

August: Business security

How safe is your business?

Crimes against businesses can include fraud, burglary, theft, robbery, arson and property damage. It's a good idea for business owners to identify their risks – what are the things that could go wrong? It may be assault upon your staff, theft of property, or the abuse of privilege by staff.

Preventing crime is about anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk, and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce the risk of crime. In terms of your business, you can help prevent or reduce crime through environmental design – the way you manage and design the physical area of your business, to increase the risk while reducing the rewards for offenders.

Some simple tips to keep in mind include:

Shop stealing and theft:

- Make the layout of your store as open as possible, with good visibility between aisles or areas.
- Keep shelves tidy and goods neatly stacked.
- Consider using surveillance mirrors so that staff can monitor awkward or hidden areas.
- Consider CCTV or in-store security guards if appropriate.
- Where possible, lock expensive and easily portable goods in cabinets.
- Stack goods tightly on your shelves, so that removal takes longer.
- Limit the entry and exit points to your store.
- Clearly display signs that state police will be called if anyone is caught stealing, regardless of the excuse.
- Clearly display signs explaining your bag checking policy.
- Limit access to keys for locked cabinets.
- Ensure your staff members understand what you expect of them under these policies.
- Remember: report all incidents to police. Police can't help you counter shop stealing problems if they don't know you are experiencing them.

Fraud:

- Internal fraud can include:
 - Theft by staff
 - Staff not charging their friends
 - Supplying receipts for refunds
 - Allowing accomplices to use bad credit

Sometimes, employees rationalise the fraud by trivialising the offence (“they can afford it”) or claiming unfair treatment as a justification (“missing out on a promotion” or “resentment at lack of appreciation”).

If you would like more information about business security, see ACT Policing's website at www.afp.gov.au/act or click on the link whilst you are still visiting the NHW ACT website menu.

Source: ACT Policing