

Police Record 221 Arrests Since Palestine Action Ban in July

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— Categories: Defence & Security



Police confirm that 221 arrests have been made since the proscription of activist group Palestine Action in early July. The ban, enacted on 5 July following a security breach at RAF Brize Norton, designates the organisation as a terrorist group under UK law.

According to counter-terrorism authorities, the majority of arrests, 162 cases, are linked to alleged breaches of Section 13 of the Terrorism Act, which prohibits the public display of items or behaviour associated with a proscribed group. A further 58 arrests have been made under Section 12, relating to inviting or recklessly expressing support for such organisations, while one individual has been detained under Section 11 for suspected membership.

Despite the significant number of arrests, only 10 individuals have been charged to date. Police state that investigations are ongoing, and further charges could follow. The small proportion of charges compared to arrests has prompted some civil liberties groups to question the use of such powers.

Amnesty International has called on the Metropolitan Police to exercise caution in handling public demonstrations. The group warns that detaining peaceful protesters could place fundamental freedoms at risk. Its statement comes ahead of a series of planned protests in the coming weeks.

The ban on Palestine Action was introduced after members of the group targeted sites linked to the defence industry, with particular focus on facilities associated with the production of military equipment for Israel. The government justified the proscription on the grounds of preventing disruption to national security and public order.

Law enforcement officials say the High Court is set to review the ban following a legal challenge. Until then, the police will continue enforcing counter-terrorism measures, which they argue are necessary to prevent further unlawful activity.

The case highlights an ongoing debate over the balance between security measures and the right to protest. While the government insists the ban is essential for public safety, campaigners argue it could set a precedent for restricting legitimate activism.

With the review pending, both sides are watching closely to see how the courts will rule. The outcome could have significant implications for the use of terrorism legislation against protest groups in the future.