigation and prosecution of offences that he specifies, the identity of any person may be equally controlled, under the same terms and conditions, and for a period of time determined by that magistrate." These requisitions are therefore used for research purposes, in the context of prosecutor's inquiries and for the investigation of specific offences. In Calais, requisitions are misused and serve only to intimidate volunteers, thus breaching the Police Nationale's code of ethics which stipulates that "when the law allows a police officer to carry out an identity check, the police officer does not rely on any characteristic to determine the person to control."

Charlotte Head, a volunteer with Help Refugees, reports that during a police operation in late May, her identity was checked twice at the same location within 20 minutes:

At 9:15, I asked a police officer what was happening. He replied “nothing special” and asked for my ID. I asked him why and he told me it was because of a requisition. At 9:42, I started filming a group of police officers. One of them started shouting at me from farther away. He told me not to film and said in English, “Where do you think you are? What are you doing?”. I replied that I had the right to film. He said “In this case, I have the right to ask for your identification”. I explained to him that I had already shown my ID to his colleagues and he replied “I don’t care.”

This misuse of requisitions for the purpose of intimidation is even more blatant when, during an identity check justified by a requisition, the police officer conducting the check refers to a previous ID check of the same volunteers. Louise Laborie reports that when she was controlled along with Eléonore Vigny, the police officer controlling them referred to the previous check of her identity:

We were documenting the arrest of a displaced person by the PAF when police officers asked to check our IDs. They claimed to have a requisition but refused to show it to us, saying, “No, you know very well that you will not see it, on the other hand, the law requires you to have a piece of identification on you.” During the check, the police chief of the Police Nationale, Pierre Aubry (RIO 1219700), threatens Eleonore by telling her, “we’ll find you” when she refuses to tell him where in Calais she lives. He also asks her if she got her internship at l’Auberge des Migrants as part of a “emploi aidé”. He then says to her “I saw you jogging with Ms. Robert the other day. You were not very fit, not as fit as Mrs Robert.” After the officers left, Eleonore told me that her identification had been checked with Mathilde Robert by the same officer the week before and that he had been extremely disrespectful with them and asked them personal questions about their holiday.



Since the requisitions are not public documents, they are never shown to us. Therefore volunteers have no way of ensuring that they are within the geographical and temporal limits of the requisition, or even that the requisition actually exists. Refusing to present the volunteers being controlled with the requisition is even more questionable given that the prosecutor of Boulogne-sur-Mer claims to have instructed the police to present these requisitions to the people who are being controlled on this basis.

C) Body searches and pat-downs

Beyond identity checks, volunteers in Calais are also sometimes subjected to pat-downs or searches of their personal belongings and vehicles, even body searches. Since 1st November 2017, we have noted 16 pat-downs, 12 vehicle searches, 6 searches of personal belongings and 4 body searches, which took place when volunteers were on distribution or morning and night shifts.

These pat-downs are never justified by the officers who carry them out, and said officers systematically refuse to respond to questions from the volunteers who have been searched regarding the legal basis of these operations. Two volunteers reported that the deputy police chief, Etienne Churret, justified their pat-downs thus:

The deputy Police Chief approached us with several other officers and asked us to present our IDs. We asked for the legal basis of the identity check. He responded to us by saying that he had a requisition. He then asked us if we had any dangerous items on our

persons. We responded that we did not. He then stated, "That's what you say, my colleagues are going to carry out a pat-down." We continued to ask why he deemed said pat-downs necessary, but he did not respond. Two officers proceeded to pat us down and we were forbidden to use our phones during the control.

Our data equally shows that these pat-downs are in fact discriminatory: females are more exposed to pat-downs than male volunteers. Of the 16 pat-downs that we have documented, 14 were carried out on female volunteers, compared to only 2 on men. This over-representation of female volunteers does not translate to the total figures of identity checks, with the proportions of male and female volunteers interacting with the police being much more evenly matched.

This data raises the question of the impartiality of the officers whilst carrying out these controls and the discrimination of female volunteers particularly concerning this type of intimidation. Article R. 434-11 of the Code of Ethics of the Police Nationale and the Gendarmerie states that, *"Police officers and Gendarme officers should carry out their mission with complete impartiality. They should accord the same attention and respect to all people, and should make no distinction in their acts and remarks, whereby such distinctions are laid out in Article 225-1 of the penal code"*, the article which specifically references the forbidding of sex and gender-based discrimination. We must acknowledge that the reality on the ground is in fact very different.

This targeting of women is as shocking as the fact that, during recent pat-downs, female volunteers were subjected to searches carried out by male officers. As soon as the volunteers asked to be searched by an officer of the same gender, they reported that the officer responded saying, "It has to be quick" and then proceeded to carry out the search himself.

A police officer asked the volunteers to step out of the car. Scarcely stepping out of the car, one of the volunteers was immediately patted down by the officer, touching her chest and her bottom several times. He then asked her what she had in her pockets and made her empty them. Addressing another volunteer who was still in the car, he continued by asking her to step out of the vehicle as well. She got out of the car and he asked her to show him what was in her pockets. She emptied the contents of her coat pockets in front of the police officer. He then asked her if she had anything dangerous in any of her other pockets. She said that she did not. He insisted, asking her, "Are you sure?" She responded saying that yes, she was sure. He then continued to pat her down, touching her

chest and her bottom, as well as the back of her neck as her hair was down and untied. He then said, “Ok, all good. Thank you.”

He then asked me to get out of the vehicle. I got out of the car saying, in English, that I would not consent to being patted down by anyone other than a female police officer. The officer said, “What?” I thus said to him, in French, “Une femme (A woman).” He responded to me in English saying, “Yes, exactly.” He continued in French: “Oui mais ca ira plus vite (Yes, but it will be quicker)”. I explained to him that I did not understand. He then said to me in French, “Oh, vous ne comprenez pas! (Oh, you don’t understand!)”. A police officer who had forbidden me from filming proceeded to say, in English, “Yes, but it is just a control.” I replied to him saying that it would be against the law for them to pat me down and that they had to call for a female officer to carry out the search. He responded to me in English saying, “Ah no, it’s not an obligation. It’s different in France, ok?” The other officer then said, “We can, but not here (motioning to his chest), and not there (motioning to his bottom), ok?” He then asked me if I had anything in my pockets, and ordered me to put my arms in the air.

Whilst I had my arms in the air, he patted down my chest, three times. He then patted down my bottom as well, moving it up and down with his hands. He continued to pat me down between my legs and on the inside of my thighs, and then again on my bottom. He then gripped me by the back of the neck even though my hair has tied up and the back of my neck was visible. He then said to me in French, “Merci beaucoup (Thank you very much).”

Pat-downs carried out on volunteers often take place during searches of personal belongings or body searches, despite these two types of checks relating to different legal frameworks, which are more restrictive when it comes to the conditions necessary for them to take place. Laure Pichot, a volunteer with l’Auberge des Migrants, reported that during a pat-down at the end of May, the police officers ordered her to empty her pockets, even though this did not fall under the category of a pat-down but under that of a search of personal belongings. They did not justify the move from one legal framework to another, and did not even inform her that this was the case. Equally, Claire Pilloy, a volunteer with Utopia 56, was forced to take off her jacket during a pat-down despite this meaning that the search then constituted a body search, as a pat-down is strictly carried out “over clothes”. She states that:

A CRS officer pushed me against the wall saying, “Maintenant c’est contrôle d’identité et fouille (Now it’s an identity check and a body search).” A female police officer asked me to take off my jacket,

which I did. She patted me down from my shoulders to my ankles and then asked me to turn around and put my hands on the wall, and then patted me down again all over.

We have also noted 12 vehicle searches during which the police officer ordered that the boot of the car be opened and then examined the contents. Oscar Leonard, a volunteer with Help Refugees, reported that CRS officer ordered him to open the bags of wood that were in the back of the van that he had been driving:

We were stopped by some CRS officers even though we were just driving down the road in our van. They had just seen us distributing wood to some displaced people on the neighbouring road. They asked us what we were distributing. I responded, saying that we had been distributing wood so that the displaced people could keep themselves warm as it was March and the temperature was still very cold. They then asked me what organisation I was working with and ordered me to open the bags that the remnants of the wood had been tidied up into.

Laura Carosio, a volunteer with Refugee Info Bus, reports that CRS officers had carried out an illegal search of her vehicle:

We were coming out of the petrol station when we noticed some CRS searching a van and violently pulling out the displaced people who had been hidden inside. We parked and got out of our vehicle to film the shocking scene. When the CRS noticed us, they came over and began to shout at us to stop filming. One of them came towards me and made me move back by pushing me. He then grabbed my phone from my hands and put it on the ground so that I could no longer film.

The displaced people managed to get away. Several CRS officers then surrounded me and two other volunteers and demanded to see our ID. They then ordered us to open the door of the Info Bus to search the interior. We asked why and told them they could not legally search our vehicle in this way. They told us that they did, and were very aggressive. We finished by opening the side door and the boot of the van and they searched the interior.

Mathilde Robert, another volunteer present during this search, testifies that:

The CRS were very angry that the displaced people had managed to escape. Many of them came towards us. They asked to see our papers, and then insisted that we open the Info Bus so that they could search it. One of the volunteers did not speak French and did not understand the interaction that was taking place, and I was in

any case the only legal practitioner amongst the people who were having their identities checked. I asked them the reason for the vehicle search, and they responded saying that they did not have to give me a reason, and one of the officers added something along the lines of, “I’ll search your vehicle if I want, as I want, actually.” I was completely sure that this was not the case, and refused for several minutes to allow them to carry out the illegal search. After a while, however, I was surrounded by 4-5 very aggressive CRS officers, who were shouting in my face and coming towards me in a very menacing way. I felt that if I continued refusing that they would hit me, so I opened the vehicle. Several minutes later, whilst discussing again that they did not have the right to carry out this control, one of the CRS officers confirmed to me, “Yes, yes, I invite you to go and look at the Highway Code, Legifrance. You’ll see”, which states in it’s manifesto the legal framework for vehicle searches.

In these two cases, the police officers refused to state whether they were Judicial Police Officers, the only officers that have the right to search a vehicle and also refused to provide a legal basis or a motive for the search. Equally, they refused to provide a *proces-verbal* (an official document stating that the search took place) for the identity checks of the volunteers who had requested to be given one. One of the officers responded telling her to “come to the Post Office” to receive the *proces-verbal*.

II. The Obstructions Faced By Associations

One further form of intimidation experienced by volunteers in Calais is obstruction of the support work and of the human rights monitoring work. From 1st November 2017 until 1st July 2018, 39 incidents were reported and documented (6.07%). These include disproportionate fines issued by the police, banning of non-food item and food distributions, summoning to the police station and before court, as well as the confiscation of personal belongings, such as mobile phones which are central for the running of humanitarian work in Calais. Furthermore, the associations of the Calais Warehouse have faced pressure and further obstacles imposed by the authorities.

It can be assumed that the actual number of incidents in this category is considerably higher than documented. The barriers and, in some cases, the criminalisation with which volunteers are confronted on a daily basis in Calais has been normalised by those very volunteers and for this reason often goes unreported as a form of intimidation.

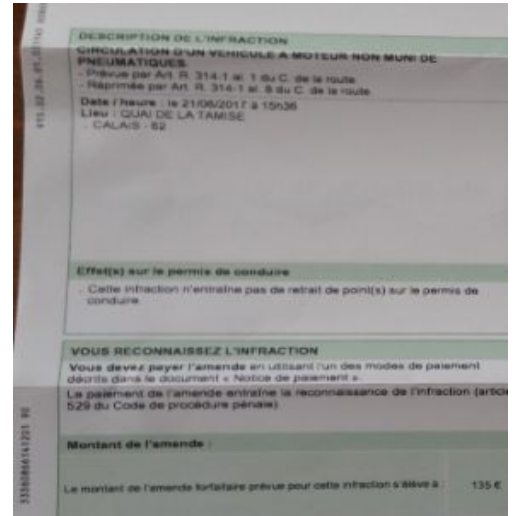
A) Unjustified Ticketing of Vehicles

The use of cars and vans is essential for the support work in Calais, including for food and non-food item distributions, for ‘hospital runs’ (providing transport for injured or ill people to the hospital or to emergency shelters), or for the human rights monitoring work. In their day-to-day work, volunteers are regularly asked to stop by the police and fined – often on grounds that seem disproportionate to the offence, if any, such as being fined for not having enough windscreen wash or for having only one and not two reflective jackets. Antonia Perumal, a volunteer with Utopia 56, reports that three fines were given to her simultaneously even though two of the three charges were not correct:

Seeing us, they stopped while on the other side of the road and ran towards us to get us to stop. They then asked us to pull up and present our IDs and the vehicle papers. As my driving license and passport were in my bag at the backseat and out of my reach, I took off my seatbelt and got out of the driver's seat after switching off my engine to get them. They took all our IDs (3 of us in the car) and asked us to wait as they gave them to someone else in the CRS van. They then returned and checked our car lights and observed that the right low beam light was not working, then they immediately checked that we had spare new lights, and left us in the car as they went back to their van. The two officers then came back to us with 3 charges: Not having seat-belts for me and the volunteer in the backseat, the right light of our vehicle was not working and for not having the insurance paper of our vehicle. Being the driver I only signed for the charge of the right light as to me it was the only one that I truly found was wrong. The seatbelt charge for me was not true and so I refused to sign it.

In addition, parking fines are regularly issued for so-called “stationnement gênant” (harmful parking), “stationnement très gênant” (very harmful parking) or “stationnement dangereux” (dangerous parking), which are among the most serious form of parking offence in France. The justification for this type of fine is never provided. As an example, fines for “stationnement très gênant” are regularly issued for parking with two tires on the walkway of the remote and poorly frequented areas where the settlements of displaced people are located.

In some instances, the same vehicle has even been given two fines for harmful parking within a four minute time period, and thus was still in the same place. The unjust nature of these fines was also shown when l'Auberge des Migrants received a fine which included the phrase: "driving of a motorised vehicle not equipped with with tyres."



Between the 1st November 2017 and 1st July 2018, l'Auberge des Migrants has received 22 parking fines, adding up to a total of 2,719 Euros, a consequential amount for the organisation, without including those of other associations that work from the same warehouse or that have gone directly to individuals. In the past three years, a total of 117 fines were addressed to l'Auberge des Migrants, adding up to 7,586.20 Euros.

B) Banning of distributions

Distribution of food and water, as well as non-food items such clothes, tents, wood and hygiene products, is central to the support of displaced people in Calais. Although the State began food distributions in March 2018, said distributions consist of only one meal a day, and the water points only function during certain hours of the day. No distribution has been carried out by the government well enough that, without the help of organisations, the displaced people in Calais would have adequate access to their most fundamental rights.

One technique deployed in Calais, to obstruct distributions carried out by organisations, is the construction of blockades by the municipal authorities. On several occasions, distribution points were blocked with large rocks and/or earth to prevent the associations from reaching the regular distribution points. These actions seem to be more frequently

carried out at distribution points that are deemed “too public” by the local authorities, who wish to continually move displaced people further and further from the town centre and confine them to areas that are deemed less “visible”. Distributions organised by associations near the *Stade de l'Épopée* in winter were blocked by the installment of large rocks that blocked the access to the site that was deemed by the Town Hall to be too “residential”. These distributions thus had to take place on *rue Jean Rostand*, in the immediate proximity of a water treatment plan.



Likewise, on several occasions, the car-park in the *zone du Virval*, that had been used for food and clothes distributions, was blocked by the building of a large wall made of boulders. The displaced people themselves moved the stones so that they could continue to access the water and food services provided by the organisations. On 18th May 2018, a new blockade was built whilst a vehicle belonging to l'Auberge des Migrants was parked inside the area where the distributions usually took place. The vehicle was blocked in by a wall of earth and stones and, subsequently, immobilised for several hours, the time it took for a passage to be made to allow the vehicle to exit the area. The blockade was immediately rebuilt after the vehicle was allowed to leave.



This blocking of distributions also sometimes presents itself in the destruction and confiscation of property of the organisations that work in Calais. To this end, the deliberate destruction of water barrels and water containers by police has been documented this past month. Pierre Jothy, an intern with l'Auberge des Migrants who has focussed on beneficiaries access to water, confirms that, *"In Calais, we can see a catastrophic situation regarding water, sanitation and hygiene owing to the refusal of the State and the municipal authorities to respond to the essential needs of displaced people. As well as this lack of action, forces of the law actively block organisations from distributing vital aid, by confiscating the jerry cans that we have distributed. Some barrels have even been destroyed and gassed."*

The blocking of distributions and the aforementioned destructions demonstrate an active desire by the French government to deprive the displaced population of their human rights. This willingness manifests itself equally in the criminalisation of support work carried out by volunteers.

Annika Rieger, a volunteer with l'Auberge des Migrants, states that several police officers forbade her from distributing wood, a service that was habitually carried out by volunteers, and had her identity checked when she questioned this order:

When we arrived and got out of our van, three CRS officers (RIO numbers: 1138531, 1151835, 1132216) came to talk to us and told us that it would not be possible to do a distribution there. (They said:

"Stop, it's over here.") They told that it was an order of the prefecture that we can not do distributions anymore at this place and that we should do the distribution at the distribution point at Rue des Huttes. We asked for a document of this new order but they answered against it that we should have a document that justifies what we are doing. We kept explaining that we distributed wood during the last month from this point (Rue des Verrotieres). One officer also said, "You get on my nerves with your documents", probably making reference to volunteers asking for requisition documents when the CRS executes police operations. One of the CRS officers controlled our IDs without explaining why. During the identity check, three officers kept close by us.

At the time of writing this report, distributions of food and non-food items have been banned in Dunkirk. These bans do not concern all volunteers, operating on a nationality-based distinction. British volunteers, British vehicles and any volunteers working with British organisations are not permitted to deliver humanitarian aid in Dunkirk. On 28th June 2018, an English volunteer working in Dunkirk reported:

This [CRS] van just told us we're not allowed to go into Dunkirk camp, as "no English organisations allowed here" - so no first aid or food distro [distribution] in Dunkirk allowed today.

More recently still, volunteers with the Refugee Women's Centre, an organisation which has provided daily support to the women and children in Dunkirk for several months, were arrested during a distribution and interviewed by the police. They were not given access to a lawyer, and were forced to give their fingerprints under the threat of prosecution if they did not oblige, despite no charges being made against them. No *proces-verbal* was given, and they were not informed of the ramifications of this incident. Louisa Cunliffe testifies that:

It was an incredibly taxing experience. We were not informed of why we had been arrested and we were never informed of our rights. We were intimidated and threatened. We had the feeling that we were being targeted because of our nationality and, because of our work with displaced people in Dunkirk, we had been dehumanised by the police by means of racist comments and jokes.

Seeing as we had a basic understanding of our rights, the three of us decided to not respond to the questions that we were asked, without access to legal advice. But after being threatened with an extended period of detention and our requests for access to a lawyer having been denied, we felt that we had no other choice other than to respond to their questions during the interrogations and to give them our fingerprints. They treated us like criminals.

All we wanted was to help the displaced families in Dunkirk, who had been targeted by the same police that were now threatening us.

If the police can abuse their power and intimidate us in this way, even though we knew that our organisation would support us and that are friends on the outside would be in the process of trying to obtain our release, I cannot imagine the fear and the intimidation that displaced people must feel when they find themselves in such a situation.

C) Prosecution of Volunteers

The obstruction of the support work is further exacerbated by the summoning of volunteers to the police station as a result of the work that they are doing. This highly intimidating practice is exemplified in the following incident report:

On the 23rd of March 2018, the CRS cleared Rue des Verrotières of tents, sleeping bags and the personal belongings of refugees at around 9 o'clock in the morning. Help Refugees drove to the distribution point at Rue des Verrotières at 1 o'clock, distributing tents and sleeping bags out of two vans. Six volunteers were present. [...] Shortly after the beginning of the distribution, two CRS vans arrived (CZ 983 ZM; other number plate not visible on footage). CRS officers as well as one officer from BAC (not wearing visible badge or uniform) came up and asked for the IDs and driving licences of the drivers. [...] The police officer and CRS officers went to one of the vans with my ID and the ID of the other driver and returned shortly to hand back our IDs. We continued the distribution and handed out most of the tents and sleeping bags without any further interruptions or complications. We returned to the warehouse at around 4 pm. Half an hour later (4.30 pm) the police officer who checked our ID in the field, as well as two other BAC officers (One with badge, one without badge). They asked for myself and the other driver. Outside the gate we then had to sign a "Procès-verbal de convocation en vue d'une audition libre" which accuses us for being the instigator of an installation on private property. We signed the forms, through which we agreed to come to the police station for a hearing on Monday morning (26/03/2018) at 9 o'clock (Au Commissariat de Police de Calais, 15 Place de Lorraine Bureau 303).

The two volunteers presented themselves at the police station for their hearing. These interviews were not followed up with further proceedings, and no charges were carried out against them. Loan Torondel, operations

coordinator for l'Auberge des Migrants, however had charges made against him, and was summoned before the tribunal where he was accused of defamation. He was reproached for having commented on his personal Twitter accounts on the situation facing the displaced population in Northern France. He was seen in court on the 26th June 2018 and the verdict will be announced on 25th September 2018. He states:

It is worrying to see that criticism against law enforcement is becoming more and more dangerous, legally speaking, especially when we are talking about the violation of human rights. These months of legal proceedings have exhausted me both mentally and physically, even though I was and am still convinced of my innocence.

The prosecutions and legal actions against volunteers are the final step in the intimidation of humanitarian aid workers in Calais. Young adults, scarcely 25 years old, find themselves accused of criminal activities because of their humanitarian work and because they stand in solidarity with the displaced population in France.

D) Intimidation of Associations

The associations in the Calais Warehouse are under constant pressure by authorities, which obstructs their activities and affects their funding situation. These restrictions are here referred to as intimidation, as they reflect – just as the intimidation of individual volunteers reflects – the increasingly shrinking human rights space and the reversal in respect of human rights organisation and defenders which can be observed all across Europe, notably in the field of migration.

In Calais, these obstacles took a variety of forms, such as administrative restrictions or judicial harassment and sanctions. This form of intimidation is illustrated below, with examples reported by members of the association L'Auberge des Migrants.

The members of l'Auberge des Migrants were at several occasions summoned by the Direction Departementale de la Sécurité Publique, which is part of the Police Nationale, to attend hearings on financial transactions made in the association's bank account. The bank account of the association is controlled by an external accountant, as well as by a member who is responsible for bookkeeping. Nevertheless, members of the organisation were called for a hearing four times since November 2017, where they were prompted to justify certain transactions.

At the beginning of 2018, local companies which supported the associations in the Calais Warehouse, either through donations (wood pallets, barrels, etc.) or by taking orders, were victims of pressure by the

Prefecture and the Calais town hall. These companies – which prefer to stay anonymous in this report – were threatened to be exempted from public tendering if they continued supporting the associations in Calais Warehouse. This not only led to financial restrictions on the associations' activities, but also leads to a stigmatisation of the associations as unreliable partners.

Further incidents have affected the limited financial situation of the associations. In February 2017, the Prefecture of Calais impelled a procedure to control the hygiene standards in the kitchen of the warehouse, where several hundred meals are prepared daily by the association Refugee Community Kitchen. As a consequence, refurbishment work amounting to 40,000 Euros had to be done to meet the hygiene norms of mass-catering kitchens. The Human Rights Defenders stated, in their report from June 2017, “the visit of the Human Rights Defenders from 12th June to Calais” observed that “whilst attempting to put in place measures that should have been implemented by public authorities, organisations are hindered and threatened: [...] injunctions to bring up to standard the kitchen of one association that has long been present in Calais.”

Finally, organisations are equally threatened with prosecution. One of the police trade unions, UNSA, threatened to file a complaint against the associations Utopia and L'Auberge des Migrants in January 2017, and eventually filed it in September 2017 with the High Court of Boulogne-Sur-Mer. This complaint accused the associations of “public defamation,” following reports filed by associations that had reported the constant harassment of displaced persons by the police forces, such as the confiscation of personal belongings and use of tear-gas.

III. Daily police violence

As well surveillance and daily intimidation, the police also sometimes adopt physically aggressive behaviour, as well as verbally aggressive, towards volunteers. In total, 141 cases of police violence have been reported by volunteers in Calais and the surrounding areas.

A) Verbal violence

On top of physical violence and aggression, the police use verbal violence to intimidate volunteers in Calais. It often occurs that the police abuse their power by giving illegal orders to volunteers or to justify illegitimate police practices, threatening them if they refuse to comply and insulting them. Since 1st November 2017, we have recorded 68 cases of abuse of power, 21 threats and 12 cases of insults from law enforcement officers towards volunteers.

i) Abuse of power

During the majority of interactions between volunteers and police officers, it is continuously stated that the officers are in a position of power and that they have control, regardless of the law. It has been stated several times by the police, on being asked for justification for an order or an identity check, that the police officers have the right to carry out these operations “because we are the police.”

In the same vein, police officers in Calais use their job to intimidate volunteers, stating that the volunteers do not have rights and that they must submit to all of the officers commands. Regularly, these abuses of power concern the filming and photographing of volunteers. Charlotte Head, a volunteer with Help Refugees, states that, during a forced eviction:

A police officer told me that I did not have the right to film or to talk. I asked him if I had any rights, and he told me that I did not.

Non French-speaking volunteers are particularly targeted by these practices because their knowledge of the French law is vague and they are thus unable to confirm the legality of the orders given by the police officers, faced with this language barrier. Ruby Brooksman, a volunteer with Refugee Community Kitchen, states:

They were very rude and told us that, because we had filmed them, they could film us in return because they were the police and have the power to do so, and that they could arrest us whenever they wanted. They were very disrespectful and made jokes between themselves that we were not able to understand.

It is equally frequent that police officers pass off laws they have created as official laws. Situations in which volunteers are witness to orders that are either illegal or unjustified are numerous. Eleonore Vigny states that, during an identity check, a police officer told her that she did not have the right to use her mobile phone:

Three border control officers surrounded us, whilst two others checked our identifications from their vehicle. I took my phone out to respond to some messages and one of the police officers

immediately ordered me to put it away and told me, “Miss, no phones for the time being.” I asked him why this was the case, and he responded saying, “Because it is an identity check, so no phones for the moment.” We proceeded to ask him if he was carrying out a new law, to which he replied, “nearly new”. We then pointed out to him that we were going to wait until the law was passed in parliament before following it. He conceded with a “yes”, and then added, “but it’s long.”

ii. Threats

Multiple volunteers have been threatened by police officers in Calais. We noted in total 21 threats made against volunteers, which most frequently consist of threats of arrest by law enforcement officers or of a summons.

Daniel Kennedy, a volunteer with Refugee Info Bus, was threatened with prosecution because he had distributed jerry cans of water to displaced people:

We had just left the jerry cans of water for the displaced people so that they could drink, when the deputy police chief came and carried out an identity check. He then threatened us with a summons, for abandoning rubbish on private property. The situation was so absurd that it took me a moment to realise that he was talking about the jerry cans of water.

Two other volunteers, whilst out on a night shift, were told, “If you don’t leave, I will find a way to immobilise your vehicle.”

It also frequently takes place that volunteers are threatened with arrest or of being taken “to the post office” when they ask questions to the police questions concerning the operations that are taking place or whether they have the correct documentation to perform them. This practice, well known of police force in Calais, is still used. The last instance was on 23rd July, when a police officer, carrying out the arrest of two displaced people with border control officers, threatened Youssoup Pachaev, a volunteer with l’Auberge des Migrants, saying, “You have no place here, this is a police operation. Get lost or we’ll arrest you too.”

Finally, Mathilde Robert, who denounced on 26th May on Twitter the throwing of water into displaced peoples tents, stating: “Of all of the vilanies of the law enforcement officers in Calais, I discovered yesterday yet a new one: CRS officers came to a living place at the start of the evening and threw water in the men’s tents, then threw their belongings in nearby pond”, was threatened with prosecution for defamation by the Prefecture of the Pas-de-Calais. The Prefecture effectively responded, again on Twitter, stating, “Following accusations regarding CRS officers

working in Calais, an enquiry has been carried out by request of the Prefecture of the Pas-de-Calais and was unable to find proof of the allegations made #fakenews". With this tweet, it published a photograph of the letter addressed to the volunteer, concluding that, after an internal enquiry which was at best questionable in its transparency and efficacy, "the police have not carried out any operation regarding the methods that you have described that would have been contrary to the ethics regulations of the police." Mathilde Robert thus provided photographs of the beneficiaries belongings in the pond and also provided a testimony in the form of a CERFA relaying the facts.



Law enforcement officers also threaten volunteers with physical violence. Arnaud Gabillat, a Utopia 56 volunteer, recalls that, while he was documenting police violence committed against displaced people, one of the police officers on site said to him, "you'll see, next time there's violence, it won't be for the refugees". While he walked away, the same police officer shouted at him, "you're pathetic, you bring shame on France".

Laure Pichot, a volunteer with the same association, recalls that she too was threatened by the CRS:

I was warned by friends that police violence had been taking place in a car park. I went there and when I arrived, the refugees had already left. I went to ask the CRS officers present what had happened and I had to ask them the question several times over before they replied that they “escorted migrants out of the car park”. Having noticed that they were not wearing their RIO numbers, I asked them if they were ashamed about what had happened and if they had used any weapons. They told me, in a menacing manner, “We don’t need to use our weapons to control you.”

iii. Insults

We have documented 12 cases where volunteers were directly insulted by the police or where police responded to questions with insults. Despite the fact that the code of ethics of the Police Nationale states that the relationship between a police officer and the general population should be “marked with courtesy” and that “respecting people’s dignity, [the police officer] should, in all circumstances, comport themselves in an exemplary manner, adequate to inspire respect and consideration in return”, the treatment of volunteers by police officers is anything but courteous and respectful.

During an operation to evict displaced people that took place early in the morning, Uri Lazaro, a volunteer present to document the operation, was treated as an “idiot” by members of the CRS who were present. Said officers found it particularly amusing to mock the non French-speaking volunteer in a high-pitched voice, given that he could not understand them.

During another forced eviction, on 31st May 2018, two volunteers who were present, and who were getting ready to cross the road to get back to their vehicle, were told, “Don’t get yourself run over, that would be a real shame, arsehole.” With little need to restate the point, the lack of respect and courtesy by the police in Calais is clearly shown in these testimonies.

Eleonore Vigny also reports, regarding insults that she has received from the CRS:

At the end of the eviction operation, whilst the CRS were getting ready to get back into their vehicles, I noticed that one of the CRS officers was not wearing his identification number (RIO number). I asked him why he was not wearing it. He responded saying, “Fuck your mother!” and moved in the direction of his vehicle. I asked him to repeat what he had just said, suggesting that he was shameful to address someone in that manner. Following his lack of response, I addressed another officer who was following behind him. This

officer stated, “I didn’t hear anything”, before giving me a big smile and getting into his vehicle.

Mathilde Robert states that she has also received these type of vulgar responses. A CRS agent, who she had asked about his lack of identification number, replied to her saying, “DTC, DTC [dans ton cul] (up your arse)”, whilst his colleague swayed in front of her phone to prevent her from filming the police intervention.

In a context whereby volunteers are confronted on a daily basis with the physical violence that displaced people suffer at the hands of the police in Calais, for them these type of insults become commonplace and do not display any sort of exceptional behaviour, despite the fact that it is unacceptable for State representatives to insult civilians in this way or to respond to them in such a slanderous manner. In addition, this behaviour from the police forces in Calais carries a serious infringement to the reputation and the consideration that volunteers carry towards the officers of the law in general.

B) Physical violence

On top of the repeated identity checks, constant surveillance, threats and hindrances to humanitarian activities, the police in Calais commit acts of physical violence towards volunteers.

Laure Pichot states that she was pushed multiple times by police officers whilst she was documenting a police intervention, sometimes in a violent manner, with two hands on her back or her shoulder and torso.

Antoine Herbé and Tom Ciotkowski, two volunteers who were on shift during a morning forced eviction, were violently pushed by police officers towards the adjoining road. They state:

We were on morning shift when we saw that there were lots of police officers arriving in the area. We were close to the beneficiaries when they came near us and ordered us to leave the area. The deputy police chief, Etienne Churet, told us, “You are trespassing, trespassing, now get out”, without explaining to us what gave the officers the authorisation to be on the private land themselves. The other police officers who were present then took hold of us and violently pushed us into the adjoining road before we had time to react. Several of them had their batons or a chemical agent disperser in their hands and we were both shocked by the sudden violence that had been used against us.

The dispersal of volunteers out of security perimeters during police operations continues, but it is however more shocking that these “invitations to leave”, as they are sometimes called by the CRS, are carried out in a brutal manner.

Charlotte Head, a volunteer with Help Refugees, states that, whilst she was offering to accompany displaced people to access medical care, the CRS violently pushed her to the ground, several times.

I saw a beneficiary arrive running, followed by 4 police officers. I was filming the situation when they came towards us and told us to get back and to stop filming. Despite the fact that I was moving backwards, one officer pushed me violently on my shoulder and I fell backwards, in front of Police Nationale van. My phone was damaged in the fall. Another volunteer helped me get up and we were moved away from the scene by several officers. There were at least 15 officers then and they formed a line and walked towards us to make us move. Whilst we continued to move backwards, an officer pushed me violently, and I fell to the ground again. He stood over me whilst I was on the ground and raised his baton towards me, threateningly. I really thought he was going to hit me.

Charlotte states of another morning whilst on shift with Claire Pilloy, another volunteer, where CRS officers were very aggressive with them both and seized Charlotte by the throat, throwing her to the floor:

The officer came towards us, telling us to move back, gesturing behind us. I asked why, and he responded: “Because it’s like that, it’s the French police. Get out.” I asked for his RIO number, and he replied: “My what? ... No, I don’t have one.” I asked why he didn’t have it, and if it was not the law for officers to wear a RIO number, and he replied: “It’s like that.” During this interaction, the officer still held his baton, extended, in his hand. He then pulled by phone from my hand, which I was using to film the interaction, and threw it on the ground, then kicking it with his foot. I picked up my phone from the ground. At the same time as this officer then said, “Go, get lost”, another officer grabbed around my throat from behind me, and pulled me to the ground. The first officer then pushed Claire, and said “Get lost, now. Go away now.”



On other occasions, the violence hasn't been immediate, but their effects present themselves in different ways for volunteers. Quentin Chevalier, a volunteer with Utopia 56, states that whilst he was present in a living space, police officers sprayed the door handles of their car with a chemical agent that was so abrasive that, after having opened their doors, it violently stung their eyes, face and throats. He could not see for several minutes whilst he was at the wheel. It does not need stating the immense danger this could present if he had not stopped the car at the side of the road and had continued to drive without being able to see.

These acts of physical violence are a true a sign of the total disrespect for the law by police officers in Calais, and of the culpability of the authorities to whom these incidents have been reported.

Conclusion

Are officers of the law at the service of the general population?

Intimidation of volunteers in Calais is therefore based both on legal measures, which are implemented repeatedly and in a discriminatory manner, but also on illegal measures that intrinsically violate the obligations of the police. All of these acts are carried out to create a climate of instability and constant surveillance, focused specifically on volunteers helping displaced people.

Moreover, we have observed that it is incredibly difficult for volunteers to make complaints or to highlight matters of police abuse in an effective manner. In fact, the possibilities are limited and the officers are unidentifiable, which guarantees their impunity.

To signal the malpractice of a police officer, it is possible to complete an IPGN report (Inspection Generale de la Police Nationale) who must recognise any lack of disciplinaries or ethics of it's officers. The need to be able to identify these officers is therefore essential for this approach to be feasible. In Calais, volunteers highlight to what extent this is approach is impossible to utilise.

A police officer is identifiable by his identification number (RIO number) [Referentiel des Identites et de l'Organisation]. This measure was put in place by Manuel Valls in 2013, in the decree of 24th December 2013 which mentions in Article 2 that "officers who carry out their missions in uniform must wear, whilst in the line of duty, their individual identification number." In 2016, Bernard Cazeneuve, Interior Minister, restated that, "the willful concealment of the number, in contravention with the rules, feeds the notion that certain officers fear being identified because they act in an inappropriate manner. These practices, if they exist, must be formally banned." It is therefore surprising to note that, in Calais, these practices do not only exist but are commonplace.

Camilla Cunningham, a volunteer with Help Refugees, testifies:

I counted approximately 34 police officers and 6 of them were either not wearing their RIO numbers or were wearing RIO numbers that were not legible.

It is also the case that these numbers, when officers do where them, are not always visible as they are hidden by the jackets. If necessitated, they refuse to show them when they are asked. Louise Laborie, from l'Auberge des Migrants, states:

Three CRS officers were opposite me and I asked them if I could see their RIO numbers, as they were not wearing them. The first CRS officer told me that he was wearing his under his jacket. The second told me to come and see, as he was wearing his. When I approached, I realised that this was not the case and I heard him say, "Oh shit, it's not there."

Finally, certain police officers do not wear their identification numbers at all and assure us that it is not an obligation to do so. Daniel Kennedy, a volunteer with Refugee Info Bus, testifies that an officer assured him that he was not obliged to wear his identification number "on this uniform", referencing his bullet-proof vest. Another volunteer states as much:

We noticed that several of the police officers were not wearing their RIO numbers and, when we asked them why they were not wearing them, they responded saying that they were not obligated to wear them. (15 March 2018)

Mathilde Robert and Eleonore Vigny state that officers even pretended to have lost their identification numbers so as to not have to present them:

They were checking our identifications when we asked one police officer where his RIO number was, to which he responded, "I don't have it." We then asked one of the officers next to him, who was also not wearing a RIO number, if she could show us hers, to which

she replied, “I lost it and it takes time to order a new RIO number”. We then pointed out to them that it was very unlucky that they had both lost their RIO numbers at the same time. They responded saying, “Yes, we all lost them, it’s a real shame”.

This impossibility for police officers to be identified by volunteers completely removes the effectiveness of the IGPN’s reporting mechanisms. The IGPN has, in effect, refused to follow up reports that have been made due to the fact that officers have been impossible to identify. On this note, the European Court of Human Rights notes in its decree *Hristovi c. Bulgarie*, from 11th October 2011, that when police officers render their identification impossible, their impunity is guaranteed, “which violates the obligation to carry out effective enquiries, in case of abuse”. Beyond the aforementioned ministerial decree of 2013, it is thus the European Convention on Human Rights itself that is violated by the practices employed by police officers in Calais.

The IGPN is moreover not an effective procedure to make cases against the behaviour of police officers as, not only does it let its officers act with total impunity, but even threatens volunteers who carry out reports against them. Charlotte Head states that, after sending off reports where she noted how officers had violently pushed her to the ground and seized her by the throat, she received the following email:

Subject: Information concernant vos signalements sur la plate-forme internet de l'inspection générale de la police nationale (IGPN).

Madame,

Vous avez adressé à la plate-forme internet de l'inspection générale de la police nationale (IGPN), les 15 et 28 juin 2018, 9 signalements dans lesquels vous avez exposé des faits constatés dans le cadre de votre activité associative aux mois de mai et juin, mettant en cause des agents de la police nationale intervenant au contact de migrants, à Calais (52) ou aux alentours. Vous évoquez des pratiques autoritaires, agressives voire brutales imputables à des fonctionnaires refusant de vous informer précisément sur la nature de leurs missions.

Afin d'envisager la suite à donner à vos signalements, l'IGPN a dans un premier temps procédé à des vérifications auprès des directions actives de la police nationale concernées par les opérations visées, à savoir la police aux frontières, les compagnies républicaines de sécurité et la sécurité publique. Non seulement les enquêtes réalisées n'ont pas permis de révéler le moindre manquement professionnel ou déontologique, mais qui plus est, les retours qui nous ont été faits relèvent unanimement votre attitude contestable sur les lieux des opérations. Il semblerait que vous vous évertuiez avec une certaine constance à entraver l'action des policiers en vous tenant systématiquement à proximité immédiate de l'action, filmant les agents et les posant de questions. Votre comportement a pu les conduire à vous écarter physiquement du cœur des dispositifs afin d'assurer leur propre sécurité mais aussi celle des migrants ou des personnels locaux participant aux opérations. Outre vos postures outrageantes, l'attention de l'IGPN a été attirée sur le caractère calomnieux de certains passages de vos signalements, que certains agents concernés assimilent à de la dénonciation mensongère, constitutive d'un délit.

Au-delà de la gêne que vous occasionnez sur les lieux d'intervention, nous attirons votre attention sur la charge de travail que votre productivité en matière de signalements, si elle perdurait, engendrerait pour les services en charge du respect de la déontologie, à l'IGPN comme dans les autres directions impliquées.

C'est pourquoi, l'étude des multiples cas que vous avez bien voulu nous soumettre n'ayant pas permis de confirmer vos allégations, il ne sera plus donné suite à vos signalements. En cas de constatation d'une infraction pénale, nous vous invitons à l'avenir à vous adresser directement par courrier au procureur de la République territorialement compétent, qui apprécierait la suite à donner.

Madam, you have addressed to the Internet platform of the Inspection Generale de la Police Nationale (IGPN), on 15th and 28th June 2018, 9 reports in which you have exhibited facts observed during your activities with your association, during the months of May and June, blaming officers of the Police Nationale [...] You mention authoritarian practices, aggressive even brutal attributes against officers refusing to inform you of the precise nature of their missions. [...] Not only do the enquiries carried out not provide the least evidence of a lack of professionalism or ethics but what is more, the feedback that we received unanimously notes your

questionable attitude during these operations. It seems that you strive, with a certain consistency, to hinder police operations, by systematically placing yourself close to the action, filming officers and asking questions. Your behaviour could have caused you to be physically moved away from the heart of operations to ensure the safety of the migrants and local personnel participating in the operations. In addition to your offensive positions, the IGP's attention has also been drawn to the slanderous nature of certain passages of your reports, that some officers concerned assimilate to dishonest denunciations, which constitutes a crime. Beyond the trouble that you have brought about at the sites of these interventions, we draw your attention to the workload that your reporting productivity, if it continued, creates for the services in charge of the respect of ethics, at the IGP as for the other services implicated. It is for this, the study of the multiple cases that you wanted to submit to us that have not allowed us to confirm your allegations, that no further actions will be followed regarding your reports. In the case of any legal infractions, we invite you to address them by mail to the local responsible republican prosecutor, who will gauge the actions to be taken.

Vous êtes informé(e) que la loi n°78-17 du 6 janvier 1978 relative à l'informatique, aux fichiers et aux libertés s'applique aux déclarations figurant dans le formulaire de signalement que vous avez renseigné. Ces éléments sont exclusivement destinés au traitement informatisé de votre demande. Vous pouvez exercer votre droit d'accès et de rectification des informations qui vous concernent, par courrier adressé à l'inspection générale de la police nationale, 11, rue Cambacérès 75008 Paris.

Les administrateurs de la plate-forme de signalement IGP

There is little need, it seems, to emphasise the immense laissez-faire towards police abuse that this response represents, nor the denial of justice committed by the IPGN. It is therefore clear to see that the reports made to the Inspection Generale de la Police Nationale are not a means of recourse accessible to volunteers working in Calais. This could also be directed at the republican prosecutor responsible for these situations, however they then come up against the indifference of the public prosecutor's department in Boulogne-sur-Mer. Numerous complaints that have been made by volunteers in Calais over the past two years have gone without response, the latest of which detailed the complaint made by Charlotte Head regarding the aforementioned events, the acknowledgement of receipt, dated 29th June, of which the TGI of Boulogne-sur-Mer has been sent back. In the context of the tensions described in Calais, between volunteers and the officers of the law, it is equally difficult for volunteers to present themselves at the police station to make a complaint against the same people that occupy this building. The volunteers in Calais are thus intimidated on a daily basis and are victims of abuse from the part of the officers of the law, and the reporting mechanisms for these abuses are not accessible to them.

The European commissioner for Human Rights reminds, in his public notice regarding the independent and efficient regulation of complaints made against the police, on 12th March 2009, that, “an independent and efficient system for complaints against the police is of fundamental importance in assuring the functioning of a democratic and responsible police force”. In Calais, it is almost impossible to make a complaint against the accounts of one or multiple officers of the law. There are only the Human Rights Defenders who occupy the dismal political landscape, an isolated but laudable voice for the defence of public liberties and individual rights. As it stands, it is limited in its action, not having the power to exercise disciplinary sanctions on the individual officers, at best being outraged about the police practices that are displayed in Calais.

“The police officer is at the service of the population”, states the code of ethics. We, as organisations, are forced to note that, in Calais, police officer oppress volunteers and, on a daily basis, violate their legal obligations.

This report has been written by Eleonore Vigny, intern at l’Auberge des Migrants, responsible for legal questions and advocacy, based on research undertaken between 1st November 2017 and 1st July 2018, with the help of Eva Spiekermann, volunteer, and Louise Laborie, intern.

It has been translated into English by Pauliana Ferhati, Oscar Leonard, Ruth Mumbela and Laura Gidrol. Mathilde Robert and Charlotte Head have respectively ensured the proofreading in French and in English. Adrian Abbott produced the promotional video.

This report has benefited from the help of 33 volunteers who agreed to testify to their daily life in Calais and has been co-signed by the organisations l’Auberge des Migrants, Utopia 56, Help Refugees and Refugee Info Bus.