

## PROTECTING THE OFFICE



### 1 Access control / intercom

An electronic door lock and intercom will provide the security of controlling who is allowed into the building.

Visitors should ideally be met at a reception desk logged in/out and issued with identification badges, which should be worn during their stay in the building. Visitor control / documentation could be via a simple manual recording system and handwritten badge or via one of the many sophisticated PC based systems now available.

### 2 External doors

Never leave unlocked unless manned or staffed. Fit door open alarm to indicate when open. Fit substantial lock to front and rear doors, 5 lever minimum (to BS 3621). Other measures may include the installation of hinge bolts, anti jemmy strips, access control systems, and door viewers.

### 3 Windows

Never leave windows open when a room is unattended. Consider window locks, window alarms, and internally or externally fitted security bars or grilles (some grilles can be unlocked and removed or folded back during room occupation). In vulnerable areas windows may also require external grilles, screens or shutters as protection against vandalism. Specialist window film can be applied to improve privacy (prevent passers by seeing into a room), for safety reasons (bomb blast protection), or simply as protection against solar gain.

### 4 Alarm systems

Together with the other measures a good quality and professionally installed alarm system, will be of help. Most insurers and police authorities however now insist on monitored alarms with verification on activation capability. Mobile sensor posts

with central monitoring systems offer excellent temporary security for perimeter or empty property applications

### 5 CCTV

Ideal for visual surveillance of the outside of the premises, car parking areas, rear doors, or entrance lobby. Multi camera observation / recording systems are now available and easily affordable. The new generation of CCTV digital recording / transmission systems offer the facility to view the images from on-site cameras in real time mode from anywhere in the world via a PC and modem link using a standard telephone line. Wire free CCTV systems can offer a cost effective solution for sites which will not easily facilitate the hard wired connection of camera(s) to monitor.

### 6 Lighting

Good lighting will increase the level of criminal deterrent especially for vulnerable areas.

**Remember** Before implementing any security measure it is preferable to carry out a risk survey. The available security options may then be evaluated against the perceived risk and the most appropriate product or solution identified

Such lighting can be controlled by a timeswitch, can be activated by a light sensor (to switch on automatically as darkness falls), or by a PIR (passive infra red) detector which activates when detecting a person moving through its field.

### **7 Valuables**

Wallets, purses, bags and other personal valuables should not be left unattended, use personal lockers or lockable wardrobe cabinets. For organisations suffering from persistent petty theft incidents, sophisticated yet relatively inexpensive covert CCTV and 'petty thief catcher' systems are now available (e.g. to help stop internal thefts from handbags).

### **8 Cash box, petty cash, stamps, computer media**

Rotate location where the cash box is kept and store in a safe if possible. A safe will be useful for storing keys and sensitive documents. Whilst 'onsite' copies of computer data and software, spare optical discs, etc. can also be secured in a safe, but remember if you want proper security for computer media you will need to consider a purpose designed 'data safe' which offers substantial protection against fire, humidity, and electro-magnetic contamination.

### **9 Internal doors**

Consider having internal doors fitted with a door viewer, coded door lock or key card lock.

### **10 Fax machine / copier**

Security mark and keep out of public sight. Consider a physical security cable strap down system for equipment in vulnerable locations or for higher value items.

### **11 Computer equipment**

Physically restraining valuable items such as PCs against removal is an excellent precaution and is a requirement as specified by some insurers. Options include security cable based strap down systems, lock down plate or rail systems and full entrapment / enclosure systems. (When using full enclosure systems ensure that the security device offers adequate ventilation for the PC as some have been known to cause overheating). Alarming individual items with an internally fitted alarm is also a good deterrent to the thief.

### **12 Laptop PCs / mobile phones**

Take care not to leave mobile equipment lying around unattended or visible when recharging. Modern laptop PCs incorporate a special micro security slot designed to allow the machine to be anchored to a

desk. via a special security cable. Specialist cabinets such as the 'LapBank' facilitate overnight storage of multiple laptops (with optional recharging facility), whilst unauthorised access to the data on the hard drive can be prevented via use of a PC immobiliser system such as 'PC Access'.

### **13 Smoke generating systems**

Although installation requires careful consideration, smoke-generating systems have a role to play in the fight against crime and are normally linked to the intruder alarm system. When triggered by unauthorised entry to a room once the alarm is set, they fill the room with a safe but dense smoke within seconds thus preventing the thief from stealing anything. Good systems employ harmless smoke, safe even for use in food preparation / consumption areas and leave no residue. (Note: Fire Brigade and Police must be notified if a smoke system is installed.)

### **14 Key management**

Safe storage / management of keys is essential. Keys should as a minimum be stored in a key organiser cabinet or key safe, whilst a more sophisticated key issue / logging system may be essential for certain environments.