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# *Counter Action*

*Putting robbers  
out of business*

This campaign was first developed by the Metropolitan Police in partnership with Threshers and is now being sponsored by *redcare*



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If you're in business, you know that robbery is a possibility. But, unless you've been a victim yourself, it's much easier to pretend it only happens to others. That is why the Metropolitan Police and *redcare* intelligent alarm signalling want you to join us in a campaign called 'Counter Action'.

And Counter Action is exactly what we're encouraging you to take to help protect your business.

For, by working together, we will reduce the chances of you being robbed and *put robbers out of business.*



## *Counter Action*

Many of the things you can do to make your business, and more importantly your staff and yourself, more secure do not cost anything and are simple to do. Much of it is common sense and gained from experience.

Of course, more sophisticated security precautions do cost money and as a general rule the more you do to prevent robbery, the safer you are.

But no matter how much or how little you can afford, anything that makes a robber's task more difficult is a major investment in your safety and improves your profitability.

So, while it may not be possible to have everything you want, you could stagger the expense of installing security equipment (and stagger the potential robber) in the following ways.

## *Be alert*

Keep an eye out for the unusual.

If you spot anyone acting suspiciously, call 999. Police do not mind attending false alarms when they are made in good faith.

Watch out for anything unusual occurring at neighbouring premises and ask them to do the same for you. See if there is a local Business Watch you can join, or start your own.

Display, in a prominent position, a sign asking motorcyclists to remove their crash helmets before entering your premises. If they refuse, ask yourself – why?

Be aware of people hanging around out of normal business hours and if they ask to come in, even on a service pretext (gas, electricity, water etc) demand proof of identity.

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## Visibility

Make sure you can both see and be seen at all times.

Keep window advertising to below waist height or above head height so you can spot anyone acting suspiciously. And people outside can see if anything is wrong inside.

Don't obscure your line of vision with high shelving units or displays.

If your business generates a lot of rubbish (ie, cartons, cardboard boxes etc) do not let it pile high enough to provide cover for a would-be robber.

Ensure that your premises are well lit, inside and outside.

Boost your interior lighting, if only by increasing the wattage of the bulbs.

If you don't have lighting for exterior and storage areas we recommend you install some as soon as possible. Criminals do not like to work in areas where they can easily be seen and identified.

## Security equipment

**Spy-hole viewers.** They are cheap and easy to install in service doors.

Always establish who visitors are before allowing them in.

**35mm photographic surveillance, Closed Circuit Television and video recording equipment.** These systems provide evidence of a robbery and can assist the Police in identifying and catching robbers. The last thing a robber wants is to be on television. These systems are not only effective deterrents but can alert back-room staff to what's going on out front.

**Intelligent alarm signalling warning.** If you've invested in an intelligent alarm signalling service so that your alarm is actively monitored, let potential burglars know by putting a warning sticker in a prominent place in your shop window or door. It's been proven to be a big deterrent.

## **Cash**

Keep as little cash as possible on the premises with a minimum in each till.

It is unwise to count cash within anyone else's view.

Siting tills away from entrance/exit doors lessens your vulnerability to till snatches.

Transfer excess cash to somewhere safe.

Restrict access to the rear of counters by means of lockable doors or counter flaps.

Try to pay your staff by cheque or cash transfer.

## **Security equipment**

**Plastic till-guards.** A cheap but effective way to prevent till snatches.

**Smoke and Dye money pack systems.** Designed to emit coloured smoke and spoil cash which has been stolen.

**Pneumatic cash transfer systems.** An air-powered tube system to convey cash to a secure area or safe.

**External access safes.** Where cash collection companies can supply or take away cash without the need to enter premises.

**Counter cache(s).** Lockable metal containers which can be kept close to the till, they are intended for the temporary holding of bank notes before transfer to the safe or bank.

**Anti-bandit or bullet-resistant glass and fast-rising screens.** Fitted at till points or pay kiosks, these offer the cashier protection and are a significant deterrent.

**Time-delay safes.** Secure and only possible to open after a pre-set time, these safes will keep any cash not in the till, or not yet banked, safe from all but the most determined robbers.



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## **Banking procedures**

If large amounts of cash need to be banked or collected on a regular basis, then the safest method is to employ a recognised cash carrying company.

If you do undertake your own banking, be especially careful. Remember you are most vulnerable at the start or finish of your journey.

Choose the right staff for the job.

Be alert. Look out for suspicious people or vehicles.

Always use a secure container for carrying cash, but don't draw attention to it.

Don't be predictable. Vary the times and routes taken. Try and use the busiest roads and walk in the centre of the pavement, towards oncoming traffic.

Never use public transport.

If you use a car, try not to use the same one each time. If possible, use a decoy vehicle as well.

Make sure all vehicles are well maintained. Keep all doors locked and don't make unnecessary stops or leave the vehicle before you reach your destination.

If you are attacked – surrender the cash.  
**NEVER HAVE A GO.**

## **Security equipment**

**Cash carrying equipment.** A security briefcase, bag or product designed for the movement of cash. These may include Smoke and Dye products.

**Car safes.** Can be fitted in the boot of the car or ring bolts can be fitted to secure cash carrying equipment.



## *Security procedures*

Make sure that every member of staff is fully aware of all the security procedures you have taken and can operate any equipment. Regular staff training, and security reminders, are important factors in preventing robberies.

Make sure all service doors, other than front entrances and exits are kept locked when not in use. They must, however, comply with fire regulations.

Access to rooms and stores, above or at the rear of premises, should be designed so that you don't have to leave the building in order to gain entrance to them.

It is advisable not to open or close your premises alone. Another person should be with you at these vulnerable times when your attention is elsewhere.

Get into the habit of making a security check on all doors, windows and alarms before leaving the premises at the end of the day.

To lessen your vulnerability it is advisable to have more than one member of staff on your premises.

The dividing of keys for doors and safes among staff is a good safeguard.

Notices outside, that anti-theft devices are operating inside, become a true deterrent where the systems have been properly installed.

Uniformed guards can be introduced full time, or to cover a particularly vulnerable period.

Internal displays can be sited in such a way as to guide the honest shopper through the sales area to the tills but can act as barriers to the would-be robber. Remember to be careful not to interfere with a good natural view of the inside of the premises.

## **Security equipment**

**Personal attack buttons.** You can put these at various points around your premises. They can be connected to a bell that rings outside your premises. Or, if your premises are protected by an intelligent, continuously monitored signalling system, a silent alarm will be sent to a monitoring centre, even if the line is cut, who will immediately call the Police. This will let someone know something is wrong without alerting the robber.

**Magnetic and electric door locks.** Especially useful for late-night services, these allow you to control entries and exits from a central point.

**Gates or barriers.** Consider limiting access to shared areas at the rear of the premises.

**Intelligent alarm signalling.** Keep up the fight against crime after hours too. By installing an intelligent, continuously monitored alarm signalling system connected to a remote alarm monitoring centre, your premises will be protected night and day. If a burglar attempts to break in or the phone line to the monitoring centre is cut, an alert will always be delivered in seconds – and from there on to the Police.

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## *Special cases*

While much that is detailed in this brochure will obviously apply equally well to mobile businesses and businesses with extended hours, they will also have some extra, specific security needs.

Again, most of these points are common sense and cost little to carry out, but are well worth taking into account.

## **Mobile businesses**

Where possible try to deal with account customers. This will reduce the need to carry cash and make you a far less attractive target.

Site your business near similar businesses. If you can do this you will benefit from the traditional 'safety in numbers'.

Avoid dark, lonely locations.

If you have any doubts about an address or customer, choose a busy location in which to conduct your business.

## **Security equipment**

**Radios or mobile phones.**

## **Extended hours businesses**

While the same rules apply as in other businesses, later hours may make you even more vulnerable. You might need extra security measures and equipment as well as being more vigilant.

## **Security equipment**

**Extra telephone extension or mobile phone.**

**Night service hatch.** Leading directly to the street, a security hatch allows you to serve customers without them entering your premises.

## *In the event of a robbery*

Now, say you've done all you can to safeguard your staff, yourself and your premises, but you are still robbed. It doesn't mean your security measures have been wasted. There may have been many other occasions, that you don't know about, when they have worked perfectly.

But that's not important right now. All that matters is the safety of you and your staff. So there are really only a few things to remember.

**Take no risks.** Make no sudden movements or noises and do exactly as you're told.

**Do not 'have a go'.** Give the robbers what they want. Remember everything can be replaced except you and your staff.

**If you are not directly involved in the robbery, keep away.** If you are out of sight, stay out of sight.

**If your premises have a silent alarm, then use it, but don't take any risks to do so.** Also, if you have the opportunity, dial 999 and inform the Police. If you don't have an alarm, consider having one fitted.

**Try and remember as much as possible.**

It's not easy, but every little detail you can remember may help us catch the robbers.



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## *Don't let them get away with it*

Even if the robber gets away with your property, there are a number of things you can do to help us catch them.

First, stop trading, close the premises and ask any witnesses to wait for the arrival of the Police, or obtain their names and addresses.

Remember all you can about the robbery and the robbers: age, height, build, hair, clothing, accents etc.

Pay particular attention to any distinguishing features such as tattoos, scars, warts or other blemishes.

Note the details of any weapons or vehicles used and the direction in which the robbers fled.

Do not touch or move anything and try to make a special note of any item or object the robbers may have touched and left fingerprints on.

Lastly, every detail you can remember, no matter how small, could help the Police to arrest them.

## *Look after your staff and yourself*

Being involved in a robbery is a traumatic experience. Different people cope with it in different ways but it is impossible for anyone to remain totally unaffected. This fact is recognised by Police and Doctors and referral to professional counsellors can be arranged by your personnel department, or for small businesses through your local Victim Support Scheme or your own GP.

## *Last and first*

If you need any help or advice on how to make yourself, your staff and your premises more secure, or if there is anything you have read here that you would like to know more about, then don't hesitate to call your local Police Station.

Also, if you are either refurbishing your premises, or at the design stage of a new building, please consult one of our Police Crime Prevention Design Advisers. They can offer invaluable advice on how to design out crime and build in security and can also be contacted through the Thames Valley Force Crime Reduction Office on 01865 846662.

For more information on how to design out crime go to: [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

For other sources of Crime Reduction advice visit [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)  
[www.businesscrime.co.uk](http://www.businesscrime.co.uk) and  
[www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk)

***So take Counter Action now  
and together let's put the  
robbers out of business.***



***...always there***



# redcare

*Now with Police Preferred Specification*



## Secure

There isn't a more secure alarm signalling service on the market. Let us explain why. Our system is always on. Always monitored. Constantly checked. All day. All night.

## Police accredited

The harshest critics of all alarm signalling systems have been the Police: years of false alarms have tried their patience. Because **redcare** has passed rigorous independent testing against the highest European standards, ACPO CPI Ltd have awarded it with 'Secured by Design' accreditation. This means that **redcare** has 'Police Preferred Specification'.



POLICE PREFERRED  
SPECIFICATION

 **Thames Valley  
CRIMESTOPPERS**  
**0800 555 111**

To obtain a quote for including **redcare** intelligent alarm signalling as part of your business security, contact your alarm installer. For a list of installers in your area, go to the **redcare SECURITY** website at [www.redcare.bt.com](http://www.redcare.bt.com) or Freefone 0800 800 828 quoting ref: TVP Counter Action

*...always there*