

The nodal governance of counter-terrorism security at temporary events in England and Wales: understanding public-private partnership working from the perspective of counter-terrorism security co-ordinators

Study exploring the subtleties and connections between public-private partnerships in the complex environment of the provision of counter-terrorism security at temporary events.

Key details

Lead institution	Keele University
Principal researcher(s)	Neil Oldfield n.oldfield@keele.ac.uk
Police region	West Midlands
Collaboration and partnership	This project is supported by the College of Policing bursary scheme .
Level of research	PhD
Project start date	May 2024
Date due for completion	July 2027

Research context

Aim

05/07/2026

The nodal governance of counter-terrorism security at temporary events in England and Wales: understanding public-private partnership working from the perspective of counter-terrorism security co-ordinators

This study intends to explore the subtleties and connections between public-private partnerships in the complex environment of the provision of counter-terrorism security at temporary events. More specifically, it will be from the perspective of counter-terrorism security coordinators (CT SecCos) and event organisers of temporary or pop-up events.

The literature identifies a gap in the knowledge of such dynamic partnerships. The approach will acknowledge individual perspectives, values and emotions underpinning stakeholder behaviour and decision-making, providing a structure underpinned by the prerequisite to investigate subjectivity instead of objective views.

The overarching aim of the study is to understand how the police effectively build and enrol the governing capacities of private agencies in the provision of counter-terrorism security at temporary events.

Research questions

1. How does governing order emerge within public-private partnerships in the provision of counter-terrorism security at temporary events and how is that governing power distributed among the partnership members?
2. What technologies, mentalities and resources do public-private partnership members possess and how do they mobilise their knowledge and capabilities within the partnership in the delivery of counter-terrorism security at temporary events?
3. What challenges are presented to individual members of the public-private partnership throughout the planning and collaborative delivery of counter-terrorism security at temporary events and what do they perceive to be the cause of any identified challenges?

Exploring these research questions through semi-structured interviews of event organisers and CT SecCos engaged in the partnership planning of temporary events will encourage the acquisition and analysis of data within a constructivist-interpretive paradigm, that assumes a subjectivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology.

Research methodology

I will gather data via semi-structured interviews and not through observations in a natural setting. I will conduct interviews with CT SecCos and event organisers working in obligatory partnerships in the delivery of temporary events. A semi-structured approach allows better use of the knowledge-

05/07/2026

The nodal governance of counter-terrorism security at temporary events in England and Wales: understanding public-private partnership working from the perspective of counter-terrorism security co-ordinators

producing potentials of the dialogue between myself and the research participants during the interviews?(Denzin and Lincoln 2018)?. I will conduct guided conversations that adhere to a themed line of inquiry rooted in my research questions. However, the questioning will remain flexible and fluid, rather than rigid, which allows me the autonomy to follow up on emerging themes and points of significance to the research objectives?(Bryman 2012)?.

An exploration of the thoughts and actions of stakeholders via this approach is a technique that Rubin and Rubin (2011) advocate for case study research. By employing a case study strategy, both the internal features as well as the surrounding situation can be examined (Neuman 2011), thus allowing me to broadly apply a nodal governance theoretical framework (Bayley and Shearing 1996, Shearing 2005, Burris and others 2005) within the project. This enables the identification of links at a micro-level – the actions of individual stakeholders, established through the semi-structured interviews – to the macro-level, or large-scale structures, organisations and processes.

Nodal governance perspectives have been applied to empirical research across a range of social contexts, exploring the variable terrain of policing and security governance. This provides a valuable way to describe the dynamics and structures of regulatory alliances, including non-state actors. The main advantage of this is that it can create opportunities for new ideas and approaches that may not be possible under traditional state-centred governance models?(Wright and Head 2009)? and support the objectives of this research project.

Research participation

For further information about the study and details on how to participate, please view the [participant information sheet](#).

References

Bayley D and Shearing C, 1996. 'The future of policing'. Law and Society Review, 30(3), pp 585–606.

Bryman A. 2012. 'Social Research Methods'. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.?

Burris S, Drahos P and Shearing, C. 2005. 'Nodal governance'. Australian Journal of Legal Philosophy, 30, pp 30–58.?

05/07/2026

The nodal governance of counter-terrorism security at temporary events in England and Wales: understanding public-private partnership working from the perspective of counter-terrorism security co-ordinators

??Denzin N and Lincoln Y. 2018. 'The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research'. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

??Neuman WL. 2011. 'Social Research Methods : Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches'. 7th (International) ed. Boston: Pearson Education.

?Rubin HJ and Rubin IS. 2011. 'Qualitative Interviewing: the Art of Hearing Data'. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage. ?

??Shearing CD. 2005. 'Nodal security'. *Police Quarterly*, 8(1), pp 57–63.?

?Wright J and Head B. 2009. 'Reconsidering regulation and governance theory: A learning approach'. *Law & Policy*, 31(2), pp 192–216.?