CRIME REDUCTION TOOLKIT

FOR

SERVICE STATIONS

FIGHTING FORECOURT CRIME

Today's service stations do much more than just sell petrol to motorists. They are an important neighbourhood asset providing a wide range of goods and services both during and outside normal shop opening hours.

Oil companies, petrol retailers and police forces alike are clamping down on criminal activity on UK forecourts. This determination to prevent the activities of lawless individuals, coupled with advances in technology and changes in criminal legislation means that there is no better time to introduce practical measures to address crime, identify the criminals and continue to make service stations safer places for both staff and customers.

Key in the fight against service station crime are the various BOSS Forecourt Watch schemes. Forecourt Watch initiatives operate in over 70 areas across the UK. Under these schemes BOSS, the British Oil Security Syndicate works in partnership with petrol retailers, local police forces and other agencies to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Many Forecourt Watch schemes during recent times have seen service station crime tumble by more than 50%. Following on from these successes similar force-wide schemes are now being planned by the majority of forces in the UK.

This toolkit has been produced by Durham Constabulary in partnership with BOSS, and takes cognisance of successful initiatives employed by police forces and private retailers in combating service station crime. It offers a menu of practical measures, which can be tailored to meet individual service station crime problems.

Through use of the toolkit and increased partnership working we can look forward to targeting further reductions in crime on Britain's network of petrol service stations.

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Service Station Crime

A Toolkit for Police Forces

Overview

The latest survey by the British Oil Security Syndicate (BOSS) in 2003, indicated that crimes committed against service stations in Britain were costing the industry in excess of £20 million each year. This figure excludes credit card losses and the cost of security measures e.g. CCTV, intruder alarms and cash collection.

Research carried out by Leicester University based on a sample of 4,360 service stations owned by participating BOSS member organisations showed that service stations suffered a number of different types of offences as seen in the table below: -

Table 1: Number of reported incidents by offence type

Type of offence	Number of reported incidents	Percentage of reported incidents	Number of reported incidents per site
Drive offs	76,326	83	17.50
No means of payment	9,414	10	2.16
Customer theft	3,002	3	0.69
Criminal damage	1,356	1	0.31
Burglary	653	1	0.15
Assault	621	1	0.14
Robbery	569	1	0.13
Other incidents	28	-	0.01
TOTAL	91,969	100	21.09

The most common offence is clearly making off without payment however the research also drew attention to the offence of 'no means of payment' where 'customers' commonly fill their vehicles with fuel, falsely claiming to be without the necessary means of payment whilst in reality having no intention to pay.

This particular offence creates serious problems for petrol retailers in relation to recouping losses.

However, it is not the most common offences, which have the greater impact. As service stations began to replace the traditional 'corner shop' as outlets for general purchases including alcohol, opportunities for criminal activity have risen. As a result they have found themselves increasingly vulnerable to offences of credit card fraud, theft of shop stock, cash, fixtures and other property belonging to staff or customers.

Table two below shows the cost of such crimes to the industry: -

Table 2: Cost to industry by offence type

BOSS Crime Survey Results			
Crimes by type	Cost £m	Cost £m	
Year	2003	2002	% Change 2003 v 2002
Theft	£1.0	£1.7	-40.7%
Criminal Damage	£0.2	£0.1	+60.9%
Burglary	£2.6	£2.4	+ 6.4%
Robbery	£1.2	£2.0	- 39.1%
Drive - Offs	£14.3	£13.7	+ 4.3%
Other	£1.3	£0.8	+ 61.7
TOTAL	£20.5	£20.7	- 0.7%

The overall total losses show a continuing downward trend especially robbery, which can be attributed to the success of various initiatives involving BOSS, the Police and petrol retailers. It is imperative that partnerships continue to develop new initiatives to further reduce forecourt crime.

It must be recognised that service station crime not only effects revenue and assets but also the safety of staff and customers. It is with this in mind that partner agencies should continue to invest time and money in protecting them.

Evidence from existing schemes confirms that those who commit service station crime are invariably involved in other serious offences. All forces were canvassed in 2002 for data in relation to drive-offs and linked criminality. 50% of forces replied but only 17% of respondents could provide data on linked criminality.

The total number of making off without payment (drive-offs) reported between 1st January 2002 and 1st November 2002 was 52,014. The Metropolitan Police have by far the most reported crimes at 24,391 and they were also able to evidence linked criminality.

These crimes include offences against the person of which there were two reported rapes as well as robbery, burglary, fraud and damage. Although clearly the highest crime area, the results are indicative of not only the vulnerability of service stations, but there position within the crime pyramid as a means to assist criminals. It seems to be stating the obvious but would travelling criminals committing burglaries across force boundaries be likely to pay for their fuel?

Statistical Discrepancy

The British Crime Survey consistantly shows that many crimes are not being reported to the police, usually through a perceived lack of confidence in the police or the incident being deemed too trivial. The 2002/03 British Crime Survey interviews estimate that less than half (43%) of all crimes were reported to, or come to the attention of the police (Simmons & Dodd 2003). Previous research has also indicated that only 36% of petrol drive-offs were reported.

Given these facts it maybe that the true, nature and extent of service station crime is considerably higher that that which is outlined in this overview.

British Oil Security Syndicate (BOSS)

The British Oil Security Syndicate was founded in 1991 by the fuel retail industry and is steered and funded by the leading petroleum companies. Its members include BP, ChevronTexaco, Esso, Shell and TotalFinaElf. It is supported by the Petrol Retailers Association (PRA), the United Kingdom Petroleum Industry Association (UKPIA), Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Association of Payment Clearing Services (APACS), Banknote Watch and Raid-Control.

Over the past 13 years BOSS has worked tirelessly with partners to reduce crime taking place on Britain's service stations and has now become synonymous with both crime prevention and reduction.
BOSS is an essential element in continuing the fight against service station crime and should always be consulted when partners are formulating crime reduction initiatives.

Toolkit

The success of initiatives to address any aspect of service station crime depend upon the police, petrol retailers, oil companies and the security industry working in partnership to make it more difficult for people to commit crime. There are a number of schemes currently operating in forces, all of which address service station crime and are good examples of how a partnership approach offers the best chance of reducing the incidences of crime.

The toolkit, which is in the form of a menu, offers the Police and petrol retailers a comprehensive set of options from which to select the best initiative, to address specific service station crime issues. All schemes are structured to combat not only drive-offs and 'no means of payment' but all crime identified through BOSS and Police research. Ideally, if all initiatives were implemented then service station crime would reduce dramatically. A summary of results of some 'Live' schemes is included at the end of this toolkit to assist. (Appendix A)

Menu

Table 3: List of options detailing specific initiatives

Options
1. Forecourt Watch
2. Ringmaster
3. Self-Reporting Packs • Drive-offs • No means of payment (evasion of liability or deception)
4. Crushing of vehicles
5. Marked police vehicles
6. Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR)
7. Pre-payment
8. Secured by design
9. Credit Card Fraud
10. Site Security and Personal Safety
11. CCTV
12. Raid Control
13. The Press (TV, Radio and newspapers)

Definition of most common offence

Prior to detailing the options it may be worth defining the offence that forecourts suffer most, in addition to credit card fraud, namely bilking or making off without payment:

Section 3 of the theft Act 1978
" A person who, knowing that payment on the spot for any goods supplied, or service done, is required or expected of him/her, **DISHONESTLY** makes off without having paid as required or expected, **AND WITH INTENT TO AVOID PAYMENT** of the amount, shall be guilty of an offence.

National guidance on crime recording (which is provided by the Home Office Counting Rules and incorporates the National Crime Recording Standard) should be followed. In other words, an incident will be recorded as a crime if on the balance of probability:

(A)   The circumstances as reported amount to a crime defined by law; and

(B)   There is no credible evidence to the contrary

If the victim's perception of the incident is that it amounts to a crime and application of the above standard confirms this then the incident should be recorded as a crime accordingly.

Clear indications of bilking include:

• The vehicle is stolen

• The vehicle is not stolen but the driver does a deliberate act to avoid payment such as, driving off at speed; driving off over a grass verge or pavement; covering a number plate; using false plates or trying to hide his/her own identity.

• The attendant notes the correct number and the driver admits the offence when interviewed.

Initiatives

1). Forecourt Watch

Depending on the nature and extent of service station crime this could be argued to be the starting point for all problem-solving approaches.
Forces should consider holding a meeting of all service station managers, oil company area managers as well as a representative of the British Oil Security Syndicate (BOSS) in order to determine the extent of service station crime. Then determine how to construct a Forecourt Watch scheme with the

likely introduction of self-reporting packs. This system will save valuable police time as well as ensuring service stations are able to complete the documentation at the earliest opportunity convenient to them.
It is vital to the success of this process that Forces give serious consideration to the establishment of a Forecourt Crime Officer / desk to support and analyse reports and data.

It is important for Forecourt Watch participating service stations to display high quality signage so as to act as a deterrent in itself.
In the past BOSS have designed pump stickers and forecourt posters promoting partnership working with the police. (See below)

2). Ringmaster

The next step on from the introduction of a forecourt Watch. Service stations within the Watch can be signed up to ringmaster, which can be received by phone, fax or E-mail. Ringmaster can circulate to all service stations signed up, details of vehicles which have been involved in bilkings and request certain actions. For example if a vehicle has been involved in two or more offences, then the action maybe not to authorise the pump and request pre-payment. Four or more bilkings could mean requesting contact be made with the police on 999.

3). Self-Reporting (S-R) Packs

a. Making off without payment

A number of forces have introduced this procedure as a means of reducing demand on police time whilst making the reporting procedure more convenient to the service station and to get drivers to pay for their fuel rather than face prosecution. Based on the Oxford system and taken forward by Thames Valley Police in Milton Keynes, the system involves the completion of S-R packs. This scheme has been highlighted by the Policing Bureaucracy Task Force as good practice.

The S-R pack comprises a set of instructions and explains how to report the crime and how to complete the statements and exhibit labels. There is an incident proforma, two pre-printed statements, one for the attendant and one for the manager to exhibit the video tape, two Cts 45 exhibit labels, one for the till receipt and one for any original notes, a video wrap around exhibit label; and a pre-paid padded envelope.

How the System Works

When a drive-off occurs the cashier will phone the police and report the incident, at which point they will be issued with an incident or crime reference number as appropriate. Using this unique reference number the service station then records it on the incident proforma. The rest of the pack is then completed as soon as possible (ideally before the cashier goes off duty) and posted along with any videotape evidence in the pre-paid padded envelope.

Using the Milton Keynes scheme as an example - the following day the Bilking Officer will print all reports of bilkings in the previous 24 hours.
A police pack is prepared for each bilking to which the incident log and any Police National Computer (PNC) check is attached. Attempts are then made by phone to contact the owner or previous keeper of the reported vehicle so that the driver may be traced and asked to return and pay for the fuel. If the phone call is unsuccessful, a letter is sent.

On receipt of the completed pack, the offence is considered and where appropriate given a crime number. The Receipt of the video is recorded and if necessary sent for development of stills. All aspects of the bilking are entered on to the incident logging computer system. An acknowledgement is sent to the service station together with a new pack and an update of the investigation.

When stills from the videotape are returned they can be placed in a viewing file in the parade room for all officers to see. Alternatively, posters can be made with the words ' DO YOU KNOW THIS PERSON OR VEHICLE? THEY MAY HAVE DRIVEN OFF WITHOUT PAYMENT FROM (location, give crime references and contact telephone numbers) and circulate them within the police station for the area covering the offence. If after 14 days the offender has not been identified and the photo is of good quality, the authority of a Superintendent should be sought to release the photo to the public. The posters should first be sent to all service stations in the area and then to the local press.

This system of self-reporting has been successful both within Thames Valley Police (Milton Keynes) and Sussex Police Force areas, however it depends on the commitment of the service station staff to complete the pack satisfactorily.

b. No means of payment (evasion of liability or deception)

Where successful drive-off reduction campaigns have been instigated some forces have experienced an increase in the numbers of drivers claiming to have no means of payment after refuelling.

To deal with this situation an inability to pay proforma was produced and supplied to service stations to be completed when the need arises. The proforma, which is essentially an agreement to pay the outstanding amount within seven days, requires the driver's signature. There could also be the option to include a thumbprint or Polaroid photograph in support of the document.

The photo is attached to the agreement and is returned along with the thumbprint to drivers paying within the seven days. Those who fail to return and pay as agreed are checked by the police and if an offence is disclosed the picture is dealt with in the same way as a bilking.

Also included within the system were those drivers who provide correct details but claim to have no means of payment on several occasions. In those cases a poster can be made from the photo taken by the service station, a copy of which can be sent to all forecourts for information, **but** not for public display.

4). Crushing of Vehicles

This type of initiative involves the seizing of any vehicles deemed as vehicles used in crime, found abandoned or unlicensed on the highway and/or have been involved in two or more bilkings.
If the owner does not come forward to claim the vehicle and they cannot be traced the vehicle is classed as abandoned and following the respective force policy for abandoned vehicles it is crushed.

Milton Keynes ran an advertising campaign over Christmas 2001 called AVOID THE CHRISTMAS CRUSH. A crushed car was placed on the forecourt of BP Supermart and wrapped up like a present with labels reading YOUR CAR? IT COULD BE IF YOU DON'T PAY. The campaign was put in the local press and on Anglia TV. BOSS arranged for it to be in various security magazines and on the web.

5). Marked Police Vehicles

This initiative is very short-term and involves the placing of marked police vehicles on service station forecourts, as deterrence to would be criminals. This initiative has been used to great effect in Durham and Thames Valley Police areas. To give some idea of the effect, in Thames Valley, a marked vehicle was placed on the worst hit forecourts for periods of 24 hours up to 48. In the two weeks that the vehicle was on loan, service stations suffered no offences of any kind.

Undoubtedly a great success, but consideration must be given to the length of time between loans. Consideration should also be given to using the service station to park up when writing reports or having a refreshment break. This will raise the profile of the police in the local community.

6). Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

What is it?

ANPR consists of cameras linked to a computer. As a vehicle passes, the ANPR equipment reads the numberplate and checks it against sources such as the Police National Computer (PNC), Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and Customs and Excise databases. If the numberplate is matched, for example with a stolen car, the ANPR equipment will sound an alert so that the car can be stopped.

Once alerted, police officers stop the vehicle concerned. Only vehicles that are highlighted by enforcement agency databases will be stopped, so no law-abiding citizen has anything to fear from ANPR operations.

ANPR can be used as a proactive tool by the police and retailers, to target offenders on the worst hit forecourts.
If sufficient police resources were available ANPR could be positioned on the highway outside or near to the subject forecourt to target a wider audience.

How can it be used to reduce forecourt crime

There are several manufacturers of ANPR systems, which have been developed using technology linked to police databases. The police database is built up by the service stations reporting every offence and is maintained by the Forecourt Crime Unit or desk.

It is a proactive system, which alerts service station staff of a vehicle, which is unlikely to pay for fuel so they do not authorise the pump without pre-payment. It achieves this by means of an ANPR camera passing the picture of a car entering the forecourt to a computer in the kiosk. This computer identifies the registration number from the picture and checks it against a police database. If there is a match an alarm sounds in the kiosk, the screen on a monitor freezes showing the picture, the registration in the database and what the vehicle is known for. All this happens within 2 seconds and before the vehicle has stopped at the pump.

The staff then have the option of not authorising the pump without pre-payment or to call the police. The monitor screen freezes for 10 seconds before resetting. Every night the system is updated by a central server.

What could be on the database

The database may contain those registration numbers responsible for:

- Drive-off (bilking)

- Persons claiming no means of payment (evasion of liability or deception)

- Stolen number plates and the vehicle make and model they were stolen from.

- Stolen vehicles

- Vehicles used in cheque and credit card fraud.

The following table details possible instructions to service stations upon activation: -

Service Station ANPR System	
Instructions to be carried out on an activation	
1. Check Index against database. (on screen)	
2. DO NOT AUTHORISE PUMP	
3. Check the reason for activation. (on screen)	
ACTIVATION	**INSTRUCTION**
1. Drive Off	**Insist on pre-payment & dial 999**
2. Stolen Plates	Check make of vehicle against database correct vehicle. **Consider asking for pre-payment. Different vehicle, dial 999 Forecourt activation for stolen plates**
3. Stolen Vehicle	**Dial 999 "Stolen vehicle on forecourt, picked up by forecourt ANPR system"**
4. May not pay	Vehicle has previously done a bilking or claimed inability to pay, **consider requesting pre-payment.**
5. Cheque/Credit Card Fraud	Request on pre-payment.
6. Claims Inability to pay	Request on pre-payment.

Silent Alarms

There is the capability for silent alarms to be activated, so that any vehicle or registration of interest can be silently notified to a police central point. This will enable police to know a criminal's location and effect an arrest with no one knowing how or where the information came from, thus avoiding any risk to service station staff.

National Standards

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) have mandated all police forces in England and Wales to ensure that all new ANPR systems are fully compliant with National ACPO ANPR Standards (NAAS). Compliance is essential if the police force concerned wants to connect to the National ANPR Data Centre (NADC) and benefit from the Back Office Facility (BOF II).

Force IT managers will have to certify compliance and should therefore assist in the purchase of ANPR systems both internally, and in partnership with non police organisations to ensure compatibility with police systems.

7). Pre-payment

From the customers point of view this can often be seen as discriminatory as it deters the minority at the expense of the majority. In addition, unless implemented uniformally it is often the cause of serious customer unrest.

Pre-payment has been shown to reduce the level of losses due to drive-offs where the appropriate equipment and technology is available. However, the majority of UK motor fuel dispensers are not equipped for pre-payment operation. Therefore, these pumps require the imposition of a manually controlled system, which is viewed as illegal by some Trading Standards officers and highly problematic by retailers, from a customer service perspective.

Should this option be considered, to be effective it needs to be targeted at those sites most at risk and combined with extensive staff training. Moreover, high quality customer orientated signage must be displayed to both inform the customer and facilitate the transaction. The closure of known high risk pumps at high risk times may be considered and thought given to the installation of dedicated pre-payment equipped fast-fill lane/s. This however may well be influenced by the implementation of Chip and Pin facilities on credit card transactions in the future.

8). Secured by Design

There is no nationally recognised **Secured by Design** specification for service stations. The industry body, BOSS, produces and reviews physical security provision on a regular basis and publishes guidance documents for its members.

However, the following advice is offered for consideration when undertaking both new build and refurbishment of existing service stations. Whilst normally the 'onion peel' method is used to undertake a crime prevention survey, in this instance staff safety is of paramount importance and therefore takes priority.

Staff Security

1). The customer entrance door should be equipped with a lock capable of remote operation by the cashier.

2). The counter should be designed to offer maximum protection to staff. This may be achieved by being a minimum 1200mm high and 600mm deep. The staff floor area may be raised by 150mm, thereby giving a psychological advantage.

3). Where physically possible, a protective 'retreat' zone should be provided in the event of staff being threatened. This area to be protected using a 44mm solid core door, with 3 heavy-duty butt hinges and a Kitemarked BS3621 three-lever mortice deadlock.

4). The manager's or cash office should be considered a secure area and where possible, of masonry construction protected by a solid core door secured with a lock to BS3621.

5). Staff must have the facility to make frequent cash drops to a secure area to which access is limited for example an under floor safe or time delay safe to LPS 1183 and EN 1143 may be specified. The appropriate resistance grade will depend upon the amount of overnight cash to be held. Police Architectural Liaison Officers (ALO) / Crime Prevention Design Advisers (CPDA), should be able to advise.

External Features

The design and layout of forecourts should assist in reducing the typical problems and crimes encountered in service stations. The location of the till in relation to the forecourt entrance and exit, for example, should offer maximum staff surveillance.

The location and angle of the pumps should aid natural surveillance as should shop layout. It is recognised that site specific physical constraints will effect this.

Perimeter Fencing

If a perimeter fence is to be installed it is recommended that it be expanded metal, weldmesh or paladin (to BS.1722 Part 14) to a minimum height of 2.1m. Palisade or chain link fencing is not recommended. A Quickthorn or Hawthorn hedging planted adjacent to the fence will increase security.

Entrance to Forecourt

Ideally, there should be one entrance and exit, both covered by natural surveillance and where installed, recognition quality CCTV.

Landscaping

All shrubs and hedges should have a maximum growth height of 1m, whilst all trees should be pruned up to a minimum height of 2m, thereby maintaining a clear field of vision around the site. Mature trees should not mask lighting columns or any CCTV system installed, nor become climbing aids. All hard landscaping and street furniture should be securely fixed down in order to prevent removal, vandalism and/or use as potential ammunition.

Lighting

Ideally, metal halide light units are recommended. This form of lighting gives better colour rendition than other types of lighting and is compatible with any CCTV system installed.

Intruder Alarms

The Police list of Compliant Companies is for police administration purposes only. Members of the public seeking information on signalling alarm installation companies are advised the following.
The police accept installation of remote signalling alarms from alarm companies whose business is subject to inspection by Independent Inspectorate organisations, identified by police policy. Currently these are: -

- N.S.I (National Security Inspectorate, formerly NACOSS).

- SSAIB (Security Systems and Alarm Inspection Board).

Sites other than 24-hour operations require a remote signalling intruder alarm system. All sites require remote signalling fixed personal attack alarm buttons at each point of customer interface as well as within the office and must comply with the ACPO Security Systems Policy. Telephone lines should be monitored.

Climbing Aids

Locate waste disposal areas/containers and oil tanks away from buildings as they can be a target for arson and also provide access to roofs and windows.

Unit Walls

Composite panels and profiled metal cladding are vulnerable to forced entry. The first 2m of all walls, internally or externally, should be brickwork or materials of similar strength. All grilles should use security screws or bolts.

Roofs

Deep eaves improve roof security. Attempts to gain access to roof voids by removing a few tiles can be prevented by fixing expanded metal to the topside of rafters. Bolt all ceiling hatches from below.

Drainpipes

Ideally, rainwater pipes should be either flush fitting or concealed. On existing sites consider umbrella spikes on vulnerable rainwater downpipes.

Roller Shutters

Any roller shutters fitted should meet LPS 1175 Grade 3.
Where roof lights are fitted consideration should be give to underdrawing with either steel bars or expanded metal, securely fixed to the fabric of the building.

External Doors

There should be only one customer entrance. All external doors should comply with enhanced security doors to LPS 1175 SR 2/3. All external glazing to doors should be minimum 7.5mm laminated glass. No letter plate should be fitted to the door. Hinge bolts should be used in any outward opening doors

Windows

All windows should be certified to BS7950. All external glazing to windows should be minimum 7.5mm laminated glass. The design of the windows should be such that windowpanes are kept to the minimum size practicable.

Interior Doors

Interior doors should be 44mm solid core and fitted with a Kitemarked BS3621 five lever mortice deadlock.

Interior Walls

Stud partition walls are significantly strengthened with the use of high impact gypsum boards.

W.C Facilities

All service pipes and fittings should be fully enclosed to prevent vandalism. Ideally, anti vandal light fittings should be fitted, together with non-return screws and hidden fixings. The use of an anti-graffiti coating will aid the removal any drawing or lettering.

Key Security

Key distribution should be kept to a minimum and a key security cabinet located in the main office. Keys should not be marked with vehicle registration numbers.

ATM Security

Construction surrounding automatic telling machines should be of masonry strength or similar and should have securilath or a similar material within the cavity, anchored to the fabric of the building. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of 'comfort zones' in front of the ATM's to act as a physical and psychological barrier. ATM's benefit from clear, natural surveillance and retailers should ensure that there are no areas of concealment adjacent or near by.

General

The measures outlined above should be considered and applied where appropriate. Additional measures such as till guards, physical counter protection, anti-ram bollards and smoke generators may be effective and advice will be given on a site-specific basis. Consultation with local crime prevention officers should be made if site surveys are required.

The presence of a 'capable guardian' on site will reduce crime levels. The presence of other services, such as repair workshops is beneficial.

Where justified, by very high crime rates, employing a uniformed guard may reduce offences. Care should be taken to avoid predictable guard absences/routines.

Prominent payment notices, particularly at entry and exit points, coupled with traffic calming measures, designed in conjunction with pinch points and CCTV, (to capture offenders and registration numbers for evidential purposes) are often a positive deterrent and will improve the potential for prosecuting offenders. Where larger shopping facilities are provided a careful balance between marketing priorities and crime prevention should be struck to avoid creating a crime generator.

9). Credit Card Fraud

Forecourt employees need to recognise that fraud often starts in a small way and can escalate into something much bigger very quickly. They should be made aware that it is not just customers that commit fraud but employees as well.

Recognising the signs of dishonesty

Odd behaviour between an employee and friends or special friendships between another employee or delivery people may indicate collusion to defraud. Other signs may be an improved life style e.g. new and expensive clothes.

Fraud by the general public

Types of fraud by the general public fall into two main categories: -

• Payment card fraud

• Cheque card fraud

"Spot and stop" payment card and cheque card fraud

Employees will be aware from personal experience that few checks are made during a transaction. Carrying out the following checks every time can reduce fraudulent transactions.

Check the card

• Does the card look genuine? – many cards are poor counterfeits.

• Does the hologram move when you tilt the card in the light?

• Check the signature strip for signs of tampering.

- Look for the *'flying V'* on Visa cards and the unique *'MC'* on Mastercards – the special printing is difficult to copy.

- If the site has an ultraviolet (UV) light for checking currency, use it to check that cards have hidden marks that appear under the light.

- Check the expiry date on the card.

- Check that the signature on the transaction slip matches the signature on the card.

If the payment fails to authorise employees should telephone for authorisation using 'Code 10'. For cheque guarantee cards the relevant help line should be used to verify if the card is lost or stolen.

During the call hold the card in the hand so that questions can be answered readily (the operator will ask closed questions because the customer is likely to be within earshot).

Keep a note of the contact numbers at the pay point.
Employees should not withhold a card if they are at risk of violence.
Retained cards should be touched as little as possible and staff should be instructed to handle them on the edges to help preserve forensic evidence.

Collusion

Unfortunately collusion between staff and customers is quite common. Collusion usually occurs when the customer is given (usually as part of a larger transaction) more goods that they have paid for.

Employees should observe company policy if they are asked to supply goods free of charge, or at a reduced price, with an offer of a reward.

Forgery

Counterfeit notes are getting harder to spot. Attempts to pass on counterfeit notes are on the increase.

Most counterfeiters will attempt to exchange notes as quickly as possible They will be looking to receive as much money in change as they can by purchasing a low value item and paying with a high value forged note. With experience employees should be able to spot many of the counterfeit notes, especially the less expertly forged ones.

They should:

- Check high denomination banknotes for the watermark and for the silver vertical strip.

- Watch out for banknotes with slightly different colouring.

- Forged notes can feel wrong to the touch if they have been printed on poor quality paper – which is often the case.

- Where possible an ultra violet light or pen should be used to detect forgeries. Checks should be made in front of the customer. Fraudsters will often leave quickly if they are under suspicion. This will aid in the preservation of evidence for a subsequent police investigation.

Chip and Pin cards

Due to card fraud amounting to losses in excess of £1 million per day in the UK alone, credit and debit cards are now being produced with a personal identification number (P.I.N), which is stored in a computerised chip on the card.

Instead of signing a receipt for a transaction and having the signature compared, the customer has to input their unique P.I.N into a machine. All other aspects of the transaction are as before. Chip and pin cards can still be signed and used in the normal way if necessary. This new system will undoubtedly reduce card fraud in the future.

10). Site Security and Personal Safety

Businesses can suffer financial loss, risk of prosecution and adverse publicity from poor security and personal safety practices.

This section of the toolkit covers two areas, which are of paramount importance and gives a brief outline of the generic issues. The information included is only meant as a guide and retailers should consult their site operation manual on site security and personal safety as well as the BOSS general security manual (procedures for service station staff), for more specific detail.

- Employees should be encouraged to take ownership of security issues by taking part in awareness training.

- General surveillance to be encouraged in particular for drive-offs, shop theft and fuel security.

- Internal and external fraud issues should be addressed and employees encouraged to be vigilant and report incidents.

- Employees should be made aware protocols for dealing with robberies and burglaries.

- Employees must be aware of how to deal with bomb threats and action group activities (i.e. Greenpeace)

Personal Safety

- It should be stressed that employee personal safety comes first <u>before</u> the security of company proceeds, stock and equipment.

- Employees should be educated in the correct preventative action and correct environment layout with regard to personal safety issues.

- Cash control and the opening and closing of the site procedures should be strictly followed.

- Interpersonal skills should be encouraged in order to equip the employee with the best way of dealing with confrontational situations.

11). CCTV

A CCTV system within the sales building to protect staff should be considered essential and external cameras be considered where appropriate. The number of cameras and complexity of the system must be decided on a site-specific basis following appropriate risk assessment. However, installers need to apply the full weight of their experience to specify the correct combination of products, positioned wisely, to ensure maximum impact and evidential provision.

The recommended standards of CCTV are currently under review and you may be required to register the system with the Data Protection Registrar in order to comply with the CCTV Data Protection Act 1998 (Code of Practice).

Ideally, CCTV systems should be installed to Police Scientific Development Branch (PSDB).

The majority of CCTV evidence seen by the police is analogue, however there are increasing numbers of digital systems being fitted. Both systems have advantages and disadvantages. Remember - 'Best Evidence' is either the original recording or digital master.

Analogue CCTV Systems

- Provide good quality images.

- Recording system and tape management system must be maintained.

- Tried and tested method.

Features of Digital Systems

- Variable recording period (user defined) - influences image quality.

- Sequences saved to disc as needed for analysis - viewing software included.

- Multiple camera views recorded.

- Systems rewrite disc at specified interval.

Police Requirements from CCTV

- In a format compatible with police systems.

- For digital CCTV, browser software included on disc.

- Image quality as high as possible.

- Browser has full functionality.

- Date and time set correctly.

- System correctly maintained and installed.

Conclusions

- Systems should be password protected to prevent changes to settings.

- Maintenance of system is a good investment.

- All users to have a good working knowledge through basic training.

- Do not use very long recording periods - low quality images.

The Data Protection Codes contain information on the secure storage of the recorded material, whether videotape or digital. A robust and audible tape management procedure must be in place.

For advice on any issues relating to the choice and installation of CCTV systems, please contact your local police station.

12). Raid-control

Raid-control is a developing national crime reduction initiative that aims to raise security standards in retail premises and thereby reduce the potential for commercial robbery.

The objectives of the initiative are defined as follows: -
TO REDUCE THE RISK OF BUSINESSES BECOMING THE VICTIMS OF ROBBERY AND TO IDENTIFY AND DETECT THOSE RESPONSIBLE, THROUGH

Raising standards:

- Of staff security-awareness.

- Of robbery-reduction equipment and procedures.

- Of identification and detection equipment and procedures.

Raising awareness:

Of potential offenders, by introducing measures in order to:

- Reduce the opportunity to commit robbery.

- Raise the risk of arrest.

- Reduce the pay-off.

The Process

Raid-control is both a pro-active and reactive tool as a means for reducing commercial robberies. The process comprises three steps:

1). The Police will be provided with a specifically designed risk assessment form that will identify the areas where additional security measures are required in any particular retail premises with the emphasis on the following five key elements itemised on the Raid-control™ window sticker:

- Staff trained in raid-awareness.

- Cash minimised (tills skimmed regularly, safe storage of cash removed).

- Time-delay systems in use (minimum 3 minute delay, visual countdown, double lock and keys under dual control and good signage).

- Camera(s) in operation (closed circuit, digital giving full frame shots of head and shoulders on leaving shop).

- Stolen cash traceable (note staining-renders notes worthless and traceable).

2). If and when the retailer comes up to the required standard his premises will become Raid-control™ 'Police Certificated Premises'.

3). The Raid-control™ Initiative will then promote the brand, both nationally and locally with the objective of raising the awareness of criminals that such premises are unattractive as targets.

On successful accreditation till stickers and window stickers will be allocated to the retailer as seen below: -

Police Certificated Premises

Raid-control™

✔ Staff trained in raid-awareness
✔ Cash minimised
✔ Time-delay systems in use
✔ Camera(s) in operation
✔ Stolen cash traceable

... a safer retail environment

This initiative has been used successfully by Greater Manchester Police and the Metropolitan Police in Croydon, in reducing the incidences of commercial robbery especially those occurring at service station forecourts.

There is a cost implication for the retailer however, any initial outlay to improve security will be greatly offset by savings made as a result of not becoming a victim of robbery.

13). The Press

The media should be used at every opportunity to publicise initiatives currently being utilised and should be given full information. This in itself will deter would be offenders. However, consideration should be given to the use of a marked, unstaffed police vehicle, as it would be unwise to advertise this particular initiative.

Consideration should also be given to the use of Crimestoppers, as a means of identifying offenders and focusing the public's attention on efforts being made to reduce service station crime.

Summary

This toolkit seeks to offer a variety of tried and tested initiatives, which can be employed to reduce the incidences of service station crime. All initiatives discussed have been used by a force within the UK, either independently or as part of a wider problem-solving approach.

It is imperative that at the earliest opportunity partner agencies identify what resources they have available and what they can provide within the framework of a problem-solving approach.

Analysis of the self-reporting system introduced in Milton Keynes showed that it had been used to good effect in that fewer resources were used and the quality of the investigation did not appear to fall. However, prior to all forces adopting this system, they would need to carry out a detailed examination of the following:-

- The scale of the problem.

- The current force policy towards these crimes.

- The actual response to these crimes.

alternatives.

- The characteristics of offenders.

This is essential as forces may only see a resource saving if their current policy for dealing with drive-offs involves uniform attendance at service stations. The Milton Keynes scheme saw police officer time savings of 2.5 hours per crime from a baseline of 4 hours per crime, prior to introduction of the scheme.

Furthermore, such a scheme will only prove successful if staff from both the police and service stations, are properly trained and aware of their responsibilities.

If a police force feels that they would benefit from such a scheme, then a pilot scheme could be developed with input from petrol retailers in the respective area and the local BOSS representative. If all parties were convinced following rigorous evaluation, that the system works, then the scheme should be adopted as the official forcewide strategy.

ANPR systems are capital and resource intensive but may be appropriate following cost benefit analysis. Preventing and apprehending drive-off offenders should be seen within the wider context of crime reduction. Evidence to date confirms that prolific drive-off offenders are invariably just the visible tip of a far larger 'crime iceberg'. By effectively targeting this sector of criminal activity forces should be able to make significant steps in the detection and apprehension of individuals wanted for more serious offences. This toolkit hopefully demonstrates simple yet effective ways in which a proactive stance can be taken to reduce volume crime whilst at the same time targeting the professional criminal, denying them the use of the highway and reducing demand on police time considerably.

The use of any initiative must be weighed up against the nature and scale of the problem in any given area. The benefits to be realised from the use of initiatives detailed in this toolkit are evident from the success stories and the adoption of problem-solving approaches should always be promoted.

Author

Acting Inspector Brad Howe
HQ Community Safety Branch
Durham Constabulary

Success Stories

The following section gives details of a number of successful forecourt crime initiatives employed by police forces in the UK.

South Lincolnshire (*Boston with Holland*)

This scheme was started some 3 years ago but was the first to establish, statistically, the link between those who commit forecourt crime and "other crime"

48 service stations were involved and in the scheme and after 6 months:

- Forecourt crime reduced by 64%
- Other offences fell by 35%

This scheme used the Lincolnshire police Watchline system to communicate the information by telephone to the participating petrol stations, as well as posters and stickers on the forecourts and shop doors.

Metropolitan Police (*Lewisham*)

After a 3-month trial in 2001 the results were as follows:

- 21 arrests (drugs weapons and stolen goods)
- 80 CLE26's (no valid road tax)
- 230 intelligence reports
- 70% reduction in drive offs

The scheme used the usual BOSS stickers and posters. Additionally the use of ANPR equipment had a valid effect. This was a BOSS system on loan to the MPS. Small laptop computer linked to an ANPR camera, situated in a plain vehicle sited on the forecourt. The system read the VIN's of every vehicle, which came onto the forecourt of the selected site. When a vehicle "of interest" was seen, two plain clothed officers approached the driver of the vehicle, once it was safely parked at the fuel dispenser and the driver was out of the vehicle.

Following the Lewisham trial five other Boroughs adopted a single system of reporting. 3 out of 5 Boroughs saw a 30 percent decrease in drive offs and an 80 percent decrease in no 'means of payment' offences. This was measured against 6 control Boroughs.

Due to its success the single system of reporting has been adopted throughout the Metropolitan Police area.

Thames Valley Police (*Milton Keynes*)

In this initiativeThames Valley police appointed a dedicated 'bilking officer' With the help of the ANPR system 1,215 cars were checked, 23 vehicles were identified as being of police interest and 200 vehicles were crushed. Nine months after it started drive offs were reduced by 40 percent.

South Yorkshire Police (*Sheffield*)

Sheffield South Community Desk has devised a self-reporting pack, which they send to incidents of drive offs under certain circumstances. This has been well received by busy forecourt staff and has resulted in significant saving in officer time.

Norfolk Constabulary

Arrests initiated by forecourt watch initiatives in the Norfolk police area resulted in arrests of offenders for burglaries both locally and 45 miles away.

Police Service of Northern Ireland (*Belfast*)

Operation 'Clean – Up' in the Belfast area of Northern Ireland concentrated purely on seizing untaxed vehicles and was conducted in 6 of the 10 Belfast Urban Regions during the period 19th February to the 15th June 2002 (17 weeks). It covered North, South, West and East, Belfast plus Castlereagh and Lisburn. This resulted in a reduction in theft from cars of 27.2 percent. A reduction of the theft of cars of 29.1 percent was recorded.

Northumbria Police (*Sunderland*)

A project called 'DAFT' (drive against forecourt theft) was initiated in the Sunderland City and West area, involving sponsorship from a mobile phone company. Forecourt staff were issued with mobile phones and sent text messages on a regular basis informing them of any relevant intelligence information, i.e. stolen vehicles etc.

Merseyside Police (*Liverpool North***)**

Twenty three petrol stations in Liverpool North were experiencing between 120-160 drive-offs per month. As a result in 2002 an ANPR scheme was commenced covering four sites. Initially, drive-offs were displaced to other service stations, which were not fitted with ANPR. However, these sites adopted other measures including selective pre-payment and CCTV upgrades. As a result there has been a **70% reduction** in drive-off offences for all twenty three petrol stations.

West Midlands Police (*Coventry***)**

Due to high levels of forecourt crime an action plan was formulated between the police and petrol retailers. The measures included the use of ANPR and the introduction of a robust enforcement system for 'no means of payment'. Part of the system involved the targeting of persistent non payers, and officers were able to gather evidence to support a number of prosecutions for criminal intent. As a result of the measures adopted Coventry has seen a reduction of 53% in forecourt crime since January 2004.

Useful Contacts

1. British Oil Security Syndicate

    Head Office
    Kevin Eastwood
    Executive Director
    kevine@bossuk.org
    01926 864757
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<u>Regional Representatives</u>

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*   **North West**

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*   **North East**

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*   **South East**

    Tom Sterling
    0208 3250232

*   **Wales and South West**

    Ian Palmer-Lewis
    01451 810494

*   **Scotland**

    Jim Anderson
    0141 5775354

2. **United Kingdom Petrol Industry Association**
    (UKPIA)

    0207 2400289

3. **Petrol Retailers Association**
    (PRA)

    Ray Holloway
    01788 538304

4. **Association of Payment and Clearing Services**   **Jeff Collins**
                                                          Fraud Intelligence
                                                          Unit
                                                          0207 2400289

5. **Raid-Control**   **Alan Townsend**
                                                          0207 2303729
                                                          www.raid-control.org

6. **Digital CCTV**   **West Yorkshire Police**
                                                          Peter Burton
                                                          01924 292688

7. **National Security Inspectorate**   **01884 258654**
    (N.S.I)

8. **Security Systems & Alarm Inspection Board**   **0191 2963242**
    (S.S.A.I.B)

9. **British Security Industry Association**   **01905 21464**
    (B.S.I.A)

10. **Customs and Excise**   **0845 0109000**

11. **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority**   www.dvla.gov.uk

12. **Secured by Design**   www.securedbydesign.com

13. **Scarman Centre-University of Leicester**   **0116 2523946**
                                                   www.le.ac.uk/scarman/

14. Crimestoppers 0800 555111

16. Metropolitan Police Forecourt Crime Unit PC Ruari Robertson
020 8217 4145

17. Thames Valley Police Forecourt Crime Unit Sue Uys
01908 686025

18. Merseyside Police (ANPR Pilot) Dave Titherington
0151 7774890

19. Data Protection Registrar Information Commissioner
01625 545740
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

**20. Police Scientific Development Branch
(PSDB)** 01727 865051

21. ACPO National ANPR Co-ordinator John Dean
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Andrew Willis   Leicester University

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Mark Cash   ESSO and BOSS

Mike Hodge   Greater Manchester Police

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