

<b>Our Ref:</b> A28.3/04/13/9408	<b>Your Ref:</b> 9/50/22 - jwNOTIFICATIONLET
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<b>Proposed Procession:</b>	Scottish Defence League March	
<b>Date:</b>	1400 hours on Saturday 29 June 2013	
<b>Police met with organiser:</b>	No	
<b>Police objection to procession:</b>	No	
<b>Recommendations:</b>	1.	There should be a minimum of 10 dedicated, appropriately qualified stewards in attendance;
	2.	The organiser must fully brief stewards as to their responsibilities;
	3.	The stewards must wear high-visibility jackets, at all times when escorting the procession;
	4.	The Stewards must remain with the procession until the participants are transported by coach from the site of the procession at the conclusion of the event;
	5.	Participants will not act in a manner or display material which is likely to incite public disorder;
	6.	The organiser must arrange a full, Council resourced, road closure over the route of the procession, for its duration;
	7.	The procession will take place on the carriageway, affording the general public access to footpaths;
	8.	The organiser will confirm the coach company and registration numbers of vehicles used to transport participants to the event prior to 1000 hours on Saturday 29 June 2013 ;
	9.	The participants will muster at a pre-arranged location, agreed between the organiser and the Police;
	10.	The entire event will last no longer than one hour in total;
	11.	The organiser must inform the local media of the timings of the procession and likelihood of there being disruption to traffic in the City Centre;

	12.	The organiser must inform the Hackney Licensing Department of the timings of the procession given the potential disruption to taxi ranks in the City Centre;
	13.	The organiser must inform local bus companies of the street closures and their duration, to enable alternative routes to be implemented;
	14.	The organiser must inform the Scottish Ambulance Service and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service about the times and movements of the procession;
	15.	The organisers should have in place Public Liability Insurance should any legal action or otherwise be forthcoming following an incident during this event
<b>Policing to be provided:</b>	Yes	

**Comments:**

The Scottish Defence League (SDL) is a far-right protest group which opposes what it views as the spread of Islamism in the United Kingdom. The SDL are currently carrying out a series of processions and demonstrations throughout Scotland.

The group has faced confrontations from left-wing organisations including Unite against Fascism. Recent SDL marches throughout Scotland have attracted significant numbers from opposing political views and the recent events in Woolwich, London have heightened tensions around this controversial issue.

If this application is granted it will be an unprecedented event for the city of Aberdeen. Whilst Aberdeen City Division, Police Scotland does not object to the procession in principle, various concerns exist on the grounds of public safety, public order and/or disruption to life in the community.

The applicant has been invited to two multi-agency meetings and a specially convened meeting during the last five weeks but has failed to attend on each occasion. He has been sent a number of e-mails requesting more details of his proposals, but again has failed to provide a detailed response. Numerous messages have also been left via telephone but to date he has failed to make meaningful contact to discuss the application.

The lack of engagement with the organiser has resulted in the planning stage of the event being very challenging.

The route of this parade is within Aberdeen City Centre and will require a full road closure to be implemented by Aberdeen City Council Roads Department. It appears there has been no application made for a Temporary Traffic Restriction Order, which would include road closures on Crown Street and the adjoin streets and parking restrictions in the area of St John's Place.

There was a suggestion that the procession could take place on the footpath but the Police would strongly object to this on the grounds of public safety with a pedestrian procession mixing with moving traffic and also disruption to the general public and business community.

It is recommended the participants gather at 1330 hours, with the parade commencing at 1400 hours. The proposed assembly point is Langstane Place at the junction with Crown Street, Aberdeen.

The procession will follow a short route on Crown Street to St John's Place the site of St John's Episcopal Church. The rector of St John's has recently allowed Muslim's to use the church for prayers as there is insufficient room in the neighbouring Mosque. This decision has been met with objections from right-wing groups including the SDL and National Front Scotland.

It appears the intention of the SDL to hold a demonstration/rally on St Johns Place at the conclusion of the procession. This demonstration has been arranged to take place outside St John's Episcopal Church.

A large policing presence will require to be provided during the entire event on the condition it lasts no longer than one hour in total. This time restriction is not intended to curtail any political activity but to ensure that police resources are not committed to this event for an extended period.

Aberdeen City Division, Police Scotland has concerns due to groups with conflicting political views being in the same area at the same time. Whilst there is no current intelligence to indicate a risk to public safety, there are likely to be implications for public order in the area. It is assessed that any activity will likely amount to verbal or protest activity only. Police Scotland can police this event effectively however this will require a significant deployment of resources, including specialist officers to segregate opposing factions and thereby public safety. The combined effect of the two groups and a proportionate policing presence is likely to result in some disruption to the life of the local community.

In light of these concerns, Police Scotland would contest the applicant's assessment that there is no risk to public safety, public order, damage to property or disruption to local business, traffic and local community.

Previous experience indicates that should this application be refused, the SDL will hold some form of political demonstration/protest in Aberdeen city centre.

**Police contact:**

Inspector David Paterson, Aberdeen City Division  
Tel 01224 306481

**Signed:**

[Redacted Signature]

**Date:** 13 June 2013

Martin Mackay, Chief Inspector, Aberdeen City Division