



Retail Security and Counter-Terrorism

Risk management & Communication
in the Shopping Centre &
Retail Park Environment.

senator 

Protecting your people, property and assets



Retail Security – Senator Security

Risk management & Communication in the Shopping Centre & Retail Park Environment and Community

Senator – Retail – Counter Terrorism

Damage to the bank balance or credit card was the greatest concern when visiting a retail park or shopping centre, but sadly, not anymore. The sight of hooded youths gathered in corners (often blocking easy access to car parks and lifts), rowdy kids riding BMX bikes in marauding packs, a drunk using your shop doorways as a 'public convenience', the 'night time economy' or a harmless yet stubborn vagrant who has taken up temporary residence in the middle of the public seating area is enough to spoil a shopper's experience. There is no desire to create a 'fortress mentality' and it is critical to maintain an inviting environment for visitors and shoppers in your centres and parks. This nowadays is a reality and, unfortunately, an every day challenge for centre managers and retailers in modern Britain. Thankfully with the right security partner these issues are manageable; however, there are more sinister considerations for the centre managers and their security provider to be prepared for... The echoes of the explosion in Exeter's Princesshay shopping centre in 2008, the December 2010 explosion in Drottningatan in Stockholm, Sweden continue to reverberate around the industry, as managers in retail parks and shopping centre malls all over the UK review their current and future security provisions. These instances are not rare as the following selection of recent press illustrates:

Shopping centre attack left dad speechless, June 19 2011 - Two teenagers were left shaken after an unprovoked attack near the Freeport Outlet Shopping Village.
Source: braintreeandwithamtimes.co.uk

Teenager in dock over Belle Vale shopping centre attack which left man on life-support machine, June 22 2011 - A teenager appeared in court following a vicious attack captured on CCTV...
Source: news[at]liverpool.com

Man charged over shopping centre 'race attack' June 15 2011 - A man has been charged in relation to a racist attack in the Wheatsheaf Shopping Centre.
Source: Rochdale Observer

SAS scouts shopping centres as fears of London 2012 terror attack grow, May 4 2011 - THE SAS is secretly scouting major shopping centres amid fears of an attack by Islamic extremists during the 2012 Games... Westfield Stratford City... Irish republican dissidents were also plotting to disrupt the Olympic torch route.
Source: Daily Mirror



A recognised fact is that any place where people gather together in relatively large numbers such as retail outlets, airports, bus & train stations, cinemas, schools, pubs, tourist attractions, leisure facilities and sporting arenas now find themselves included in the growing list of potential terrorist targets. These risks are not new to you, the shopping centre/retail park managers, who already co-ordinate activities with local police and community liaison, in the daily process of dealing with criminal activity, trespass and vandalism that affects or threatens your Centres and Retail Parks. This practice, alongside the standard routines of disaster recovery, evacuation plans and procedures are repeatedly reviewed and tested to avoid any unnecessary panic and potential loss of life in the event of flood, fire or even worse scenarios.

In general, most locations have a solid security base and measures are already well established. However, in a reactive sense, technologies such as CCTV have a key role to play in identifying where something is going wrong and this speeds up the deployment of resources accordingly along with providing a source of forensic and evidential material – the riots and public disturbance in August 2011 again reinforced the efficacy of CCTV for identifying and aiding Police enquiries.

The key to successful operation is the effectiveness of the Centres communications operation and whether all associated bodies within the centre structure are intrinsically involved as the additional 'eyes and ears on the ground' to provide early warning and/or prevent any potential 'flash points' and identify suspicious behaviour that may lead to such an occurrence. There is certainly a place for well-managed CCTV, remote monitoring and coordinated alarm response but there remains the real need for the experience and intuition of a manned guarding presence.

The "Operation Fairway" initiative details how the effective communication within a centre can prevent a potential terrorist situation and then also demonstrates the negatives of a poor complacent team with catastrophic consequences. This clearly demonstrates how crucial it is to involve everyone in the Centres/Retail Parks Security Operation with everyone knowing his or her defined roles and responsibilities. There must also be regular meetings, training updates and a clear and 'easy to use' communication network at the Centre to ensure a collaborative and seamless team understanding and deployment.



The security landscape is changing constantly and in order to be equipped and ready to adapt and react to the demands and challenges this system should be tested weekly involving all parties as a minimum to ensure that all eventualities are tried and tested and where necessary the corrective action taken. An effective response to any threat circumstance that requires the retailers to react – namely a bomb threat – is dependent upon having clear and concise

communications with all tenants and operators in the centre – in many cases this must extend to the local community, businesses, residents and associated authorities and/or community organisations. Simply; you must be able to alert and inform all the staff, contractors and on-site personnel at the same time informing them of the nature of the emergency and the immediate action that is required. Ideally, the requirement is for an instant broadcast channel that enables all staff within the shopping centre community to acknowledge or reply to a message with speed and ease - it should be multimedia capable due to the fact that sometimes you need the communications equivalent of a klaxon, and other times you need to be subtle, effective and responsible in the message. There are numerous systems in the market place and, in reality, each centre/retail park manager, in conjunction with their security provider, should agree and implement a system to meet the needs of their specific location and need.

John Grinnell, Dolphin Shopping Centre Manager said; "In today's retail environment comprehensive communications between centre management and their tenants is critical to achieving a rewarding and safe shopping experience for their customers."

Paul Redden Centre Manager for Land Securities at the Lewisham Shopping Centre said; "Security, and all the associated benefits of having professional, well managed security operatives, is essential in the modern retail environment. It is a sad fact of life that the threat of gangs, terrorism and disaster are daily considerations and we have to be vigilant, aware and prepared at all times – this is not something that may happen to someone else, may happen somewhere else or to be in any way complacent."

David Plumb Centre Manager for Jones Lang LaSalle at the Brunswick Centre London said; "Security is not a luxury or something we put in place as a token gesture – the security team at Brunswick are a valued and integrated element in our infrastructure; involved in all operations, plans and day-to-day running of the centre. In the event of a major incident the security team is on the front line, coordinating communications, first contact with the emergency services and overseeing evacuation. A professional, well trained, well managed security team is essential... and all this has to be conducted behind the scenes as our centre has to present a safe shopping environment and an enjoyable shopping experience for our visitors, again something that polite, knowledgeable, well presented security personnel contribute towards."

Are Shopping Centres and Retail Parks prepared to respond to an attack? The recent examples of shootings, bombings, gang activity, arson and riot bring home, once again, what security experts have known for decades: retail parks and shopping centres are "soft targets." It is the very nature of retail that makes them vulnerable: Large numbers of people, many carrying bags, boxes or back-packs come and go through multiple entrances and exits, car parks (often underground beneath the centre) make it easy for a perpetrator (or a reconnaissance unit) to blend in with the crowds. This is compounded by many centres having special events, open-air markets, celebrity visits, promotions... all adding to the potential risk and exposure to threat – and this threat may not be terrorism or a random shooting; catastrophic accident such as an aircraft crash in an urban area or natural disaster also presents many of the same scenarios and security actions.

There are some key considerations for shopping centres and retail parks: Has there been enough investment to upgrade security since 7/7? The focus is clearly on London but there are many Olympic and Paralympic events taking place across the UK – Weymouth & Portland, Eton Dorney Reach near Windsor and Maidenhead, Brands Hatch – Kent, City of Coventry Stadium, Hampton Court Palace, Lee Valley White Water Centre, Old Trafford, Wembley and Wimbledon – all presenting a threat potential or opportunity.



In many locations training of security staff on preventing and responding to attacks remains inadequate. Security operatives can be effectively integrated into the operations of a centre; i.e. manning information desks, traffic management, car park management, service road management, front-of-house and reception duties, post room, cleaning staff management, multi FM contractor management etc. – all value added benefits that provide an integrated security/FM solution. Disaster recovery provision – getting your premises back into operation with minimum down-time, off site CCTV data recovery, void premises security, protection against looting etc.

Selection of security contractors is increasingly based on cost alone rather than a balance of cost/capability.

At what cost is security measured when the crime and terror threat continues to blight our lives? Emergency management and activation plans are frequently developed without the input or participation of first responders – in an emergency it is almost certainly the security personnel to which the tenants and public turn for assistance and direction. Worse, these plans are not practiced or rehearsed often enough to be effectively deployed if an incident should occur.

Can Shopping Centres Better Prepare? Conducting a formal security risk assessment and security audit with an SIA Approved security provider. This should be reviewed and updated every six months; and when a major event is to take place near your centre (International Football Match, Olympic Event, Music Festival, Protest March, Remembrance Day etc) the plans should provision for scaling your security provision accordingly.

Training staff to 'know what to look for' – What exactly is a suspicious package and exactly what do you do if you see one? Has a door, hatch or window been tampered with... and was this door an access panel for power or a manhole cover? How is this reported and recorded? Communication and 'knowledge/information transfer' is essential amongst the centre community. Car parks and service or delivery areas require the same level of precaution, awareness and security. The perimeter of a centre or park needs visible deterrent – access points are not exclusive to the entrance and exits.

If vandals can graffiti on otherwise inaccessible areas such as air-conditioning units and roof areas then these become legitimate security patrol checkpoints. Be aware of more heavily populated or high footfall areas adjacent to or within your community – pedestrianised precincts, Tube Stations, Bus, Stations, Terminus, sports stadiums, tourist attractions etc. Be aware of local sites such as Police stations, utilities (Water, Gas, Fuel etc), overhead rail and power sub-stations that are likely targets.

Develop and rehearse detailed and coordinated emergency response plans in collaboration with security personnel, first responders, tenants and local residents/community.

All these measures are common sense but it is often the case of 'you don't know what you don't know' that makes the difference. This is all linked to initiatives such as Project Griffin, a police initiative to protect our cities and communities from the threat of terrorism. It brings together and coordinates the resources of the police, emergency services, local authorities, business and the private sector security

industry. Project Griffin was developed by the City of London Police and formally introduced in London in April 2004 as a joint venture between the City and Metropolitan police forces. Its remit was to advise and familiarise managers, security officers and employees of large public and private sector organisations across the capital on security, counter-terrorism and crime prevention issues. To find out more go to: <http://www.projectgriffin.org.uk/>

Shopping Centre Security – NaCTSO: The National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) is a police unit co-located within the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI.) It is funded by a Home Office grant and works to the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism [OSCT] reporting activity to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Director Protect and Prepare. Terrorist attacks in the UK are a real and serious danger. Crowded places, including shopping centres, are likely to feature in the attack plans of terrorist organisations in the future as they are usually locations with limited protective security measures and therefore affords the potential for mass fatalities and casualties.



Counter Terrorism Protective Security Advice for Shopping Centres (3MB PDF) has been produced in partnership with the British Council of Shopping Centres. Counter Terrorism Protective Security Advice for Shopping Centres (5MB PDF) has also been produced for the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS).

These can be accessed via:
www.senatorsecurity.co.uk or
www.nactso.gov.uk/AreaOfRisks/ShoppingCentres

The Counter-terrorism strategy: CONTEST, the UK's Counter-terrorism strategy, aims to reduce the risk to the United Kingdom and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.

The new Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) has

been changed to reflect the terrorist threats we now face, and the government's security and counter-terrorism policies. This replaces the version published in 2009.

The current environment: International counter-terrorism work has made significant progress over the past ten years. Al Qa'ida is indeed weaker than at any time since 9/11 and 7/7 but, Al Qa'ida remains a threat along with the threat from Northern Ireland related terrorism activities.

CONTEST is organised around four principal work streams: Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks, Prevent: to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; Protect: to strengthen our protection against terrorist attack and Prepare: where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact. More information at:
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorism/uk-counter-terrorism-strat/>

Those responsible for public safety and security in shopping centres and other retail premises are urged to take time to study the advice available and put it into practice in respect of each of the environments they are developing and managing. It is recognised that there is a need to maintain a friendly and welcoming atmosphere within shopping centre environments and this guide is not intended to create a 'fortress mentality'.

There is however a balance to be achieved where security management are informed that there are robust protective security measures available to mitigate against the threat of terrorism.

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