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ILLICIT USE OF PYROTECHNICS AT EVENTS IN SCOTLAND

September 2021

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Police Scotland has had concerns about the risks of illicit use of pyrotechnic articles¹ for some time and established a short life working group in January 2017 to examine this issue with a view to maximising public safety and minimising the risks to police officers when dealing with these articles. This arose from a genuine concern that it is only luck which has prevented a tragedy involving illicit use of pyrotechnics in Scotland, with several incidents having already involved injuries or near misses.
- 1.2 The short life working group completed its work in May 2017 and after some consideration internally, a submission was made to the Scottish Government highlighting the work undertaken and the potential for legislative change to promote improved safety.
- 1.3 Separately, concerns had also been raised in relation to illicit use of fireworks following some challenging operational circumstances for officers who became the target for attacks using lit fireworks which were thrown towards officers and police vehicles.
- 1.4 These two strands of work have now been coordinated into a single project to ensure greater safety for officers and the public in relation to all kinds of pyrotechnic articles.

2. Information included in this report

- 2.1 This report provides information drawn from a range of police systems and open source material to support proposals for legislative change in relation to pyrotechnics, highlighting risks to:
 - Public safety
 - Policing resources
- 2.2 The report begins with information relating to incident and crime recording and arrests. It then provides information taken from the Police Scotland Health and Safety recording system followed by details of a recent football supporter survey and concludes with case studies and links to notable media reports (see Appendices I and II).
- 2.3 Proposals for legislative change form just one strand of the work to influence and educate those who use pyrotechnic articles at events. Section 9 of this report details the Pitchin' in Programme which is being used as a prevention and diversion method in relation to illicit use of pyrotechnics and other harmful behaviour, primarily amongst young people (see Appendix III for full programme document). This programme is being delivered in schools and other educational settings across Scotland as a prevention and education tool and is also being delivered as a Criminal Justice disposal via Early and Effective

¹ As defined in the Pyrotechnic Articles (Safety) Regulations 2015

Intervention (EEI) processes and Diversion from Prosecution referrals by Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS).

3. Limitations on information

- 3.1 The information contained within this report is management information and cannot be regarded as a full statistical analysis of illicit pyrotechnic use in Scotland due to the limitations in retrieving recorded information. The information is drawn from Police Scotland crime recording, incident recording system and Health and Safety recording system, augmented by Police Scotland football match reports and open source research. Match report information contains matches up to and including 22 August 2021, while open source research was concluded on 22 September 2021.
- 3.2 All of the information contained herein is verifiable but there is the potential that, due to the reasons detailed below, some recorded information has not been identified during the retrieval process.
- 3.3 Police Scotland recording systems do not allow for a single statistical search for illicit use of pyrotechnics and as such, information in this report has had to be collated from a range of sources and includes manual review of some information and keyword searches. As a consequence, there is potential for inaccuracies in terms of composite figures but the information used in the report is sufficiently reliable to provide a broad representation of the issues surrounding illicit use of pyrotechnics in Scotland.
- 3.4 Health and Safety reporting will differ from crime reporting as there will be instances where officers/staff have not been present when a pyrotechnic was used and so will not submit a Health and Safety report. Section 6 below provides an analysis of the recorded Health and Safety reporting information from April 2017 to June 2021.
- 3.5 The Health and Safety information presented in this report was obtained by using key word searches for common terms used in relation to fireworks and pyrotechnics and it is possible not every possible key word has been applied during the research process. Furthermore the results show that some events generated reports from more than one officer but as these relate to each individual's experience, this does not invalidate such reports.
- 3.6 In relation to incidents at football, recorded information is limited due to the fact that only 15-20% of senior football matches in Scotland each season have a policing operation attached to them, with the overwhelming majority of matches being 'police free'. Furthermore, routine collation of match reports in a format that allows detailed analysis is generally restricted to matches involving SPFL Premiership and Championship teams and the Scotland national Men's A Team, meaning that even where a relevant incident takes place at matches involving lower league clubs, extraction of that information can be problematic.

- 3.7 In terms of using a stop and search power it is not possible to quantify the number of times that a search power would have been used had it existed, but where possible throughout this report, it is highlighted when circumstances have arisen in which a search power could have been applied.
- 3.8 Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a national lockdown and cessation of events for a sustained period in 2020 and 2021, with modifications still in place for many types of events and some events yet to resume. As such, there is little value in comparing recorded information relating to events from 2020-21 onwards and it should be noted that events ceased just prior to the end of the 2019-20 financial year so there will also be a modest impact on recorded information that year. Where meaningful information exists, it has been included in this report but it, and any projections based upon partial time periods, must be regarded as only partly reliable.

4. Pyrotechnics at events

Bonfire night fireworks

- 4.1 Bonfire Night issues tend to revolve round fireworks rather than the types of pyrotechnic articles commonly encountered at other events, so while fireworks are a sub-classification of pyrotechnic articles, they are different due to having particular firework-related legislation, including associated offences and a search power in relevant circumstances.
- 4.2 The health risks posed by fireworks in Scotland, around Bonfire Night and other festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali, are comprehensively presented by the Care of Burns in Scotland (COBIS) report 'Evaluation of firework-related harm in Scotland'² and it is therefore not necessary for this Police Scotland report to present other information drawn from police systems in this regard.

Concerts and festivals

- 4.3 Many concerts and festivals will have management entry conditions that require individuals to submit to a search, but unlike in England and Wales where the Policing and Crime Act 2017, Section 134, creates an offence of possessing a pyrotechnic at a qualifying music event (which includes areas used as part of entry, exit or sleeping facilities), there is no possession offence in relation to pyrotechnics at Scottish music events.
- 4.4 In recent years, pyrotechnic use at outdoor festivals such as TRNSMT has been common and with the closely-crowded audiences present, the risks posed by pyrotechnics are clear. More worryingly, there have been some instances of pyrotechnics activated in indoor concert venues in Scotland, creating fire and

² <https://www.cobis.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Evaluation-of-firework-related-harm-in-Scotland-October-2020-1.pdf>

stampede risks to all present in addition to the risk of burns to those in close proximity to the article.

Football

- 4.5 The last few years has seen the continued use of pyrotechnics in relation to football matches in Scotland and it is no longer seen as an emerging trend within Scottish football. The type of pyrotechnics which are predominantly used are smoke devices, thunder flashes and flares inside and outside stadiums before, during and after football matches.
- 4.6 The use of pyrotechnics has been recorded by Police Scotland at football matches involving 27 Scottish teams and a further 16 teams from outside Scotland who played matches such as friendlies, European club ties and internationals in Scotland.
- 4.7 The use of fan marches (also known as corteos) are adding to the increasing frequency of pyrotechnics use outside venues.

Parades

- 4.8 The illicit use of pyrotechnics at parades has not been particularly prevalent in Scotland, however there have been some notable incidents, including a firework being thrown by counter protesters during a Republican parade in Glasgow in July 2019 and an officer being injured when a flash bang exploded, causing burns, bruising and hearing interference during a Republican parade in Glasgow in September 2019.

5 Crime and incident recording

- 5.1 Crime recording cannot record something that is not currently a crime nor can arrest figures show how many people would have been arrested had an offence been in existence at some time in the past.
- 5.2 Crime data can provide a picture of the general prevalence of pyrotechnics at events, albeit in circumstances where legislation already exists to deal with it, but it cannot indicate incidents where additional police powers could have been applied had they been in existence at that time.

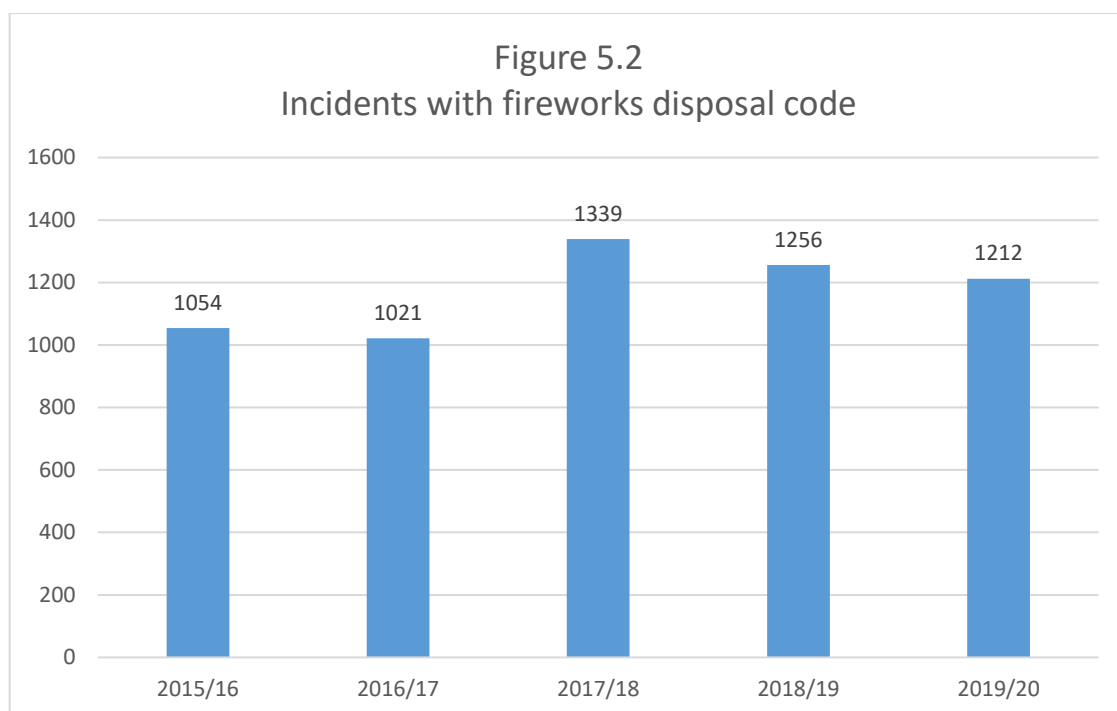
Data tables

- 5.3 The tables below are all data extracted from police systems between 01 April 2015 and 31 March 2020 inclusive.
- 5.4 Table 5.1 below contains the number of recorded crimes for two relevant crimes, namely the Explosives Substances Act 1883 and Keeping and Supply of Explosives.

Table 5.1 – Recorded crime					
Crime Type	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Explosive Substances Act 1883	31	18	24	12	21
Keeping and Supply of Explosives	88	53	85	96	90
Total	119	71	109	108	111

5.5 Taken together over the full time period the total is 518 recorded offences. There will also be some additional recorded Culpable and Reckless conduct crimes over this time period but retrieval processes produce all such recorded crimes and without a review of each of the 12,237 records, it is not possible to pick out those relating to fireworks or other pyrotechnics.

5.6 Figure 5.2 below shows the number of recorded incidents using a firework disposal code:

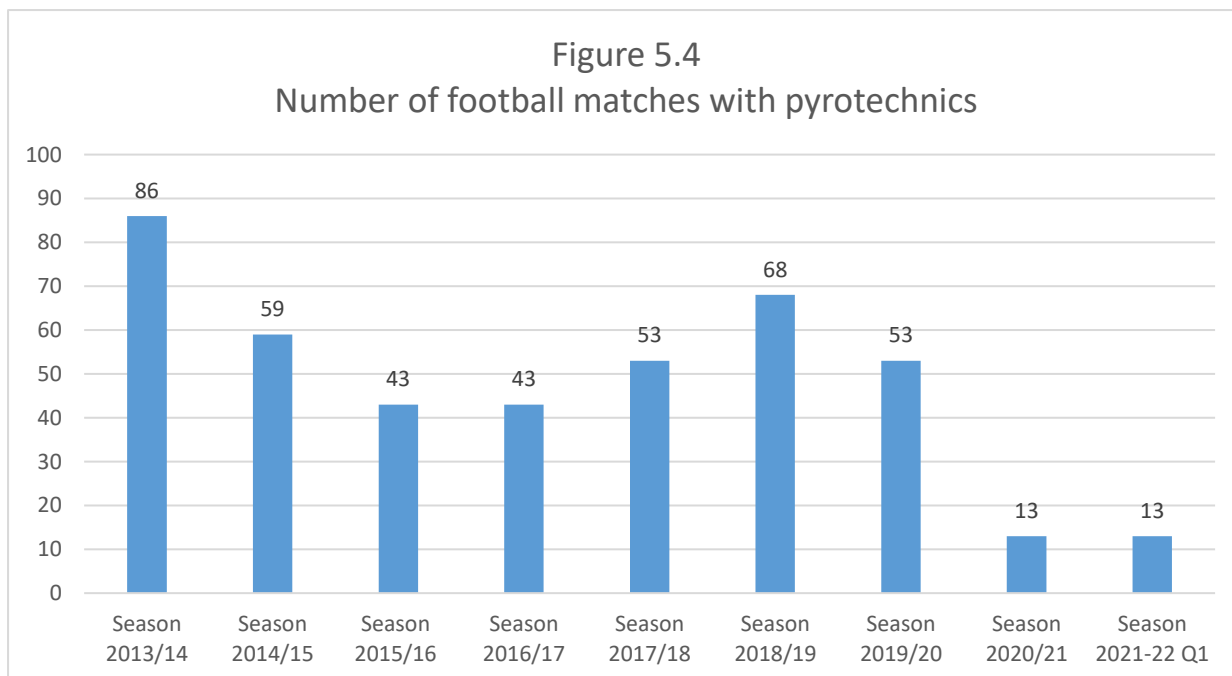


5.7 Table 5.3 shows recorded crimes identified through a keyword search:

Table 5.3 – Recorded crimes					
Keyword Search	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Flash	3	1	0	1	0
Bang	4	3	3	5	3
Firework	52	22	48	37	35
Pyro	4	2	2	5	6
Pyrotechnic	4	2	2	4	4
Total*	67	30	55	52	48

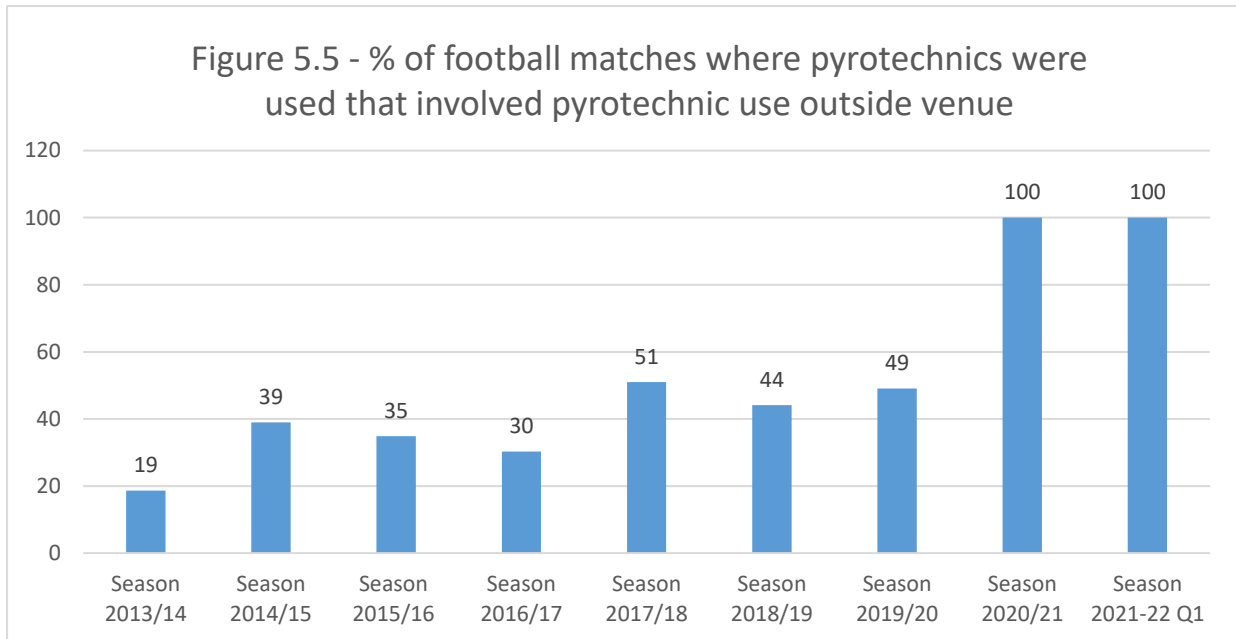
* Keyword search does not equate to the number of crimes as multiple keywords maybe recorded under the same crime record.

5.8 Figure 5.4 shows the number of football matches where use of pyrotechnics was recorded, organised by football season rather than financial year. This figure shows the count of matches where pyrotechnics featured, rather than the number of individual pyrotechnics observed (which is therefore likely to be higher as there are often multiple pyrotechnics used at the same match). Season 2019-20 was curtailed before the high profile season ending matches such as league deciders and play-offs took place and that season's total is likely therefore to be lower than would otherwise have been the case.

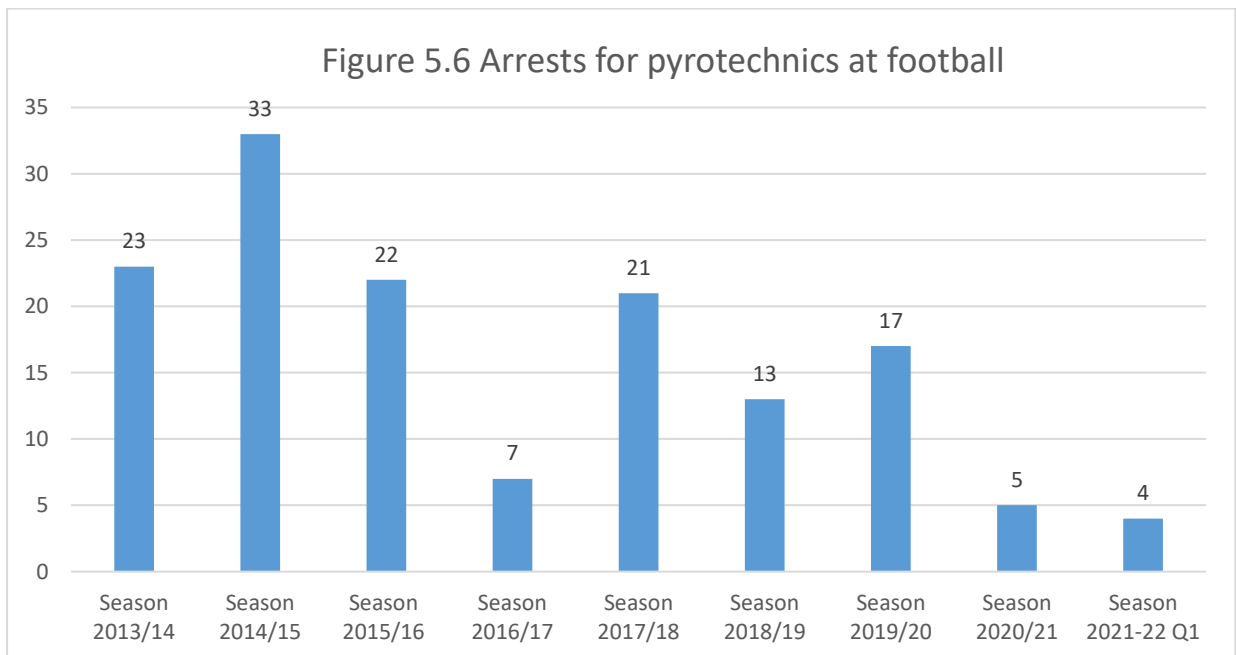


5.9 Of the matches where pyrotechnics were observed, as detailed in Figure 5.4 above, Figure 5.5 shows the percentage which involved pyrotechnics outside the venue, which is of note as these are the incidents where it is likely the circumstances mean that no offence or search power currently exists for

possession of pyrotechnics. Seasons 2020-21 and Q1 of season 2021-22 are skewed towards external use of pyrotechnics due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which supporters were excluded from venues or only admitted in very limited numbers.



5.10 Police Scotland match reports indicate that since season 2013-14 there have been a total of 145 people arrested in relation to pyrotechnics at football, spread between home and away supporters and across incidents inside and outside venues. Figure 5.6 shows this broken down by season – it should be noted that one match (Celtic v Dinamo Zagreb in October 2014) accounted for 13 of the arrests in season 2014-15 and one match (Scotland v Poland in October 2015) accounted for 13 of the arrests in season 2015-16.

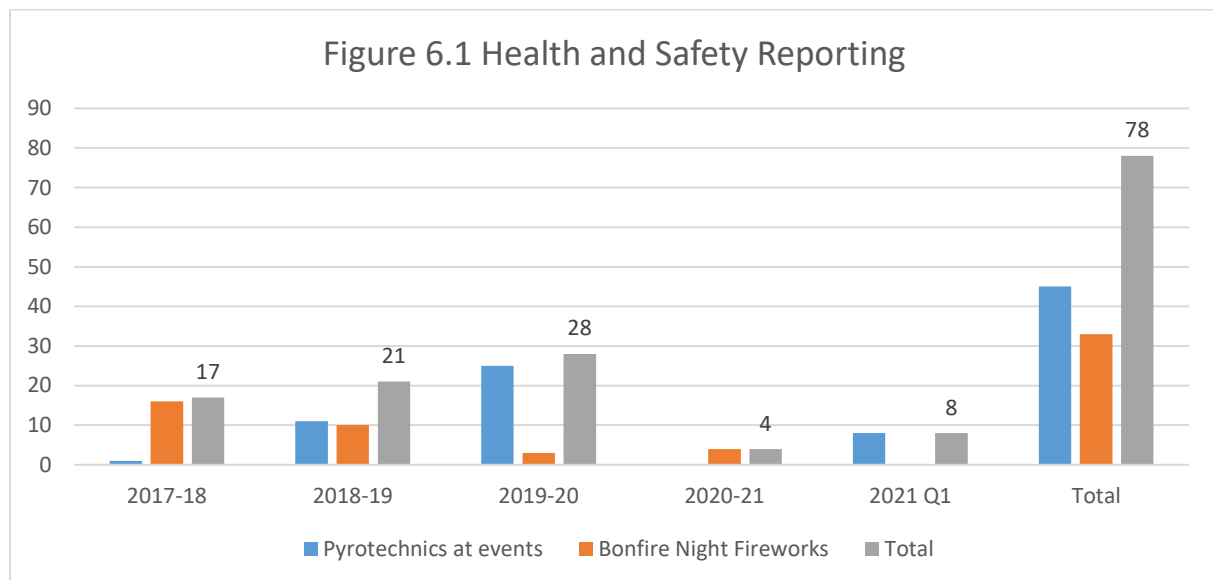


6 Police Scotland Health and Safety recording

- 6.1 In line with Health and Safety legislation, Police officers and staff, or their supervisor if the individual is incapacitated, are required by Health and Safety legislation to complete an accident/incident/near miss report where an incident meets the definition(s) set out by the Health and Safety Executive. Within Police Scotland this is achieved by means of a report created on the SCOPE system, which is then reviewed by Health and Safety staff.

Reported incidents

- 6.2 Figure 6.1 below shows the numbers of reports submitted to the SCOPE system since April 2017, broken down by financial year and split between incidents relating to Bonfire Night and incidents relating to pyrotechnics at other events. This split is the simplest method of making a distinction between fireworks incidents and incidents involving other types of pyrotechnic such as smoke bombs, flares or thunder flashes.

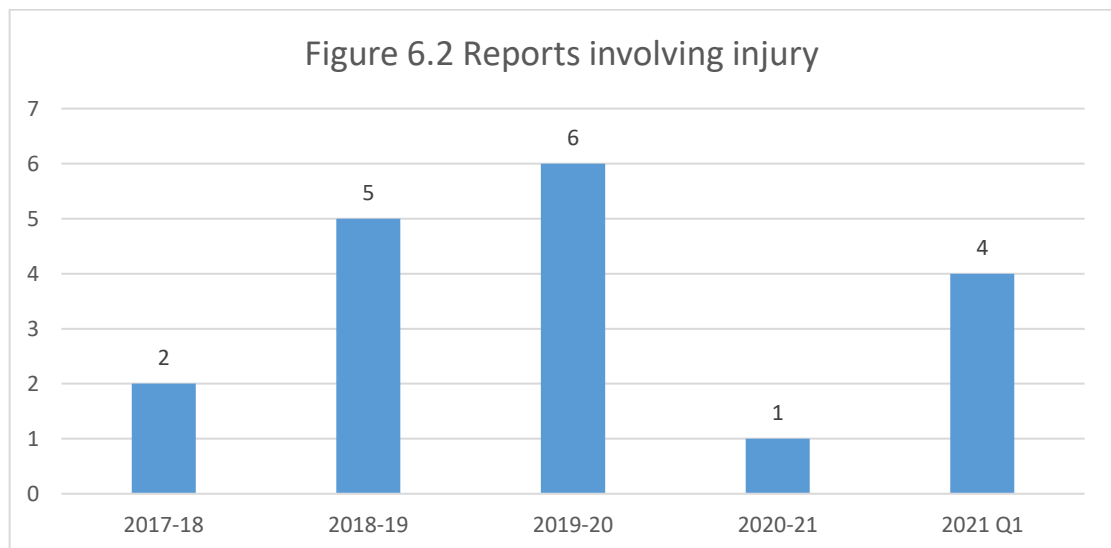


- 6.3 The figures from 2018-19 and 2019-20 show substantial increases compared to previous years (24% and 33% respectively). As stated above, the pandemic makes 2020-21 meaningless for carrying out any statistical analysis but the Q1 figure for 2021-22, if projected ahead for the full year, would result in a further increase in reports of 14% compared to 2019-20. It is impossible to know if the 2021-22 reporting will continue at a constant rate throughout the year, but already having eight reports during a year where major events continued to be severely restricted is concerning.
- 6.4 In relation to Health and Safety reporting on fireworks, reports show that some areas have had repeated disorder with fireworks which would be assisted with the provision of 'no fireworks' zones; these were recently consulted on and are included in the recommendations from the Fireworks Review Group. Reported

incidents show that in most incidents officers have only become aware of the firework when the article was thrown at them so had no opportunity to apply legislation in relation to possession of the firework. A preventive power of search coupled with 'no fireworks' zones could perhaps allow earlier pre-emptive intervention by officers and this would be assisted by a proxy purchase power which could prevent young people getting hold of the fireworks in the first place.

Reported injuries

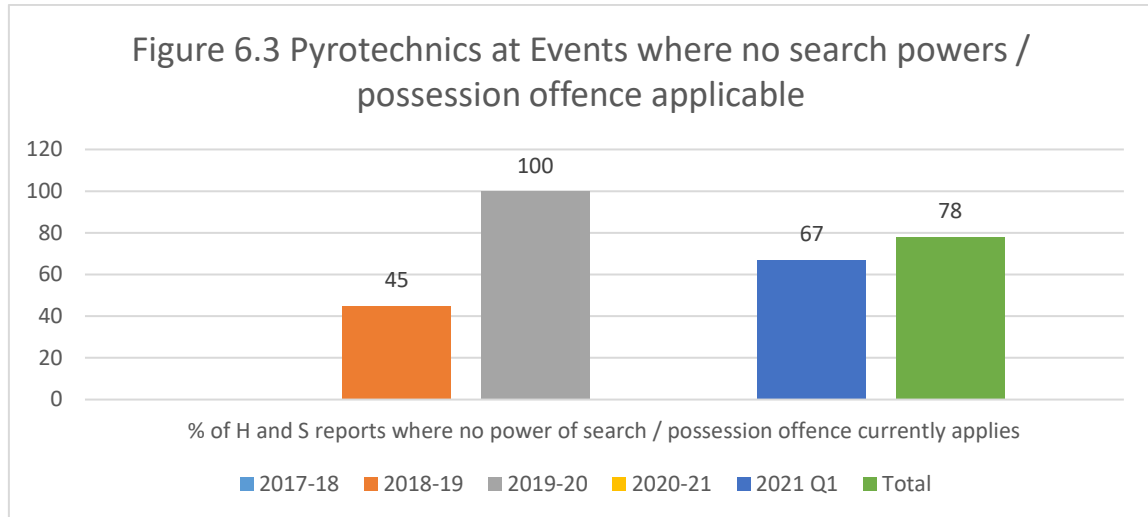
- 6.5 Reported injuries include damage to hearing, burns, bruising, abrasions and eye irritation and include two incidents which resulted in hospital treatment for the officers involved. Figure 6.2 below shows the number of reported injuries. The number of injuries is small in total but does show upward progression and if the Q1 2021-22 figure is projected forward for the full year, would show a substantial increase on the previous pre-pandemic totals to 16. It is impossible to know if the 2021-22 injury reporting will continue at a constant rate throughout the year, but even with only Q1 reporting known, the total number of injuries for 2021-22 is already close to the total for the full 2019-20 year.



Pyrotechnics incidents - no search powers / possession offence

- 6.6 Figure 6.3 below shows the percentage of Health and Safety reports that arose from circumstances where there is not currently a possession offence or search power in relation to pyrotechnics. These relate to circumstances where police officers could perhaps have intervened to prevent an accident / near miss had powers been available to them and represent a missed opportunity to enhance safety at events due to legislative provisions not permitting more proactive police action. The percentage each year is high, indicating significant potential for new powers to contribute to safer events.

- 6.7 Although modest in number, the Health and Safety reports are a powerful indicator of the risks posed by illicit use of pyrotechnics at events – every accident or near miss is a potential fatality due to the destructive nature of pyrotechnic articles.



7 Scottish Football Supporters' Association survey

- 7.1 The Scottish Football Supporters' Association (SFSA), a fans' umbrella organisation, published the results of its pyrotechnics public survey on 21 August 2021. This survey was used by SFSA to inform its own submission to the Scottish Government's public survey on fireworks and pyrotechnics and while it is brief in nature, the survey results show an interesting appetite amongst respondents for the continuation of pyrotechnic displays at football but with the reassurance of professional involvement.
- 7.2 The majority (69%) believe that pyrotechnics enhance the match day experience and have a place within Scottish football. However, 74% of respondents favoured the trialling of organised, licensed, club managed/led use of pyrotechnics, rather than unofficial fan activity. Almost half of respondents reporting having seen unsafe use of pyrotechnics in football stadia and 60% said they would feel safer travelling to matches if they knew only licensed individuals were allowed to possess pyrotechnics.
- 7.3 Thus while it is clear that pyrotechnics are regarded as a positive aspect of the football experience, there is a clear unease amongst respondents about their own safety while these articles remain in untrained hands.

8 Sources of pyrotechnics

- 8.1 Pyrotechnics are readily available from sources in Scotland and elsewhere:

- From information received by police it would appear that both individuals / football 'risk' groups are obtaining pyrotechnics online from countries such as China, Japan and Poland.
- Some supporters are actively advertising pyrotechnics on social media for sale to other supporters.
- Pyrotechnics can be purchased from retailers in Scotland at affordable prices.
- Pyrotechnics can be purchased from mainstream online outlets and individuals using online marketplace websites.

- 8.2 This ready availability is a concern when considered in conjunction with the profile of many football 'ultra' groups, which often attract teenage boys under the age of 18.
- 8.3 Protecting children and young people from harm is of paramount importance and in order to do this, potential supply chains to young people must be interrupted. As with other age restricted products, children and young people will often look to adults to supply them with a product which would otherwise be difficult for them to obtain.
- 8.4 Liquor is an example of such a product for which proxy purchase legislation has been in place for several years and this acts as a deterrent for both young people and adults and also provides police with an enforcement option when tackling such issues. Proxy purchase legislation also provides enforcement options when ensuring sellers of age restricted products are conducting their business responsibly. Without such legislation, enforcement options would be limited, which would in turn limit the police's ability to prevent children and young people from being exposed to the potential harms posed by pyrotechnic articles.

9 Prevention / Diversion – Pitchin' in Programme

- 9.1 The Pitchin' in Programme is a key strand of Police Scotland's prevention and diversion efforts relating to harmful behaviour amongst young people and although primarily focusing on football-related incidents, it can be applied to any context. This programme has been developed over several years to address violence, disorder and anti-social behaviour and it is delivered in person or online to address behaviour such as illicit use of pyrotechnics.
- 9.2 The programme takes into consideration scientific research that indicates young people's brain development may continue well into their 20s and provides a supportive, educative and rehabilitative response to them becoming involved in harmful behaviour such as illicit use of pyrotechnics. As such, the continued roll-out of the Pitchin' in Programme is an ideal accompaniment to additional powers designed to assist with removing dangerous articles from the public arena as the programme offers an opportunity to ensure young people are not unnecessarily criminalised for their actions.

Case studies and illustrative incidents from Scotland

1. Mounted Branch policing Celtic Park, Glasgow

The Police Scotland Mounted Branch is often deployed in the midst of the most challenging situations at events and while the officers and horses are highly trained to cope in crowd situations, the use of pyrotechnics bring a dimension of risk to this role that is unlike any other in policing. The incidents detailed below provide an insight into the impact of illicit use of pyrotechnics on this specialist function at one venue in Scotland. Although the information below relates only to policing at Celtic Park, Glasgow, this type of incident has been experienced by Mounted Branch officers at other venues around the country.

A number of the incidents detailed below occurred after the match or away from the stadium in circumstances where a search power for pyrotechnics and / or a possession offence for pyrotechnics could have contributed to a safer event.

On 02 September 2018 Mounted Unit officers were deployed at Celtic Park for a Celtic v Rangers game. Pre-match disorder took place at Clyde Gateway between Celtic and Rangers supporters where pyrotechnics were thrown towards police horses. Post-match mounted police were engaged in large scale disorder between rival supporters at Springfield Road.

On 29 September 2018 Mounted Unit officers were deployed at Celtic Park for a Celtic v Aberdeen game. Post-match mounted officers were involved in some minor disorder between rival supporters during which pyrotechnics were thrown at officers and horses.

On 13 December 2018 Mounted Unit officers were deployed to Celtic Park for the Celtic v Salzburg game. Pre-match, the Mounted Unit attended the front door of the stadium where a large number of home supporters were already in the barrier area, including Celtic 'risk' supporters. They were in possession of a large number of flares, smoke bombs and flags. Due to the enclosed area and large numbers of flares and other pyrotechnics being set off, the Mounted Sergeant made the decision to withdraw the horses from the front door. This had implications on the policing operation as the police horses could not be utilised at this location.

On 14 February 2019 Mounted Unit officers were deployed to Celtic Park for the match between Celtic and Valencia. During the post-match deployment, the Mounted Unit assisted at Kinloch Street with the away fans who were to be escorted to Bridgeton Cross who numbered approximately twenty persons. At this time a group of Celtic 'risk' numbering fifteen to twenty persons approached the away supporters and refused to move away when requested to do so by Public Order and Mounted Unit officers. A number of loud 'flash bangs' were released and deliberately thrown underneath the police horses by Celtic risk. This resulted in the horses becoming frightened and one of the horses received a burn to her leg from the pyrotechnics. One of the 'flash bangs' also exploded near to the leg of a Police Inspector narrowly missing causing injury.

2. Event Policing – conventional officers

In addition to specialist colleagues, convention police officers often find themselves confronted with the illicit use of pyrotechnics. The links below have been collated from open source research and demonstrate the illicit use of pyrotechnics at a wide range of events over more than a decade:

11/07/2010

Faithless - Insomnia | Live @ T in the Park festival (2:45 seconds on video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mko7RpS8Nxo>

30/04/2013

U17s Cup Final 2013 (football)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_7QebpfZPk

14/09/2013

St Johnstone v Hibs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Wzhe63AxJM>

12/07/2015

The Proclaimers performs Sunshine on Leith | T in the Park festival (0:22 s on video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LIMiFYfZlg>

28/07/2016

Fair City Unity (St Johnstone FC supporters)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFhVSCApAyg>

01/06/2017

Green Brigade Corteo (fan march). Scottish Cup Final 27/05/17

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RU9pnz1TbQ>

05/12/2017

Pyrotechnics inside Glasgow Hydro during Liam Gallagher concert

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/1929110/liam-gallagher-flares-sse-hydro-glasgow/>

30/06/2018

Pyrotechnics during Gerry Cinnamon set at TRNSMT festival

<https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/news/16325415.no-pyro-no-party---watch-dozens-banned-flares-go-off-gerry-cinnamon-takes-stage-trnsmt/>

09/11/2018

Serious injury - Bonfire Night accident

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/3465336/glasgow-schoolboy-coma-firework-priesthill-fingers-blown-off/>

BBC Sportscene pundits comment on pyrotechnics

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/av/football/47814453>

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07/05/2020

Teenage Hibs fan in court over 'throwing smoke bomb into disabled section at Dundee's Dens Park'

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/5260789/hibs-dundee-dens-park-smoke-bomb/>

15/05/2021

Rangers fans let off pyrotechnics over River Clyde ahead of trophy day

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/rangers-fans-hundreds-red-flares-24114170>

07/09/2019

Police officer injured by pyrotechnic during Glasgow republican parade

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/police-officer-injured-glasgow-firework-republican-parade-clyde-street-a9096131.html>

<https://www.glasgowlive.co.uk/news/glasgow-news/loyalist-yob-who-tossed-firework-19095727>

19/09/2019

Rangers v Feyenoord: Dutch fan arrested after flare set off in George Square

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/4738988/rangers-feyenoord-fans-flare-george-square-arrest/>

26/09/2019

Livingston v Rangers: Fans including child injured after flares and fireworks set off in away end

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/4767187/livingston-rangers-flare-fireworks/>

12/01/2021

Article on pyrotechnic-related detection

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/scottish-news/6523262/rangers-celtic-fans-arrest-pyro/>

09/03/2021

Rangers fan hit in face by firework sparks at George Square while setting off pyrotechnic into crowds

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/rangers-fan-hit-face-firework-23633398>

15/05/2021

Rangers title party: thousands of fans head to George Square and set off pyro & smoke bombs amid heavy police presence

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/scottish-news/7115591/rangers-fans-george-square-police/>

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16/05/2021

Report of Rangers fan seriously injured after firework he was holding blew up during title party

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/rangers-fan-missing-half-hand-24120416>

17/07/2021

Celtic's Green Brigade ultras celebrate 15th anniversary with George Square pyrotechnic display

<https://www.glasgowlive.co.uk/sport/football/football-news/celtics-green-brigade-ultras-celebrate-21078150>

3. Football-related incidents

The incidents below, taken from Police Scotland match reports, give an illustration of the circumstances in which there has been illicit use of pyrotechnics at football in recent years. The incidents show a mix of circumstances where new search powers could be applied along with circumstances where there are existing powers under legislation such as the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995, Sections 20 and 21.

Aberdeen v Celtic Scottish League Cup 02/12/2018 Kick-off: 15:00 Hours

Around 80 Green Brigade members walking towards the stadium. At this time, they took up the entire width of the road which caused issues for vehicles travelling in both directions. The group were in possession of their drum and large flagpoles. The group continued towards Aikenhead Road and by this time it was clear that there was in excess of 120 individuals. This group set off one flashbang as they entered the car park.

Within the stadium, there were numerous smoke devices and flashbangs used both within the concourse, within the seating area and of the Green brigade and thrown on trackside. There were also numerous flashbangs thrown from the Green Brigade section onto trackside which landed close to both Police and stewards. There was also a flare discharged near to the Segregation line at the Northwest corner.

Both sets of supporters carried out large displays on both sides of the stadium. Again, there were smoke and flares set off from behind the Celtic display and again coming from or near to the Green brigade section. There were 7 added minutes due to an injury and as play was stopped there was a flashbang set off again from within the Green Brigade section.

Celtic scored the only goal of the match in stoppage time and on doing so there was total of 5 smoke devices set off from within the area occupied by the Green brigade. An Aberdeen supporter managed to gain access to the pitch and was subsequently detained by stewards before being handed to Police. Additional Officers were required to assist with the male who was struggling with Officers. As Officers were dealing with this incident, 2 smoke devices were thrown towards them.

There was a red smoke device being thrown back and forth from both sets of supporters near to the segregation line. This causes a safety risk to members of the public/supporters due to the high temperature these devices burn at. As well as the smoke, this may cause difficulty breathing to asthma sufferers. Upon full time there was a further smoke device and flashbang set off from within the Green brigade section.

Hamilton v Motherwell Scottish League Cup 24 September 2014 Kick-off 19:45 Hours

A supporter had difficulty breathing after being overwhelmed by smoke from devices in the North Stand. Ambulance later called to assist.

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Dundee United v Motherwell Scottish Cup 29/11/2014 Kick-off 15:00 Hours

A steward was hit on the side of the face by a lit pyrotechnic.

Hibernian v Hearts Scottish Cup 22/02/2017 Kick-off 19:45 Hours

A smoke canister was thrown from West Stand (Hibernian) into the South Stand (Hearts) after the first goal, striking a young female, resulting in her sustaining burns to her legs.

Motherwell v Rangers Scottish Premiership 06/08/2017 Kick-off 13:30 Hours

Supporter injured by detonating thunder flash pyrotechnic article.

Rangers v Celtic Scottish Premiership 23/09/2017 Kick-off 13:00 Hours

In Helensburgh a Celtic supporter threw an ignited smoke grenade into an occupied public house causing danger to the public and placing them in a state of fear and alarm – he was later convicted and received a Community Payback Order and Football Banning Order.

Heart of Midlothian v Hibernian Scottish Premiership 27/12/2017 Kick-off 19:45 Hours

Approximately 300 Hibernian supporters congregated at the Murrayfield Hotel and formed a 'corteo' (fan march) to walk to the ground. Prior to marching off a smoke bomb was discharged from within the group. Flares and further pyrotechnic devices were set off by the group as they stopped underneath the Roseburn Bridge.

Celtic v Rangers Scottish Premiership 30/12/2017 Kick-off 12:00 Hours

Pre Match saw a large scale fan march of Celtic supporters on London Road, Glasgow towards Springfield Cross. Numerous flares and smoke canisters were used with some being thrown towards police officers. Another group set off numerous pyrotechnics within the car park at the Forge Retail Park.

Heart of Midlothian v Hibernian Scottish Cup 21/01/2018 Kick-off 14:05 Hours

Pre match The Murrayfield Hotel was quickly filled to capacity, with stewards operating a one in, one out system. Stewards were conducting pat-down searches and confiscated at least 9 smoke flares from Hibernian supporters entering.

Motherwell v Hamilton Scottish Premiership 12/05/2018 Kick-off 15:00 Hours

Prior to the match whilst a large group of Motherwell fans were making their way to the ground a pyrotechnic was let off. A short time later the male involved attended at the medical room at the ground with burns and admitted holding the pyrotechnic.

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Celtic v Motherwell Scottish Cup Final 19/05/2018 Kick-off 15:00 Hours

There was extensive pyrotechnic usage by both sets of supporters during the fixture and a detection for possession of a lit flare within the crowd outside the stadium. During the bus parade after the match numerous pyrotechnics in the form of smoke grenades and flares were used both behind the bus parade and outside Celtic Park, including smoke grenades thrown near to police vehicles.

Celtic v Rangers Scottish Premiership 02/09/2018 Kick-off 12:00 Hours

Pre match approximately 200 Green Brigade members used smoke and flares as they walked on the roadway towards the stadium escorted by Public Order officers. There were numerous smoke devices within the standing section upon kick off. Celtic scored the only goal of the fixture. Upon the goal, there were numerous smoke devices set off from within the safe standing section in the north east curve. A device was also thrown onto the field.

Hibernian v Heart of Midlothian Scottish Premiership 29/12/2018 Kick-off 17:30 Hours

Pre match, Hearts supporters began to gather in Easter Road and pyrotechnic articles were activated from within this group. One Hearts supporter was arrested in Easter Road at 1600hrs for being in possession of a lit pyrotechnic device. At 1605hrs, another Hearts supporter was arrested for being in possession of a lit pyrotechnic device. At 1625hrs, another Hearts supporter was arrested as he approached the away turnstiles in possession of a lit pyrotechnic article. About 1540hrs, some of the group made their way back to the Easter Road area, where they became disruptive and confrontational towards Hibernian supporters in the area and at 1648hrs there was a disturbance between rival supporters with a number of pyrotechnic articles being thrown between the groups in Easter Road, Bothwell Street and at the away turnstiles.

Hibernian v Rangers Scottish Premiership 08/03/2019 Kick-off 19:45 Hours

Approximately 50 Hibernian supporters, formed up at The Strathie Bar, Iona Street, to have a fan march to the ground. As the group entered Albion Road, one male activated a green marine flare and was arrested. Hibernian supporters also activated 2 marine flares from within the singing section while Rangers supporters activated one blue smoke grenade.

Celtic v Rangers Scottish Premiership 31/03/2019 Kick-off: 12:00 Hours

Prior to the match kicking off, about 1100hrs, a large group of Celtic supporters walked en masse to the stadium. Along the route other supporters joined this group and walked to the stadium escorted by Public Order officers. They ignited pyrotechnics throughout their journey to the stadium; these were thrown towards police officers. There were also reports of a blue smoke device being ignited by the away support.

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Celtic v Hamilton Scottish Premiership 02/08/2020 Kick-off: 15:00 Hours

With no fans able to attend the match at Celtic Park due the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Celtic supporters gathered outside the ground with a large amount of flares and smoke devices set off as the team bus made its way into the stadium.

Dundee United v Celtic Scottish Premiership 22/08/2020 Kick-off: 17:30 Hours

About 12 Celtic fans turned up outside the stadium with banners and on arrival of the team bus, two green smoke devices were activated by fans. Police attended and the crowd was dispersed.

Motherwell v Glentoran Europa League Qualifier 27/08/2020 Kick-off: 1945 Hours

Image on social media of pyrotechnics being used outside the stadium.

Hamilton v Rangers Scottish Premiership 29/08/2020 Kick-off: 1730 Hours

One 13 year old male youth Rangers supporter arrested for being in possession of 2 flares. Charged with offence under Fireworks regulations 2004, Regulation 4(1) and the Fireworks Act 2003, Sections 2 and 11.

Celtic v Motherwell Scottish Premiership 30/08/2020 Kick-off: 1500 Hours

About 30 Celtic 'risk' supporters were observed letting off numerous pyrotechnics on arrival of the Celtic team bus near stadium. Crime report was raised for Culpable and Reckless conduct with no persons identified as being responsible.

Appendix II

Incidents from outside Scotland

Open source research has been carried out with examples provided below of risks including death and serious injury when pyrotechnics have been used at events outside Scotland.

UEFA warns of pyrotechnic dangers

<https://www.uefa.com/insideuefa/protecting-the-game/security/news/newsid=2522865.html>

Football flare death lessons 'not learnt,' says victim's son

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-24931711>

Flare-throwing teens jailed for car death

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-41050496>

Two men killed by fireworks during New Year's Eve celebrations in Germany

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/men-killed-fireworks-new-years-eve-germany-berlin-cologne-brandenburg-a8136841.html>

Flares and smoke bombs: The ugly side of the beautiful game

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-35402735>

1992 - A 13-year-old Spanish boy was killed when he was hit in the chest by a flare at a stadium in Barcelona.

2013 - A 14-year-old boy died in Brazil from a flare which was thrown at a Corinthians game.

2015 - The Russia goalkeeper was struck on the back of the head with a flare during a match between Montenegro and Russia.

Examples of injuries caused by pyrotechnics at English football grounds

- Leeds United v Shrewsbury Town, 11 August 2012 – two supporters were injured, one requiring hospital treatment, when an industrial firework was ignited and thrown in the away supporters' toilet.
- Coventry City v Walsall, 8 December 2012 - a flare was discharged by the Walsall supporters. A steward placed his foot on the device to prevent further smoke escaping, however the sole of his shoe melted causing injury.
- Leicester City v Sheffield Wednesday, 9 March 2013 - a female supporter received treatment for burns to her leg from one of the smoke bombs thrown between supporters.

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- Bolton Wanderers v Huddersfield Town, 2 April 2013 - Bolton supporters ignited a flare and an 18 year old youth was treated after burns picking it up.
- West Bromwich Albion v Newcastle United, 20 April 2013 – fans were treated for shrapnel wounds following the setting off of thunder flashes. Debris passed through jeans and caused cuts to legs.
- Wigan Athletic v Aston Villa, May 2013 - a 15-year-old boy suffered lung damage from a smoke bomb thrown during the game. The boy needed hospital treatment, while two women aged 22 and 24, also required attention for the effects.
- Liverpool v Everton, 05 May 2013 – an eight year Everton fan was hit by a smoke bomb thrown by fans in the away end. He was treated for a burn on his neck.
- Aston Villa v Tottenham Hotspur on 20 October 2013 - an assistant referee was struck by a lit smoke canister thrown from the stand.

Pitchin' in Programme

The full Pitchin' in Programme can be accessed below:



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