

Safer business action days

A joint approach that focuses resources into a designated location to reduce business-related crime.

First published
20 October 2023

Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Prevention Diversion
Topic	Anti-social behaviour Community engagement Crime prevention
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Region	London
Partners	Police Business and commerce Private sector Voluntary/not for profit organisation
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.

Key details

Start date	February 2022
Scale of initiative	National
Target group	Communities

Aim

The objective of the safer business action (SaBAs) days is to deliver a focused operation with joint patrols, the targeted intervention of offenders and a range of crime prevention activity. This is done through:

- working in collaboration to create awareness and understanding of the crimes that affect business
- demonstrating the importance of tackling crime to protect and safeguard frontline staff
- developing local, trusted relations leaving a legacy of partnership working

The SaBA days do not aim to permanently make these changes through one day alone. They aim to introduce partnership working between the police, businesses and private sector. This can be developed following the day to tackle business-related crime.

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of a SaBA day include:

- a reduction in physical violence and assaults against retail workers
- an increase in arrests and disposal outcomes of violent offenders targeting retail workers
- an increase in the safety of retail workers
- an increase in engagement with the public and stakeholders
- an increase in confidence in the police by the retail community

At the end of every SaBA day, a survey is sent out to the police for outcome data, including number of arrests made during the day of action. Another survey is sent out to businesses involved in the SaBA day, which requests information about confidence in the police in the retail community.

Description

It was identified that there were ongoing challenges related to tackling business crime as resourcing and changing priorities can result in variance in police engagement. A day of action was proposed during a discussion between police, a large business and the City of London's National Business Crime Centre (NBCC). This would involve focusing resourcing on showing support around business-related crime. The central messaging would be focused around reducing violence towards shop workers.

Identifying a location

A combination of crime statistics (for incidents and crime reports) and data from businesses themselves was used to identify a force area and specific location where the highest rates of business-related crime were recorded. This identified a hotspot location where retail-related crime was a priority issue. The involved partners share information and intelligence (in line with GDPR compliance), for example sharing priority offender information which is used to create a focus list of offenders for the day.

What a SaBA day includes

SaBA days includes the following.

- Engagement events – where police and crime commissioners (PCCs) and senior police officers host drop-in sessions for retailers and business organisations to discuss important retail crime issues and share solutions.
- Problem solving sessions – hosted to look at and address specific crime types in a hot spot location. Police then work with partners to create and disperse crime prevention material and expertise throughout the day by hosting pop-up events and visiting victims (retailers).
- Diversion schemes – these promote and implement diversionary tactics for suitable offenders, such as restorative justice and rehabilitation programmes to address drug and alcohol use.

Resources and funding

During the SaBA day, police, private security, Business Improvement District (BID) and Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) provide a significant increase in resources above and beyond business as usual. This includes staff numbers and wardens, as well as specialist resources such

as knife arches and weapons dogs. It also includes collaboration with other police forces, such as British Transport Police and aviation.

The day lasts between five and six hours on average. It takes place in daytime hours, based on intelligence of when business-related crime is likely to take place.

There has been no specific funding attributed to SaBA days. Joint buy-in is required from each stakeholder to provide the support and resource required on the day. It is a collaborative effort to reduce crime and increase confidence in policing and security by the retail community.

Approximately 100 people from across the partners are needed to run a SaBA day. The majority of these are police officers and cyber security officers as presence and patrol on the day, with background support, including senior leaders.

- [Find out more about SaBA days on the NBCC website](#)

Overall impact

A SaBA day was recently conducted this year in Nottingham. This resulted in:

- six arrests (five were retail related and one hate related)
- one community resolution for a first-time offender
- 40 multi-agency community engagements
- 100 retailer engagements
- 38 survey responses
- 19 detentions
- 19 active deterrence
- £348.35 worth of stock recovered

Five flagship SaBA events have been implemented so far, three taking place in 2022 and two in 2023. These have been held in London, Bristol, Southampton, Birmingham and Nottingham. A SaBA day is due to take place in Manchester in 2024.

Feedback

Qualitative feedback from businesses shows an increase in staff and business confidence as a result of the day. Improved working relationships between police and businesses has led to further

arrests and interventions.

The connections and processes created by SaBA days have led to more events. New partner relationships form, and further days have taken place because of the initial day of action. Partnerships are brought together made up of businesses, private sector and police, who should all be working together. SaBA days bring all these partners together, encouraging ongoing working relationships to tackle business-related crime.

There have been discussions about conducting similar events for the night-time economy, as this could follow the same concept but would be aimed at different businesses.

Learning

- Be clear what you want to achieve from the SaBA day and align your approach. Make the focus clear. Depending on what it is, it may mean the difference between high visibility policing and covert tactics.
- You can't tackle everything. It's important to narrow down what you want to achieve from the day and filter tactics and resources accordingly. Not doing this may dilute the impact.
- Have a media and communications strategy and share this well in advance. A big success of the SaBA day is shining a light on retail crime, so you need all parties to publicise the event in a consistent way. It's vital to get lines out there early and signed off by communications departments. Police have their own protocol, but businesses need to agree to the communications strategy to ensure that coverage can be promoted consistently following the SaBA day. The NBCC once had an occasion where businesses had not yet signed off the strategy and they therefore had to refuse to speak to journalists about the day of action.
- Getting buy-in from policing can be challenging. Having the crime data to identify a hot spot is key to engaging the relevant police area to participate in the event. It's important to engage at the right level in the police force. The more people hear about SaBA days, the more they will be willing to provide buy in. Promotion and communications are important.

Best available evidence

Currently, the [crime reduction toolkit](#) does not include an intervention similar to holding SaBA days. It does include the best-available evidence on [CCTV](#) and on [retail tagging to prevent shop theft](#).

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