OTAS LIVE

Supporting Events and Professionals at Every Stage

OTAS Insight, event security. Full report

Stopping the show for the front of stage

Two pauses at a UK arena, a stadium stop in Argentina, a stage rush in India, and who calls a show stop at your next gig



Lights up, music off, and everyone can see why. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

Operational **Tactical** **Strategic**

OTAS Insight v2.0 · 9 November 2026 · Correct as of 9 November 2026

OTAS Live Ltd.

SUMMARY

One show stopped, cleared the front and carried on. Another lost its barrier and its stage. The difference starts with a plan.

2

pauses at a UK arena show on 6 November 2026 for medical incidents in the crowd [8][10]

10

minutes, about, before a stadium show in La Plata restarted after a pause [1]

10%

less chance of survival for every minute of cardiac arrest without CPR and a defibrillator, the Resuscitation Council UK says [14]

Before your next standing show, agree who can call a show stop, the words, the cues and who agrees the restart.

By OTAS Insights. Edited by Kris Dailly. Correct as of 9 November 2026.



Lights up, music off, and everyone can see why. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

CONTENTS

In this report

01 Read this first

02 What was reported

03 More stops and near misses

04 Two events, two outcomes

05 What UK guidance says about the front of stage

06 The medical side of a show stop

07 The show stop script

08 Why a show stop needs a plan

09 Six things to agree with the stage

10 Signs the front of stage needs a stop

11 Plan the show stop before doors

12 When the barrier is not enough

13 Roles in a show stop

14 What to do at each level

15 The show stop checklist

16 What we do not know yet

17 Questions, sources and notes

01
Read this first

Sources: 21 public sources opened on 9 November 2026. They are reports from minutouno in Argentina, The Times of India and The Indian Express, The Star, Yorkshire Live and 360Wire on a UK arena show, WVLT and NBC Chicago in the US, the Resuscitation Council UK, the Purple Guide, HSE guidance and legislation.gov.uk. We describe venues and artists rather than naming them. Where a report carries an allegation, we say who made it. Each fact carries its source number. Everything without a source number is OTAS guidance for event professionals.

On Friday 6 November 2026, a show at a UK arena was paused twice for medical incidents in the crowd [8]. An eyewitness said an announcement from the stage reported that four people in the standing area had collapsed, 360Wire reported [10]. The headline act later criticised the venue's medical and security response, and alleged that it took staff 12 minutes to bring out a defibrillator during one incident [8]. The venue had been approached for comment [8][9]. These are allegations, and we have not seen the venue's account. On 21 October, a few songs into a stadium concert in La Plata, Argentina, the music stopped [1]. People in the standing field had built up against the barrier in front of the stage [1]. The house lights came up, the crowd was asked from the stage to step back, water was handed out and fans with dizziness were taken out [1]. About ten minutes later the show carried on [1]. On the evening of Saturday 31 October in Bhagalpur, India, a crowd larger than the ground could hold broke through the barricades at a music event and rushed the stage [2]. The performers were taken to safety, the show was abandoned and it took police nearly two hours to clear the ground [2]. This Insight is about the show stop: a procedure your team plans, not a decision left to the stage on the night.

> **In short:** a show stop works when everyone knows who calls it, what is said, what the lights and sound do, what the pit team does, and who agrees the restart. Plan it, brief it and rehearse the words before doors.

Five things to take away

01	**A show stop is a planned procedure, not a decision left to the stage.**
02	**A stop for a medical incident is only as good as the medical response behind it. Know how long your defibrillator takes to reach the floor [14].**
03	**Agree who can call it, and give them a direct line to the stage.**
04	**Lights up, sound down, one message, the same on screens and the PA.**
05	**The pit team uses the pause to give water and help people out.**
06	**Agree before doors who decides the show can restart, and on what check.**

ACTION

Read section 14, then agree one task for each level before your next event.



02

What was reported

Reports from each event, read on 9 November 2026 [1][2][8][9][10].
We describe venues and artists rather than naming them in the text. Some source links carry names.

Water over the barrier during a pause. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

A UK arena, 6 November

Where	A sold out arena show with a standing area, Yorkshire Live reported [9].
What happened	The show was paused during two separate medical incidents in the crowd, to let teams respond [8]. An eyewitness said an announcement from the stage reported four people in the standing area had collapsed [10].
The pause	The musicians left the stage while medical help was called, and came back once paramedics were confirmed to be arriving, 360Wire reported [10].
Afterwards	The headline act said the medical response did the audience “a complete injustice”, and alleged it took staff 12 minutes to bring out a defibrillator during one incident [8]. He also wrote that “no-one was properly hurt” [8].
The venue	The venue had been approached for comment [8][9]. We found no reply in the reports we read on 9 November 2026.

La Plata, 21 October

Where	A stadium concert in La Plata, Argentina, with a standing field in front of the stage [1].
What happened	A few songs in, people in the field built up against the barrier in front of the stage [1].
The stop	The music stopped, the house lights came up and the crowd was asked from the stage to step back, with translators and the big screens [1].
The pause	The message was repeated by the crowd control coordinators and medical staff. Water was handed out and fans with dizziness were taken out [1].
The restart	After about ten minutes, once space had been made at the front, the production allowed the show to restart [1].

Bhagalpur, 31 October

Where	A music event at an open ground in Bhagalpur, India, on Saturday evening [2].
What happened	The crowd was larger than the ground could hold. Soon after a popular song began, some people broke through the barricades and rushed the stage, and others followed [2].
The outcome	Chairs, shoes and stones were thrown at the stage. Security staff shielded the performers and took them away, and the show was abandoned [2].
The police	Police used batons to clear the ground [2]. It took nearly two hours. Several people, including police officers, were injured [2].

The permission	An official said the organisers had not obtained the required permission, so police were not deployed in enough numbers [2]. The official said legal action would be taken against the organisers [2].

	As reported
UK arena, pauses	Two, for medical incidents [8]
UK arena, allegation	12 minutes to bring out a defibrillator, the headline act alleged [8]
La Plata, length of pause	About ten minutes [1]
La Plata, what was done	Lights up, step back, water, people helped out [1]
Bhagalpur, crowd	Larger than the ground could hold [2]
Bhagalpur, time to clear	Nearly two hours [2]
Bhagalpur, permission	Not obtained, an official said [2]

Table 1. Three events, as reported. minutouno [1], The Times of India [2], The Star [8].

ACTION

Ask your team: if the front of stage built up tonight, who would stop the show, and how fast?

03
More stops and near misses

Three more reports, from 2025 and 2026. We describe the events rather than naming them.

	What was reported	What it shows
A festival in Chicago, July 2026	The headline act paused after several fans near the front lost consciousness, and called for security at least three times [12]. Those at the front had likely been there since gates opened about ten hours before [12]	Heat and a long wait at the front add up
A free pop-up on a US campus, September 2026	About 10,000 people came. Barriers collapsed soon after the gates opened, witnesses said, and the university said the organisers cancelled the show in consultation with the privately hired security [11]	A free event can draw far more than the space holds
A festival concert in Cuttack, India, November 2025	A surge as the singer came on. The organisers paused the show until police managed the crowd. Two people who fainted were treated at first aid, then taken to hospital [13]	A pause can work, if someone calls it

Table 3. Three more reports. NBC Chicago [12], WVLT [11], The Indian Express [13].

ACTION

Ask your team which of these could happen at your next show, and who would call the stop.

04
Two events, two outcomes

Side by side, as reported [1][2].

	La Plata	Bhagalpur
The barrier	Held, with pressure on it [1]	Breached [2]
The stage	Stopped the music and spoke to the crowd [1]	Rushed. Performers taken to safety [2]
The pause	About ten minutes, water and help at the front [1]	The show was abandoned [2]
Afterwards	The show carried on [1]	Nearly two hours to clear the ground [2]

Table 3. The two events side by side. minutouno [1], The Times of India [2].

ACTION

Use this table at your next safety meeting to ask which column your plan looks like.



05

What UK guidance says about the front of stage

In brief, from HSE event safety guidance [3][4][5][6] and the law. Not legal advice.

A paused stage, waiting for the call to restart. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

Expect the surge

- HSE says an audience may move forward as the main act comes on stage [4].
- It says to protect areas where people are vulnerable to crushing, for example in front of a stage [4].
- Crowd incidents can develop very quickly, HSE warns [4].

The barrier and the pit

- HSE describes a front of stage barrier with a step on the stage side, used to offer water to the audience or to lift people out over the barrier [3].
- It describes a pit area behind the barrier for stewards and first aiders, with escape routes to the left and right of the stage [3].

The law [20][21]

- Employers must assess the risks to people affected by their work, including the audience [21].
- They must run their undertaking so the public is not exposed to risks to health or safety, so far as is reasonably practicable [20].

Watching and stopping

- Staff in or near the crowd can observe faces and spot signs of distress [5].
- HSE says to plan a control point, with back up loud hailers in case the PA fails [4].
- The organiser keeps overall responsibility for the safety of the public, and roles should cover both normal and emergency situations [6].
- HSE asks organisers to put crowd controls in place based on the risk [18], and to plan for incidents and emergencies [17][19].

HSE also says that where a barrier section is under pressure, it should have no access gates [3].

ACTION

Check that your event safety plan names a show stop procedure, and that the stage team has read it.

06
The medical side of a show stop

A stop gives the medical team time and space. Sources shown.
The rest is OTAS guidance.

What the guidance says

Defibrillators	For every minute someone is in cardiac arrest without CPR and a defibrillator, their chance of survival falls by 10%, the Resuscitation Council UK says [14].
Medical cover	The Purple Guide says medical cover should fit the scale of the event and its activities, with at least a qualified first aider at any event [15].

What to plan

- Know where the nearest defibrillator is, and time the walk from there to the middle of the standing area.
- Agree the route medics use into the crowd, and who clears it.
- Put the medical lead on the same radio channel as the show caller.

ACTION

Walk the route from your defibrillator to the front of stage before doors, with a stopwatch.

07
The show stop script

Agree the words before doors, and give the same script to the stage, the screens and the PA. OTAS guidance.

The stop

- "We are going to stop for a moment. Everyone, please take two steps back."
- "Look after the people around you. If someone needs help, put your hand up."
- "We will start again as soon as the front is clear."

The restart

- "Thank you. Keep that space. Look after each other."
- Only after the named person has agreed the restart.

ACTION

Send the script to the artist team and the stage manager this week.



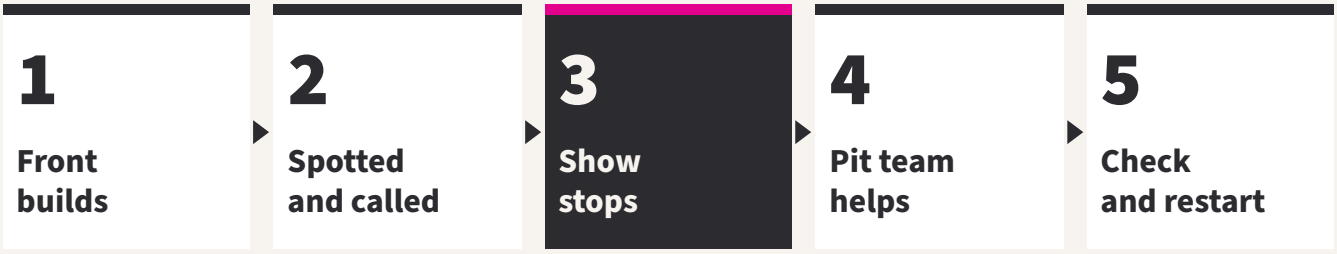
08

Why a show stop needs a plan

In La Plata the stop came from the stage, and the team around it backed it up [1]. The rest of this section is OTAS guidance, drawing on HSE.

The show stop is called from control, not left to chance. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

A show stop, from first sign to restart



The stop is only as fast as the line from the pit to the stage. OTAS guidance.

Speed

Pressure at the front can build in seconds. If nobody knows who calls the stop, the time is lost asking. The Purple Guide says crowd planning covers how people move around the site, and how they leave in an emergency [16].

One voice

The crowd listens to the stage. A stop works best when the words from the stage match the screens, the PA and the pit.

The pause has a job

A pause is time for the pit team to give water, help people out and let the front breathe [1][3].

The restart

Restarting too soon can bring the surge straight back. Someone needs to check the front first.

No barrier, no stop

In Bhagalpur the barricades failed and the stage was rushed [2]. A show stop needs a barrier and a crowd that fits the space.

ACTION

Agree who can call a show stop, and test the line from the pit to the stage before doors.

09
Six things to agree with the stage

These are the six things to agree first. OTAS guidance unless a source is shown.

Before doors

Who calls	The named people who can call a stop [6].
The line	A direct radio or talkback route from the pit to the show caller.
The words	The stop and restart script, agreed with the artist team.
The cues	Music off, house lights up, effects and pyrotechnics stopped, the script on screens and the PA. OTAS guidance, drawing on the La Plata stop [1].
The pit	Water ready, the step behind the barrier clear, first aid on hand [3].
The restart	Who checks the front, and who agrees the restart.

ACTION

Give each of the six a named owner today.

10
Signs the front of stage needs a stop

Signs 1 to 3 draw on the reports and on HSE. Signs 4 and 5 are OTAS guidance.

Signs the front needs a stop

01 People pressed on the barrier

The front rows are pushed hard against the barrier and cannot step back [1][3].

02 Faces in distress

People look pale, faint or distressed, or hold their hands up for help [1][5].

03 People being lifted out

The pit team is lifting more and more people over the barrier [3].

04 The crowd sways

The crowd moves in waves, and people fall or lose their footing.

05 Pit calls go unanswered

The pit team cannot get through to control or the stage over the noise.

Signs 1 to 3 from the reports [1] and HSE [3][5]. Signs 4 and 5 are OTAS guidance.

ACTION

Brief the pit team on these five signs, and on the exact words they use to call a stop.



11

Plan the show stop before doors

Five stages, from the planning meeting to the restart. OTAS guidance unless a source is shown.

Restart only once the front has space again. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

Five stages, from the plan to the restart



STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Plan	**Brief**	**Stop**	**Help**	**Restart**
Who calls, who restarts	Same words, same cues	Lights up, one message	Water, lift out, first aid	Check, then agree

From the plan in this Insight. OTAS guidance.

Stage 1. Plan

Write the show stop procedure into the event safety plan. Name who can call it and who agrees the restart [6].

Stage 2. Brief

Brief the artist team, stage manager, show caller, lighting, sound, screens and the pit team on the same words and cues.

Stage 3. Stop

On the call: music off, house lights up, effects and pyrotechnics stopped, one message from the stage, the same on the screens and the PA [1].

Stage 4. Help

The trained pit team gives water, lifts people out over the barrier and passes them to first aid [1][3].

Stage 5. Restart

The named person checks the front with the pit supervisor, then agrees the restart with the stage.

Part	What it needs
Who calls	The named people who can call a show stop
The line	How the pit reaches the show caller and the stage
The words	The script read from the stage and shown on screens
The cues	Music off, house lights up, effects and pyrotechnics stopped, screens and PA
The restart	Who checks the front, and who agrees the restart

Table 2. What to agree before doors. OTAS guidance.

ACTION

Hand the stage manager the show stop words before soundcheck, and agree them with the artist team.

12
When the barrier is not enough

The Bhagalpur report shows what can follow when a crowd is larger than the ground can hold and the barricades are breached [2]. OTAS guidance.

Plan first

Capacity	Know how many the standing area can hold, and stop entry when it is full.
Barrier	Use a barrier built for front of stage, with a pit behind it [3].
Competent person	A competent person should check the barrier design, loading and build, and the standing capacity. HSE points to Institution of Structural Engineers guidance on temporary demountable structures for the barrier [3].
Permission	Hold the licences and agreements the event needs, and share the plan with the police.

On the night

- Stop the show early, before the barrier is tested.
- Keep the escapes to the left and right of the stage clear, so people at the front can move away to safety [3].
- If the barrier fails, protect people first, then the stage.

ACTION

Check that your standing capacity and barrier are written into the plan, not just agreed by word of mouth.

13
Roles in a show stop

Four roles, each with one named person. OTAS guidance, drawing on HSE [6].

Role	What they own
Event safety officer	The decision to stop and to restart
Pit supervisor	Spotting the build up and checking the front
Show caller	The cues to sound, lights, screens and the stage
Artist liaison	The script on stage, agreed before doors

Table 4. Roles in a show stop. OTAS guidance.

ACTION

Put a name against each role on the running order for your next show.

14
What to do at each level

Operational

Watch faces

Call it in

Water and help

Watch faces at the front. Call pressure in with the agreed words. During a stop, give water, and if you are trained in the pit, help people out over the barrier and pass them to first aid.

Tactical

Keep the line open

Run the cues

Check the front

Keep the line from the pit to the show caller open. When a stop is called, run the cues. Check the front with the pit supervisor before any restart.

Strategic

Write the procedure

Agree with artists

Name who calls

Write the show stop procedure into the plan. Agree it with the artist team and the promoter. Name who calls a stop and who agrees the restart.

ACTION

Pick one action at your level and do it before your next standing show.

15
The show stop checklist

OTAS guidance unless a source is shown.

Before doors

- A written show stop procedure, agreed with the artist team.
- Named people who call a stop and agree the restart.
- A tested line from the pit to the show caller.
- The script loaded on the screens.

During the show

- Pit team watching faces at the front [5].
- Water ready behind the barrier [3].
- First aid ready to take people from the pit.

After

- A log of any stop, its length and the restart.
- A short debrief with the pit team and the stage [7].

ACTION

Print this checklist for your next production meeting.

16
What we do not know yet

- What happened in the two medical incidents at the UK arena, and the venue's account. The venue had been approached for comment [8][9].
- How the stage and the production spoke to each other before and during the La Plata stop.
- How many people the Bhagalpur ground was meant to hold, and how many came.
- What the legal action against the Bhagalpur organisers will find.

ACTION

We will update this Insight if any of the venues or the authorities publish more.

17

Coming up: arena and club season

Arena tours, club nights and Christmas shows run across the UK through December. Many have standing areas in front of the stage. HSE says audiences may move forward as the main act comes on [4]. Agree your show stop before the tour reaches you.

ACTION

If you need support with a show stop procedure or front of stage planning, reach out to us to see how we can support you.

Questions

Who should be able to call a show stop?

A small number of named people, usually the event safety officer and the pit supervisor, with the show caller running the cues. Agree with the artist team before doors that if anyone named sees people in immediate danger, the stop happens at once and is confirmed afterwards.

What should the artist say?

Short, calm words agreed in advance: stop, step back, look after the people next to you. The same words on the screens and the PA [1].

How fast should the medical response be?

As fast as you can make it. For every minute without CPR and a defibrillator, the chance of survival falls by 10% [14]. Time the route from your defibrillator to the standing area, and plan it into the show stop.

What does the pit team do during the pause?

The trained pit team gives water, lifts people out over the barrier and passes them to first aid, as HSE describes [3].

How long should a stop last?

As long as it takes to clear the front. In La Plata it was about ten minutes [1]. The restart is agreed only after a check.

What if there is no barrier or the barrier fails?

Then a show stop alone will not keep people safe. In Bhagalpur the barricades were breached and the stage was rushed [2]. Plan the barrier and the capacity first.

> **If the front of stage built up at your next show, who would call the stop, and how would the stage hear it?**

ACTION

Send us your question and we will add the answer to the next update.

Sources

Web sources opened 9 November 2026 and labelled with their publisher.

1. **minutouno, show paused in La Plata because of crowd pressure on the barriers, 21 October 2026** minutouno.com
2. **The Times of India, several injured as music show turns violent in Bhagalpur, 2 November 2026** timesofindia.indiatimes.com
3. **HSE, stage barriers** hse.gov.uk
4. **HSE, crowd controls inside the venue** hse.gov.uk
5. **HSE, crowd management, monitoring** hse.gov.uk
6. **HSE, set clear roles and responsibilities, updated 4 April 2025** hse.gov.uk
7. **HSE, crowd management, assess the risks** hse.gov.uk
8. **The Star, headline act criticises an arena's response to two medical incidents, 7 November 2026** thestar.co.uk
9. **Yorkshire Live, headline act says crowd emergencies stopped an arena gig, 8 November 2026** examinerlive.co.uk
10. **360Wire, paramedics called to an arena during a concert, 6 November 2026** jusmedia.co.uk
11. **WVLT, free campus concert shut down after a crowd surge, 25 September 2026** wvlt.tv
12. **NBC Chicago, headline act pauses festival show after several fans pass out, July 2026** nbcchicago.com
13. **The Indian Express, stampede like situation at a festival concert in Cuttack, two fainted, November 2025** indianexpress.com
14. **Resuscitation Council UK, defibrillation** resus.org.uk
15. **The Purple Guide, medical** thepurpleguide.co.uk
16. **The Purple Guide, crowd management** thepurpleguide.co.uk
17. **HSE, managing crowds safely** hse.gov.uk
18. **HSE, event safety, put crowd controls in place** hse.gov.uk
19. **HSE, running an event safely** hse.gov.uk
20. **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, section 3, duties to persons other than employees** legislation.gov.uk
21. **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, regulation 3, risk assessment** legislation.gov.uk

Related OTAS Insights

These are links to other OTAS Insights pieces, not to any OTAS Live product or service.

Irritant spray in the crowd: the first five minutes
Christmas lights switch-ons: a capacity without a turnstile

Guidance: this Insight summarises HSE and Purple Guide guidance, the Resuscitation Council UK, and parts of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which apply in Great Britain. Northern Ireland has its own equivalent law. It is not legal advice. Ask your council, the police and your safety advisory group what applies to your event.

Interest: OTAS Live Ltd, which publishes OTAS Insights, sells event operations services, handbooks and training related to this topic.

Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Corrections: if you spot an error, tell us using the contact details on the OTAS Insights page and we will correct it and update the 'Correct as of' date. To ask for this Insight in another format, use the same contact details.

OTAS, our website and OTAS Insights are a work in progress. Get involved and tell us what to improve.

Published by OTAS Live Ltd. General information only, correct as of 9 November 2026. It is not legal advice and does not replace your own risk assessment or the advice of your local council, the police and the fire service.

Events industry since 2008, internationally since 2015.

OTAS Live Ltd.

Images are OTAS style images, generated from real photography. None is a record of a specific event.

ACTION

Check the sources before you quote them, and tell us if any link has changed.

OVER TO YOU

If the front of stage built up at your next show, who would call the stop, and how would the stage hear it?

If you need support with a show stop procedure or front of stage planning, reach out to us to see how we can support you.

OTAS LIVE

Events industry since 2008, internationally since 2015.

OTAS Live Ltd.

OTAS Insight v2.0 · Correct as of 9 November 2026