



SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE
KEEPING SA SAFE

ARMED ROBBERY PREVENTION



Government
of South Australia

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A photograph of a gas station at dusk or dawn. The sky is a vibrant orange and red. The gas station canopy is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. Several fuel pumps are visible under the canopy. In the background, there are trees and a flat landscape under the colorful sky.

Dear Business Owner,

South Australia Police (SAPOL) is committed to working in partnership with the community to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime to ensure that South Australia is a safe place to live, visit and do business.

Armed robbery can have a dramatic impact on the work, health and safety of employees. It can cause significant economic and social costs to the victim, their family, the business in which they work and the wider community. Employers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all employees. Employers must provide a safe working environment and safe systems of work for employees.

As a crime prevention initiative and a means of minimising the risk of an armed robbery occurring on your business, we are pleased to provide you with the Armed Robbery Prevention book.

This book has been developed to provide you with practical tips and we encourage you to:

- read this book, share the information with your staff and where possible apply the recommendations in your work area
- place the stickers provided in the Armed Robbery Prevention Toolkit in prominent and appropriate locations within your business premises
- make copies of the Suspect Description form provided in the Armed Robbery Prevention Toolkit, ensuring they are kept close to your cash point at all times
- place the 'Code A' poster in your staff room and consider placement near cash points
- in the event of a crime occurring, place the 'Temporarily Closed' sign at the entrance point to your premises.

For further assistance please contact your local police station or visit www.police.sa.gov.au



Being proactive can help prevent a crime occurring and ensure the safety of your staff and customers



FACTS¹

- Business premises are generally the most vulnerable to armed robbery (67% of offences) between 6.00 pm and 6.00 am on any day of the week.
- Business premises are involved in approximately 30% of armed robbery with violence offences.
- The more high risk and high gain a target, the greater the likelihood that offenders will select weapons like a firearm.
- Knives were the weapon most commonly used in approximately 57% of all armed robberies.
- Firearms were used in 16% of armed robberies.
- Armed robbery offenders are typically unknown to their victims.
- Emotional trauma is the most common type of injury resulting from armed robbery (35%).

PREVENTION

Being proactive in your business can help prevent the opportunity of a crime occurring and ensure the safety of your staff and customers.

Take the time to conduct your own Business Security Assessment to improve your business security and apply the suggested treatments where necessary. The Business Security Assessment is available at www.police.sa.gov.au

PREMISES DESIGN

- An open, uncluttered environment providing a clear, well-lit view of the sales area from outside can deter offenders. Advertising material, posters and curtains should be kept to a minimum to provide a clear view of the premises from both inside and outside.
- Staff should take extra care when opening and closing the business. This includes checking the premises for unwanted intruders who may be hiding in toilets or other locations.
- Store rooms, rear access points, doors and windows should be kept secure at all times. Locks should be of suitable strength to ensure the security and safety of staff.
- Rear access points should be well-lit to allow easy visibility for staff on duty.
- Sales counters should be the domain of staff only and be monitored and secured at all times. Raised platforms and deep counters can provide added safety for staff by assisting observation of the work area and distancing them from possible assaults.
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and security systems should be of the best quality affordable. See the section on CCTV in this booklet for further information.
- Electronic sensors can alert staff to a customer entering the business.
- Mirrors can be used to monitor blind spots although they should be positioned to prevent observation of cash handling procedures.

¹ Borzycki M & Fuller G (2014), Armed robbery in Australia 2009-2010: National Armed Monitoring Program report. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

CASH HANDLING

- Limit the amount of cash held on the premises and publicise this fact.
- A float should be kept to a minimum and stored securely.
- Cash registers should be positioned in such a way that the cash cannot be seen by customers.
- Cash should be counted away from customers and stored safely before banking.
- Shop takings should NEVER be discussed in public.
- Ensure cash is not left on the premises overnight.
- A policy limiting entry to businesses or requiring exact change at night prevents customers seeing cash holdings.
- Safes should be fitted with time delay locks and secured permanently to the wall or floor.
- Safe keys and combinations should be stored securely.
- Place the 'No Cash' sticker in a prominent position at the entry point of the premises.
- Place the 'Keep Cash Low' sticker near your cash transaction area.
- Consider using a professional cash carrying service.

CASH IN TRANSIT

- Before signing a contract with a cash carrying service:
 - ensure the company is an accredited and licenced security company
 - sight the company security licence, firearms licence and check their conditions
 - all employees must hold a current South Australian firearms licence.
- Request for cash to be collected on varying days and times to reduce predictability.

BANKING

- Banking should be conducted at irregular times.
- Vary the times and routes when banking.
- Have two staff members attend to banking where possible. Remove or cover badges and uniforms that identify staff when going to the bank.
- When carrying cash, populated areas are safer than deserted areas.
- Conceal the fact that you are banking for a business. Do not use bank identifiable bags.
- Use local bank services to reduce the amount of time spent carrying cash in transit.
- Ensure the time of return is known to co-workers so an alarm can be raised if necessary.



Limit the amount of cash held on the premises and publicise this fact



STAFF MANAGEMENT

- Train all staff about how to respond in the event of an armed robbery. This should be conducted as an integral part of all staff inductions and then maintained and renewed annually.
- Staff should not discuss cash handling procedures or security measures with ANY person not connected to the business.
- People seeking entry to the premises outside normal business hours should be treated with suspicion and identification should be requested before entry is permitted.
- Staff name tags should not contain surnames.
- Check the background, references and referees before employing new staff.
- Seek a National Police Check for all staff.
- Staff should be alert towards suspicious behaviours, motor vehicles, or out-of-the-ordinary incidents.
- Keen observations by staff may prevent an offence from occurring. Police should be notified of any reasonable suspicions as soon as possible. Individuals can be apprehended for attempted crimes.
- When a staff member leaves your employment, ensure all keys and staff passes are returned or change the locks. If a staff member leaves under difficult circumstances, also consider changing cash handling procedures and security codes.
- If you consider your business to be at high risk, security staff may be required to review and monitor safety. Contact your local police station for more information.

Training staff about how to respond in the event of an armed robbery should be an integral part of all staff inductions

CCTV

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) is the use of video cameras in a closed circuit to remotely view a particular location and then transmit the signal to specified place, usually a monitor or recording device.

Before introducing CCTV into your business it is essential to establish what you expect to achieve from the installation of CCTV. CCTV may deter and/or detect crime, provide evidence to the police in the event of a crime as well as promote the perception of safety and reduce the fear of crime among your staff and customers.

Please ensure your CCTV systems are installed properly, regularly maintained, switched on and in proper working order. A poorly installed, maintained, or functioning CCTV system is only marginally better than having no CCTV system at all. If evidence is gained from poor quality CCTV system it may be excluded by a court.

Some suggested locations for CCTV:

- entry and exit points to the business to identify persons entering and leaving the business
- cash points to clearly record actions of customers at the counter
- shop floors and display areas.

Camera placement is critical to the success of all CCTV systems and it is recommended that professional advice be sought.

CCTV may deter or detect crime, provide evidence in the event of a crime and reduce the fear of crime among your staff and customers

SAPOL has developed a booklet to assist businesses when considering installing a CCTV system or upgrading your existing system to new technology. For further information download Closed Circuit Television – South Australia Police – A Guide For Business at www.police.sa.gov.au

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

ASIAL is the national association for the security industry, acting as a self-regulatory body to promote a high level of service within the industry. To become a member, a security company must meet the highest standards of quality and service. Members of ASIAL can be located via the website at www.asial.com.au





WHAT TO DO

DURING AN ARMED ROBBERY

- Try to remain calm, assess the situation and obey the offender's instructions. Remember, the number one priority is staying safe.
- The offender may be anxious or drug affected so avoid any sudden actions and explain any movements.
- Speak only when spoken to as any conversation with the offender will prolong the incident.
- Avoid direct eye contact with the offender.
- Note the offender/s conversation including any accent, nicknames, indecent language or speech impediments.
- Unless otherwise ordered, continually watch the offender/s, making a mental note of their description especially scars, tattoos and any other prominent features and any weapons.
- If there is more than one offender there is an increased likelihood they may be armed with some form of weapon.
- Activate alarm devices as soon as possible, but only if it is safe to do so.
- Look to see the direction of travel taken by the offender/s when they leave the premises if safe to do so.
- Look to see if a vehicle has been used, note the description and if there are any other occupants.
- Never take drastic action during an armed robbery and do not chase the offender.

STAY CALM AND OBEY - DON'T BE A HERO

'CODE A': STAY SAFE

During an armed robbery, the most important thing to do is STAY SAFE.

Learn the principles of 'CODE A':

C CALM

Try to remain calm. Do not invade the personal space of the offender.

O OBEY

Obey instructions but do not provide any cash or goods that are not asked for. Advise the offender of any movements you have to make to comply with instructions. Do not make any sudden or unexpected movements.

D DESCRIPTION

Make a mental note of the offender's features, including height, hair colour, scars, tattoos, accent and speech. Also note the description of the offender's clothing and any description of weapons used.

E EVIDENCE

Be aware of what the offender touched and do not touch it yourself. After the offender leaves, lock the entry point of the building and ask any witnesses to await the arrival of police.

A ALARM

Only when it is safe to do so, activate the alarm, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for the police.

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000)

AFTER AN ARMED ROBBERY

- Immediately call Triple Zero (000) and ask for the police (even if you have activated alarms) and state:
 - The name and exact location of where the crime occurred, including the name of the business.
 - An armed robbery has occurred.
 - The time the offence occurred.
 - If anyone has been physically injured.
 - Whether any weapons were seen or mentioned and what type.
 - The direction of travel of the offenders.
 - Number and description of offender/s, including any vehicles used and registration numbers.
 - Only hang up the telephone when told to do so and stay off the phone until police arrive unless you remember additional information that may be important.
 - Immediately close the premises to the public and keep unauthorised persons from entering. Place the 'Temporarily Closed' sign at the entrance point.
 - Make sure that no person touches any surface or any item that the offender/s has touched.
 - Consider arranging someone to meet police outside, particularly in large shopping areas to make the response more efficient.
 - Ask witnesses and customers to remain until the police arrive – if they have to leave, obtain their names, addresses and telephone numbers.
 - Ask witnesses not to discuss the details of the crime with each other.
- If possible and practical, witnesses should independently write a description of the offender/s and what actually occurred in as much detail as they remember. Use the 'Suspect Description Form' to record the details.
- Staff should not tell anyone other than the police how much cash was stolen or missed by the offender/s.
 - Do not make any statements to the media before discussing the matter with police.
 - Supply all details to police no matter how insignificant they appear. This may also include earlier suspicious rude, drunk or drug affected customers, disgruntled staff or suspicious vehicles seen near the business.

Immediately call Triple Zero (000) and ask for the police



VICTIM SUPPORT

REACTIONS AFTER AN ARMED ROBBERY

Victims of an armed robbery can often feel violated, fearful and isolated for a long time after the event. It can affect many aspects of people's life including work, family and friendships. Some common reactions include:

- Physical – nausea, headaches, sweating, tiredness, shaking, sleep difficulties, changes in appetite.
- Emotional – feeling tearful, depressed, scared, anxious, angry, guilty, sad, isolated and lonely.
- Behavioural – withdrawn, increased smoking/alcohol, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, being very 'busy', scared to go out, changes in relationships.
- Cognitive – slow thinking, flashbacks, re-living the event, forgetfulness, poor concentration, distressing dreams.

Reactions will differ depending on individuals and may last from a few days to a few months or even longer. It is normal for people to experience these and other reactions.

After the police have completed their initial investigation, victims receive the Information for Victims of Crime booklet. The booklet contains information including contact details for the Victim Support Service.

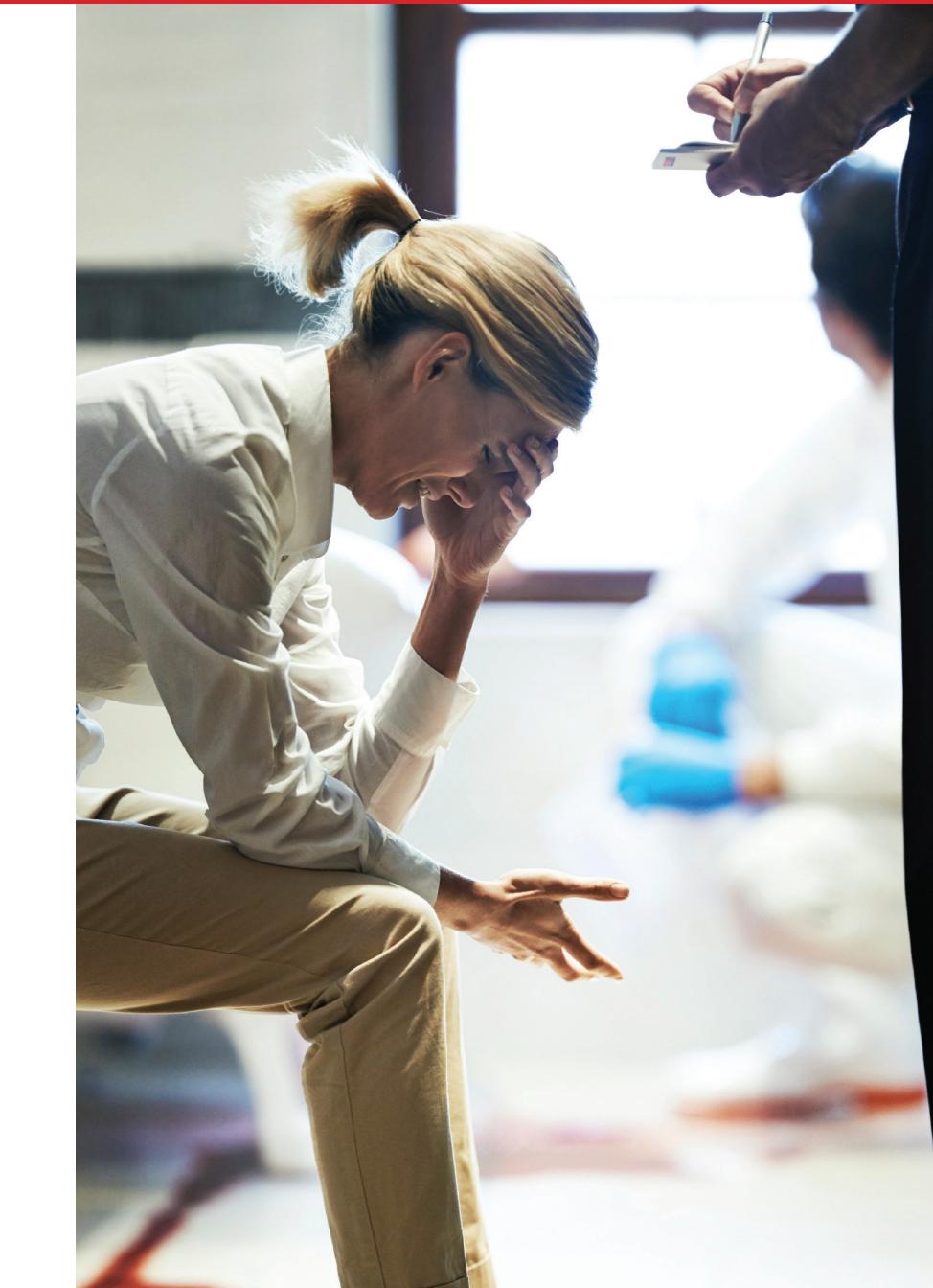
Victims of an armed robbery can often feel violated, fearful and isolated for a long time after the event

VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICE

The Victim Support Service is a non-government, non-profit organisation that provides many services for victims of crime, their family and friends, and for the wider community. These include counselling, provision of information about victims' rights and victims' compensation, court support and referral to other agencies where appropriate.

POLICE VICTIM CONTACT OFFICERS

Police Victim Contact Officers can provide victims with information about the investigation or compensation, and can link them to the prosecution authorities and other sections of SAPOL. They help to protect victims' rights and can provide referral to victim support agencies. If you require assistance please contact the Victim Contact Officer at your local police station.





For further crime prevention assistance, please contact
your local police station or visit www.police.gov.au



Become a local Business Watch member. For further details visit www.watchsa.com.au

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