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## E 1 | CHECKLIST FOR AFFINITY GROUPS

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### Forming an affinity group (AG)

- Possible criteria for the formation of an AG: 1) Same/similar action level(what exactly does everyone want to do during the action? What level of confrontation are people comfortable with?) 2) Members of the AG already know one another well and trust each other.
- Groups of people with a similar level of experience have advantages, but it is helpful to enable inexperienced people to participate in experienced AGs

### AGs should prepare for an action by:

- Participating in action or blockade training as an AG, as this helps people to get to know each another better and to practice behaviour and decision-making etc.
- Practicing fast consensus-based decision-making.
- Gathering information about the expected scenario, the surroundings, and the things that activists should bring with them.

### AGs should discuss:

- Previous experiences; fears, aims, motivations, and the needs and requirements of individual members in the context of the action
- Names and dates of birth (in case the legal team needs to be called).
- Addresses, phone numbers or other ways of contacting each other (to get in touch later, and in case of legal consequences).
- Medical conditions/issues.
- Availability (How much time does everyone have?).
- Individual and collective limits in terms of the action: it is not necessary to reach a final decision on this issue before the action takes place, but you should have an understanding of how far everyone is willing to go. It may be useful for the group to plan to divide at some point, so that the whole AG does not have to leave if some members reach their limits.
- Possible repression and legal consequences, and how to deal with these issues collectively.

### AGs should agree on:

- A buddy system: two people stay together during an action, no matter what – particularly if it is not possible for the whole AG to do so. If the two people are of the same gender they may be able to stay together if they are arrested or taken into custody.
- Discuss and agree on situations in which the AG will split up or be dissolved.
- Participation in the spokes' or delegates' council as part of the overall coordination of the action (alternating delegates or the same delegate?).
- A name for the affinity group (an unusual word that can easily be called out and that is clear and easy to understand), so that people's real names do not have to be used. This is also a faster way of getting the group back together if it does split up.

- Decision-making (e.g. consensus, voting, delegating certain decisions).
- Hand signs that you can use for communicating in hectic and stressful situations (e.g., pointing in directions while running; or to indicate that you want to ‘come together to discuss something’, etc.).
- Meeting points for before, during and after the action.
- Division of tasks, depending on the action and the group, e.g., one person has the map, one person has a first aid kit, another provides information (via a ticker, Twitter, a phone line etc.).
- Behaviour towards the police.
- Behaviour towards other people or groups who do things during the action that do not reflect your ideas, needs or the action consensus.
- Ideally, a way of/time for evaluating the action afterwards.

**AGs should evaluate and review the action together**

- What did everyone feel like as part of the AG? How well did the action go?
- What worked well? What did not?
- Has there been any repression, or could repression still happen? Agree on what to do in case repression does occur (such as swapping contact details to stay in touch).

Source: Skills for Action, Action Training Manual, <http://www.skills-for-action.de/en>