

Since 2017, the HRO project's mission has been to observe, document and denounce the daily state violence perpetrated against displaced people on the French-British border*. As there are many obstacles to HRO observations, these figures should be taken as an extreme minimum.

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :



At least 86 evictions from 11 informal settlements



At least 154 tents including 5 full of personal belongings and 16 tarps stolen



At least 17 people on the move arrested during evictions



At least 4 shelters destroyed, 32 pallets and 3 chairs stolen, along with 2 mattresses and 1 sleeping bag



At least XX unaccompanied children met**



At least 4 bike stolen

The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to daily evictions in the Calais 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 operation, HRO members witnessed violent intimidation against displaced people. Our observations are non-exhaustive. These are some examples of violent intimidation perpetrated by police against displaced people during evictions in December 2023.

During all the operations, HRO noted the over-armament of the police forces, who are very often armed with LBDs, tear gas, tonfas, shields, helmets... This armament is intimidating and disproportionate to the operations in question.

On December 7, the police **seized two kittens** from a camp, even though they were the **pets** of people on the move.

On December 16 and 22, law enforcement officers **nased** people on the move for several dozen minutes, **forcing them to destroy their own shelters.**

On December 16, the **wind** blew away the tent of a displaced person fleeing eviction; it fell into a **pond**, triggering the **hilarity of the surrounding law enforcement.**

On December 22, the forces of law and order **kicked** the people on the move awake. On the same day, a CRS spoke to a displaced person in French, and when HRO reminded him of the presence of translators on site, he replied: **"No, but the problem is that he doesn't want to understand"**, then **pushed him** off the mound he was standing on. On the same day, a CRS **pulled down the tent** of a displaced person who was carrying it, knocking it to the ground. The person took offence, and the CRS, who was carrying an LBD, shouted at him: **"Come on, let's have some fun!"** As the young man fled, he turned to his colleagues and asked, **"Are there any fast runners on the team?"**

Harassment of observers during evictions :



Several attempts at intimidation:

Obstacles to observation are numerous. Without counting the perimeters arbitrarily deployed to prevent the observation of operations by members of HRO, 32 attempts to intimidate observers and/or obstacles were recorded. Among these, HRO members were filmed without their knowledge at least 12 times, including 2 times with personal phones, and had their identity checked 2 times.

On several occasions, **very contemptuous tones** were used against HRO members: **"Did you study law or not? Because it would be easier for me to explain it to you, otherwise..."** (December 16); **"we're in France, we speak French"** (making fun of an HRO member's accent, December 20); **"come on, go back to school"** (December 22); **"you have to know your law before asking questions, you think you know but you don't know anything"** (December 26).

On December 22, while setting up the perimeter, a CRS **pushed HRO and stepped on their feet.** On the same day, during an identity check, the national police commander tells the HRO members who were trying to assert their right to **"stop hollering"** and **prevent them from filming.**

On December 28, the CRS complained to HRO about the garbage in the area: **"When you do something, do it right to the end. You're distributing food in plastic bags, it's a mess".**

On December 30, the operations assistant advanced in a very threatening manner towards an HRO member: **"You, get lost".** On the same day, the CRS mocked a HRO member's questions with a ridiculous **"gnagnagnagnagna".**

* 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 December 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)