

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project has been to observe, document and denounce the daily State violence against displaced people at the French-British border*.

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :

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|  | At least 62 evictions from 8 informal settlements |  | At least 60 tents including 6 full of personal belongings and 20 tarps stolen |
|  | At least 4 displaced people arrested during evictions |  | At least 1 mattress sized |
|  | At least ... Unaccompanied Minors (UMs) met** |  | At least 3 bikes sized |

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in the Calaisis area, which mainly take place between 8am and 7pm. This involves displaced people being forced to move their tents and belongings, anywhere between 2 to 500 meters. Personal belongings and basic necessities are often stolen and/or destroyed***. In Calais, a place for the recovery of belongings has been set up without people being systematically informed of its existence by members of the Prefecture or the police. HRO has received several testimonials from people who claim they were not informed about the existence of this recovery system.

These operations of harassment are also accompanied by often abusive identity checks (Cour de cassation, 25 avril 1985, n° de pourvoi 84-92916), followed by arbitrary arrests and illegal stays in administrative detention.



During the eviction operations, HRO members witnessed violent intimidation of exiles. While fully accepting the non-exhaustive nature of this report, we have documented the following intimidation perpetrated by the police against exiles during the evictions in August 2023.

On 10 August, at least 5 displaced people were grabbed by the police, including 3 who were subsequently arrested.

During all the operations, HRO noted the over-armament of the forces of law and order, who are very often equipped with LBDs, tear gas canisters, tonfas, shields, helmets and sometimes even assault rifles. This weaponry is intimidating and disproportionate to the operations in question.

On 1 August, HRO observed two CRS with assault rifles and one CRS with a gas mask. On 16 August, a CRS at the eviction was carrying an LBD launcher. On 22 August, a CRS had a PGL-65 multi-shot launcher during the operation.

The police regularly interacted with exiles without using translators.

On 1 August, CRS blew its whistle to attract the attention of a displaced person. On 4 August, a law enforcement officer used his hands to indicate to displaced people that they could not pass. On 6 August, a national police officer was observed waving his arms at someone, with no interpreter present to translate correctly.

When translators do their job, they sometimes use their discretion and do not translate everything.

On 26 August, a person asked an interpreter to retrieve a hammer that had been seized by the cleaners because it was being used to cut wood. The interpreter refused to translate the request for the police officers and replied directly to the people himself.

Harassment of observers during evictions :

Several attempts at intimidation:



There were many obstacles to observation. Not to mention the perimeters arbitrarily deployed to prevent HRO members from observing operations. The HRO team has had a perimeter imposed on it at least 30 times this month, and HRO members have been escorted outside these perimeters 9 times by the police.

Numerous attempts at intimidation and/or obstruction were recorded. HRO members were filmed 6 times without prior warning, and had their identity checked 4 times.

On 10 August, the police threatened the members of the HRO team with being taken to the police station if they did not leave their observation area.

On 20, 22 and 24 August, members of the HRO team were filmed by the police using work and personal telephones, without having been notified in advance (although this is compulsory).

On 26 August, a CRS turned on his pedestrian camera without informing HRO. When HRO reminded him that he was obliged to notify, a second CRS turned on his pedestrian camera, laughing.

* Our data are based on our observations and are therefore not exhaustive.

** Number of self-reported unaccompanied children met by the ECPAT association (not mandated by the department) in August who were in a street situation. This number is an underrepresentation of the number of children living on the streets because outreach activities are not carried out daily in all living areas by these actors; some children do not communicate with the associations; others access shelter directly via the mandated association and are therefore not included in this figure. One observation remains: repeated dismantling operations are a source of increased fragility or even disappearance of these children, both girls and boys, and therefore of increased risks of trafficking and exploitation.

*** During each eviction operation, the personal belongings of displaced people are seized by agents of the private company APC, mandated by the State, under the supervision of the police. Evidence shared on our social medias (instagram @HumanRightsObs, twitter @HumanRightsObs)