

Since 2017, HRO's mission has been to observe, document and denounce the daily state violence perpetrated against people on the move at the Franco-British border* Due to recurring hindrances to our observation work, the following figures should be taken as an extreme minimum.

Chiffres concernant les expulsions des lieux de vie informels :



At least **14 police operations led to 59 evictions** of **9 different informal living sites**



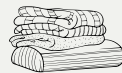
At least **413 persons** were evicted from their informal living sites



At least **2 lifejackets** seized.



Au moins **98 tents seized, including 20 tents filled with belongings then seized saisis, 1 shelter emptied and 1 shelter destroyed**



At least **20 tarps, 2 backpack and 2 blankets** seized



At least **8 people on the move arrested** during the evictions.

The **21st of February**, the **symbolic milestone of the 100th eviction since the beginning of the year**. This large number shows the extent to which expulsions in the Calais area are **recurrent**, taking place on an almost daily basis, despite the fact that they are pointless in terms of the authorities' intended objective.

Occurrences of violence endured by people on the move recorded by HRO :

- **Again in February**, the police carried out **6 evictions (18 evictions) during the cold weather plan**. Even though temperatures are deemed low enough to trigger this emergency accommodation scheme, people who do not use it, either by choice, lack of information or lack of space, are evicted. These evictions and seizures of tents in freezing temperatures **clearly endanger the lives of the exiles affected**.
- **The 5th and 26th of February**, the police seized **lifejackets**. The theft of lifejackets is evidence of the desire to dissuade people from crossing, but above all has the effect of making their departure more **dangerous**.
- **The 5th of February**, the cleaning team **completely emptied and seized the tent of a person who had just left it**. Despite the official rhetoric, it is not just "abandoned" property that is being seized; in reality, **it is the property of exiles that is being stolen**, with the aim of dissuading them from settling.



Crédit : T.T HRO

- Since mid-February, HRO's data collection has shown an **increase in the number of tents seized** in the city centre, from around 3 to almost a fortnight on certain days. This can be explained in part by the large number of people returning after the cold weather plan and being equipped by associations. However, **no alternative or solution is offered** to people returning from the Cold Weather Plan whose tents are seized. This contributes to the **precarious** situation of those evicted.
- **On the 19th**, the police **destroyed the shelter of a person known to the associations as being disabled**. During the destruction, the person's wheelchair was in the middle of the shelter. The same shelter, which was rebuilt, was emptied 5 days later.

A living site the target of constant harassment by exiles

The 6th and 13th of February, HRO received reports of **special eviction operations**, in other words evictions outside the “usual” framework, taking place **early in the morning or late at night**. **These evictions seem to be the scene of exacerbated violence** on the part of the forces of law and order and, because of their unusual nature and the absence of prior information, take residents by surprise. HRO was not present to observe and document these events. The 14th of February, this same living space was evicted once again, this time as part of the daily eviction circuit, even though it is not usually part of it.

The **6th of February**, a local resident reported that the police **destroyed their belongings and tents with knives**, and shouted “Shut up!” when the residents asked why they were doing this.

The **13th of February**, another person testified that during the eviction, **the police stole their food** and seized all the tents they had. Yet people are supposed to have the right to keep their belongings, and their food, when they are taken to “shelter” buses.

The **14th of February**, the eviction took place **without any translators, even though they had been present at the other homes evicted just before**. As the operation unfolded, tempers flared, not least because **the residents did not understand what was happening to them**. The head of the operation **shouted at them, and threatened one** who tried to argue with her. She also asked the cleaning team's lorry to move back, even though there were people being evicted right behind it.

These violent operations are **traumatic** for the people who are subjected to them, and help to make their situation even more precarious, and **to make them live in degrading and inhuman conditions**. The example of this living space, usually not evicted but targeted for several weeks, also bears witness to the **constant harassment** to which exiles are subjected.

The 7th of February, the Lille Administrative Court **rejected the City of Calais's request for a large-scale eviction from the town centre**. This rejection was prompted in particular by the fact that, **at the time of the hearing, HRO had documented that an eviction targeting these living quarters was in progress**.

This is only a half-hearted result. The judge's decision was motivated by the fact that if an eviction was underway, then the living quarters would be empty and therefore did not need to be evicted. This decision does not, in fact, authorise exiles to remain in the city centre. With no alternatives, these living spaces that Calais town hall wants to evict permanently **represent the few places where exiles can survive**.

Occurrences of violence endured by people on the move recorded by HRO :

- In February, HRO observed or received information about at least **16 arrests other than evictions**. Most of these took place around **the station and bus stops**. These arrests are often moments of great tension and a form of constant harassment faced by exiles in the Calais area.
- The **20th of February**, during a street patrol, HRO heard the testimony of a person who claimed to have been arrested and detained for 2 days. During this detention, **the person claimed to have been made fun of because of her illness**. As a vitiligo sufferer, this person testified that the police laughed at the effects of the disease on his skin, and did not help him when his skin was burning.



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Increased police presence on buses

Since the beginning of February, the sub-prefecture and the municipality of Calais have been introducing **a police presence on public transport**. This increased police presence on buses and around bus stops is supposed to **“provide security on routes where overcrowding is becoming a problem”**^{*}.

However, it is assumed **that the police are only present on routes and at stops particularly frequented by exiles**. According to the sub-prefecture, this measure is not intended “to prevent migrants from taking the bus”^{*}. However, during an interaction with a police officer on a bus, the latter told the observers that their job would be to “dissuade exiles from getting on”. Yet Calais buses are **free for everyone**. Discouraging people from getting on a bus because of their status or origin is a **discriminatory measure that is contrary to human rights**.

Numbers concerning the obstruction and/or intimidation of the police toward HRO:

This month, HRO has recorded numerous attempts to obstruct its work and/or intimidate its team, including :



On 14 **occasions**, observation was totally blocked by the police, who kept them at a distance from many police operations. **These perimeters hampered the work of documenting the evictions.**



The observers were **filmed** without being told **at least 7 times**, including once with a personal phone.

Occurrences of hindrance, intimidation and/or violence endured and recorded by HRO:

- **During evictions**, CRSs are often heavily equipped when interacting with HRO or evictees. For example, on the 7th, 4 CRS surrounded the HRO team with shields and LBDs. On the 12th, a police officer spoke to an observer with a truncheon in his hand. **This over-equipping of people who pose no danger** is mainly intended to **intimidate** associations and discourage their members and exiles.
- During the deportation on 7 February, HRO members underwent an **identity check**. These checks are also used as a **means of pressurising** and intimidating people in solidarity.
- On 3, 14, 17, 19 and 21 February, the CRS **filmed HRO with their pedestrian cameras or personal phones**, without ever notifying them. Police officers have the right to use their body cameras, but have a **duty to report when they are switched on**. Police forces often defend this use by claiming that it is a **“response”** to HRO's documentation work. However, by law, pedestrian cameras can be used during operations in cases where *“an incident has occurred or is likely to occur, having regard to the circumstances of the operation or the behaviour of the persons concerned”*. Under no circumstances do HRO personnel represent a threat during an interaction.
- **The 26th of February**, an unmarked black pick-up driven by National Police officers **sped towards an observer**, honking its horn, then braked in front of her. As well as being an **intimidating and dangerous** manoeuvre for the observer, this demonstrates the police's determination to prevent HRO from documenting the evictions.



The 14th of February, a CRS said that HRO could not pass because it was an association, and that it was carrying out a **“filtering blockade”**. Legally, a roadblock is only legal if it falls within a **specific framework, and must not be discriminatory**. However, in the context of the security perimeters set up during evictions, these are **directed solely at members of associations, collectives, activists and exiles**. This interaction demonstrates the **police officer's ignorance of the law**, confusing a “roadblock”, linked to a road control operation or crime, with a “security perimeter”.