



# **CRIME PREVENTION MANUAL**

**A GUIDE FOR RETAILERS**

**LET'S MAKE THINGS SAFER !**

**JANUARY 2006**



## CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE – A GUIDE FOR RETAILERS

### PREVENTING CUSTOMER THEFT \_\_\_\_\_ 3

We want to convince people that theft should be taken seriously and it would be better to use the phrase 'customer theft' or 'shop theft' rather than the downgraded 'shoplifting'. The Criminal Statistics for England and Wales for 1994 show that 115,494 offenders were found guilty at court or cautioned by police for theft from shops.

### PREVENTING CUSTOMER FRAUD \_\_\_\_\_ 7

The majority of fraud incidents affecting retailers are defined as deception.

### PREVENTING BURGLARY \_\_\_\_\_ 12

Information about crimes committed against retailers. It offers practical advice about what you can do to reduce the risk to your business.

### PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST STAFF \_\_\_\_\_ 18

The goods and cash held at retail premises puts retailers at risk from criminals who will use violence to steal.

### MAKING ARRESTS \_\_\_\_\_ 24

The advice given here should be used as a good practice guide and will help you to make an arrest safely and legally. It is likely you will be presented with a dishonest customer at some time and you may feel the person should be arrested. You might as well do it legally and avoid getting sued for damages by the same person that stole from you.



## PREVENTING CUSTOMER THEFT

### The definition of theft

*A person who dishonestly takes property belonging to another, with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it, is guilty of theft.*

### Terminology

*Many believe that theft is taken less seriously if it is against shops, and that use of the expression 'shoplifting' has contributed to that downgrading. We want to convince people that this is not so and it would be better to use the phrase 'customer theft' or 'shop theft' instead.*

### You can help prevent customer theft at your premises

This is one of a series of booklets providing information about crimes committed against retailers and retail staff. It offers practical advice about what you can do as a retailer to deter customer theft in your shop. The booklet offers ideas and options, which can of course be discussed in more detail with your local crime prevention officer.

### The scale of customer theft

#### Recorded crimes

The Criminal Statistics for England and Wales for 1994 show that 115,494 offenders were found guilty at court or cautioned by police for theft from shops.

#### Surveys

The 1994 Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey (covering England and Wales) estimated that the costs of customer theft to retailers amounted to some £203 million. The 1994/95 British Retail Consortium annual survey of crime against retailers (covering the whole of the UK) showed that the witnessed incidence of customer theft cost retailers £213 million. However, retailers also estimated the cost for unwitnessed customer theft as an additional £451 million.

### The main types of customer theft in shops

#### Non-professional

##### Opportunists

Many shop thieves are not regular thieves, but are influenced by opportunities such as easily accessible display areas, or goods left unattended on counters.

##### Persistent thieves

Many thieves steal regularly – every day or every week perhaps. They mix genuine purchases with some stolen goods and may be some of your oldest or most trusted customers. Do not take anyone for granted.



### **Juveniles**

Young people can be influenced by peer pressure to steal. This can be part of a 'group syndrome' where young people only steal when they are together. They tend to steal such items as electronic games, CDs and fashion goods.

### **Thieves who use children**

Some family teams make use of children to steal items (in order to avoid convictions) or to cause a distraction that will conceal the theft.

### **Mentally disturbed**

A very small group of people have a mental disorder, which compels them to steal. Sometimes goods are taken which are of no value to the thief (such as single shoes), and when caught, they are often found to have large quantities of such goods hoarded at home.

### **Drug abusers**

Many shop thieves steal to support a drugs habit, which can cost users hundreds of pounds a week. They often see shop theft as the easiest way to raise money.

### **Steaming**

This is a technique where a large gang will enter a shop and intimidate, threaten or distract staff in order to steal large quantities of goods before running off. It is dangerous to tackle these people, as they are likely to resort to violence.

### **Staff collusion**

Sometimes shop staff helps thieves to steal, either actively, or by turning a blind eye to what is going on. Thieves may pay the member of staff to co-operate with them, or they may intimidate them into doing so.

## **Professionals**

Professional thieves target high value goods, and often steal a great many items e.g. entire racks of clothes at one time.

They often work in teams passing the goods through several pairs of hands before they are eventually taken away. Some gangs also employ 'mindors' to protect them.

### **What can you do about it?**

Not all of the following practical suggestion will apply to your business. The level of shop theft committed against your premises will depend on a range of factors. These include:

- The type of goods you sell
- The location
- The layout of your shop and the style and location of your displays
- The local crime rate
- The hours you trade
- The number of staff you employ and their experience.

You need to consider all of your circumstances and then choose the preventive measures, which suit you best. Remember – all retailers are at risk. Never think that your type of business isn't.



## **Establish a policy**

Establish a store policy for the prevention of customer theft and ensure that all staff is aware of it. Remember to brief new and part time employees on store policy procedures.

## **Train your staff**

Well-trained and alert staff form the basis for good crime prevention. Don't rely on technology instead of investing in proper staff training. Get advice from your crime prevention officer, or your trade association or trade newspaper. Training need not be expensive – 15 minutes each week should be enough to refresh your staff's memories, and stay alert.

- **Vigilance**  
Teach your staff to be alert, and to recognise shop thieves. Thieves will often look around the room rather than at the products, or behave in other suspicious ways. Train your staff to spot potential thieves.
- **Knowing what to do when a suspect is identified**  
Decide what you expect your staff to do when a suspect is identified. Making suspects aware that they have been noticed will often be enough to deter crime. Use the normal sales approach e.g. 'can I help you in any way?' or 'can I help you find anything?' Make yourself busy near the suspect; keep walking past them; smile at them, and look them in the eye. If the theft has already occurred you will want your staff to keep the suspect under observation – or alert specialist security staff if you employ them – with a view to making an arrest.

## **Physical security**

Use of a combination of preventive measures. Most strategies work best in combination rather than isolation, e.g. CCTV can work very effectively, particularly where helped by security mirrors, good lighting, and alert well-trained staff. Store design is important. Ask your crime prevention officer to advise you. Some useful measures are:

- **Display dummy or 'disabled' goods**  
Empty record sleeves and compact disc boxes. Electrical equipment with key components removed.
- **Cabinets and cabinet security**  
Displaying goods within glass cabinets. If high value goods are displayed in cabinets, the glass needs to be fixed so that it cannot be lifted out. Locks must be of good quality, and access to keys strictly controlled. Put yourself in the place of the thief and see how easy it is to steal, and then introduce those measures, which make it harder.
- **Warning notices and signs**  
Prominent signs and notices warning customers about the consequences of theft. They are inexpensive and work best if displayed in areas shown to be most at risk. If you use CCTV cameras place sufficient warning signs. You are required by law to do so and they work as an efficient deterrent.
- **Mirrors**  
Mirrors can help you keep an eye on areas, which would otherwise be out of sight.
- **Display ('loop') alarms**  
High value goods can be protected by alarm wires, which 'loop' through them to an alarm box. If the wire is disconnected or cut, the alarm sounds. Product tagging may also be of value.



- **In-store closed circuit television (CCTV)**  
CCTV cameras will deter some thieves, and can help with prosecutions if good quality recording equipment is used. Cameras should be highly visible, e.g. monitors may be mounted at entrances, and signs displayed alerting potential thieves to the use of CCTV. Dummy cameras can provide an inexpensive short term deterrent on their own, or increase the apparent cover and hence deterrent value of a live system. But do not rely solely on dummy cameras. Thieves will soon find you out.

### Working with others

- **Radio-link schemes**  
These schemes link a number of different retailers, and usually provide a channel with the local police. So warnings about the approach of known warnings about the approach of known troublemakers can be given and they can also be used to summon police assistance. Talk to neighbouring businesses, and ask your local beat officer or crime prevention officer for advice.
- **Town-centre (or shopping centre) closed circuit television**  
CCTV in town centres can also deter shop thieves and be used to assist with their arrest if they are not caught immediately. Connecting town centre CCTV schemes to a radio link, pager system or other communication system linked to the police or other control centre greatly increases the value of CCTV to retailers.
- **Truancy watches and unaccompanied children**  
Truancy watch is a partnership scheme, which trains retailers how to deal with children who are in shop during school hours. The schemes usually provide police and education authority contact points for problem cases, but the idea is that just being noticed will deter schoolchildren from truanting. Shopkeepers can put up stickers to advertise their involvement with a scheme. Some shops limit the number of unaccompanied children they allow in the shop at one time. Plastic screens in front of sweets displays can reduce the temptation to steal.
- **Store banning**  
Your shop is private property, just like your home. Although there is an implied invitation to come in and shop, you are fully entitled to exclude any person from your shop if you feel that their presence is unhelpful to your business – e.g. drunks, or someone whom you have previously caught, or suspected of stealing. You do not have to give any reason for banning someone. Just politely tell them that you would rather they did not shop here any more, and that you would appreciate it if they do not come into your store again. If they return they will be trespassing, and you can order them to leave. If they refuse, you are entitled to call the police to assist you in removing them. If your shop is in a shopping centre, then you can call a security guard.

### Remember...

- Train your staff;
- Keep your shop secure, and cut down opportunities for thieves;
- Investigate the use of CCTV;
- Work with others: e.g. retailers; the police' local authorities to see what you can do to prevent crime in your shopping area.



## PREVENTING CUSTOMER FRAUD

### The definition of fraud

*The majority of fraud incidents affecting retailers are defined as deception: obtaining property by deception, obtaining services by deception, and evading liability by deception.*

### You can help to prevent fraud at your premises

This is one of a series of booklets providing information about crimes committed against retailers. It offers practical advice about what you can do as a retailer to help prevent external fraud in your shop. The booklet offers ideas and options which can of course be discussed in more detail with your local crime prevention officer.

### What is the scale of the problem?

The retailers covered by the British Retail Consortium's 1994/95 Retail Crime Costs survey provided information on their losses from fraud during that financial year. Their figures indicate that payment card fraud cost £3.6 million, and cheque fraud cost £8.3 million.

The Association of Payment Clearing Services (APACS) monitors the level of loss to the card issuers, who are the main losers from plastic card fraud. APACS reports that about two thirds of the issuers' losses relate to transactions processed by retailers. In 1995, these losses totalled £83.3 million.

The types of fraud, which most commonly affect the retail sector, are described below, together with a range of preventive measures, which retailers can take.

All retailers should consider establishing a policy to prevent fraud. Staff should be trained to deal with the various methods of payment available, and to know how to verify documents and the identity of customers. It is also important to ensure that this training is given to all new employees.

In the following pages, we will deal with the various types of fraud, and suggest preventive measures, which you can take.

### Payment card and cheque fraud

Stolen chequebooks, cheque guarantee cards, credit cards and debit cards are often used to defraud retailers. The fraudster may even have other stolen documents, belonging to the genuine cardholders, to support the use of the stolen card.

Fraudsters also use cheques, which have been fraudulently drawn or stolen from building societies. These cheques will have been printed for a specific customer, and will bear that customer's name. Because of this, retailers often do not query their validity. However, these cheques are often for far greater amounts than customer-written cheques.



### **What can you do about it?**

While it is very difficult for signatures on plastic cards to be erased, or for the signature strip to be replaced, many fraudsters have become proficient at forging signatures. They rely on retail staff not to notice or challenge any differences.

Train your staff to:

- Watch the customer sign – keeping hold of the card while this is being done – and make sure the signatures match;
- Check the signature strip for any signs of tampering;
- Check the start and expiry dates on the card;
- Make these checks obvious to the customer;
- Telephone for authorisation, where appropriate, or for cheque guarantee cards, telephone the relevant help line number;
- Vary the authorisation levels frequently, even between different stores in the same chain;
- Refer to a list of lost/stolen cards, if there is one available;
- Check any supporting identification (i.e. driving licence), where appropriate;
- Be suspicious when a customer selects goods without thought or care. If in doubt, telephone for authorisation using 'Code 10'.

Some retailers use equipment at the point of sale, which, via a computer network, automatically obtains authorisation for every plastic card transaction. This detects cards immediately after they have been stolen. However, it is still important to make the above checks – don't rely on the electronic equipment alone.

### **When an incident occurs**

- Do not take risks. For example, staff should not withhold a plastic card if they feel that it will put them at risk of violence from the fraudster. However, it is often fairly easy to retain a card, as fraudsters are normally quick to leave the premises if they think they have aroused suspicion.
- The card should be touched as little as possible. When it is handled, it should be by the edges. This will help to preserve any fingerprints or other forensic evidence.
- Cut the bottom left-hand corner off the card to prevent any further use of it. However, make sure that the signature strip and hologram are not damaged in any way.
- If you hand the card over to the police, note the name and number of the officer, the location of their station, and obtain a receipt. Then advise the bank.

### **Credit fraud**

Fraudsters target retailers who offer credit facilities. They obtain credit by providing a genuine address and other details, but move on before making any payments. This is a difficult area to tackle, as it can be difficult to separate fraudsters from customers who have simply run up a large debt.

### **What can you do about it?**

- You should always ask a customer who is seeking credit to produce more than one proof of their identity. However, this will only have a limited effect – as explained above, many fraudsters will be able to produce genuine identification.



- Establish strict vetting procedures to deal with applications for credit. The Credit Industry Fraud Avoidance System (CIFAS) will be able to assist with this. CIFAS holds detailed information on incidents of fraud and attempted fraud, and has the full support of the police. Email [cifas@cifas.org.uk](mailto:cifas@cifas.org.uk) for further information.
- Impose credit limits, and do not allow customers to exceed them.
- Watch out for customers who have large long-term debts and are not making regular payments. Do not allow them further credit.
- Place cameras at the POS/checkout area, fraudsters do not like to have their picture taken, giving police an opportunity to trace back their true identity.

### **Refund fraud**

Fraudsters, having stolen goods, will then return them for a refund, sometimes without even removing the goods from the shop. They can get more from a cash refund than from selling the goods themselves. They use forged till receipts or genuine receipts from previous transactions as 'proof of purchase', or may even claim to have lost the receipt.

Fraudsters may also buy goods, and claim refunds on them once they have used them. This effectively gives them free hire of the product. The goods targeted range from clothing to electronic goods, for example camcorders.

### **What can you do about it?**

Obviously, a retailer's primary aim will be to prevent the initial theft of goods by fraudsters.

You should also consider establishing a full policy for dealing with refund claims. However, it is important to ensure that the terms of this policy do not infringe upon your customers' statutory rights. Customers are entitled to expect goods:

- To be accurately advertised and described;
- To be of satisfactory quality;
- To be fit for the purpose for which they are intended.

However, customers are not entitled to return goods if:

- They have simply changed their mind about the purchase;
- They have, in the eyes of the law, 'accepted ownership' of the goods, ie if they have marked or altered them, or if they have kept them for a reasonable amount of time without returning them.

Therefore, refund fraud above can often be dealt with by refusing to offer refunds for goods which have no defect and which meet the above conditions. Alternatively, you may like to consider the following measures:

- Insisting upon proof of purchase.
- Insisting that the original packaging be returned with the goods.
- Offering credit notes instead of a cash refund.
- Taking the name and address of the customer – this will enable you to keep a record of claimants, and check for regular ones. You could also obtain this information by insisting upon sending a cheque refund to the customer's home.

You should be aware that some fraudsters might deliberately damage goods and attempt to return them as defective.



### **What can you do about it?**

- Ask for proof of purchase.
- Train your staff to thoroughly check and operate products, in front of the customer, before selling them. This will put you in a better position to challenge a suspected fraudster, particularly if the defect on the product is very noticeable and is likely to have been spotted at the point of sale.
- Record the refund area through security cameras. In case you detect fraud with a customer you might have a stronger case by being able to proof previous instances in which you were defrauded.

It is important to remember that all of the above measures are voluntary.

Some retailers are happy to offer fairly generous refund schemes – it is for you to assess the risk to refund fraud to your business, and decide upon a suitable policy. It is good practice to display the terms of this policy in the shop, so that customers are fully aware of them.

### **Counterfeit currency and gift vouchers**

Retailers should be alert to the use of counterfeit currency by fraudsters. While this area of fraud is still relatively small, the cost of individual incidents can be high, as forgers tend to produce large denomination bank notes – 200 and 500 Euro, rather than 5 or 10 Euro.

The forging of gift vouchers is easier for fraudsters, as their designs are often less intricate and easier to copy than banknotes.

### **What can you do about it?**

- Ensure that all staff checks high denomination banknotes for the watermark, and for the vertical silver strip.
- Forgeries are often of inferior quality. Watch out for banknotes with slightly different colouring, and ones, which feel as though they have been printed on poor quality paper.
- However, forging techniques are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and some forgeries can be very difficult to spot. There are special detection devices available – consult your local crime prevention officer for further advice.
- If you accept gift vouchers, make sure staff are aware of their designs, their paper quality, and any other checks, which are built into them.
- Make checks obvious to the customer. In many cases, it will be possible to preserve the evidence, as a fraudster will leave quickly if they think they have aroused suspicion. However, as always, staff should not take any risks in attempting to do this.
- Look out for any unusual trading patterns with vouchers.
- Report any incident or suspicion to the police. Your local crime prevention officer will also be able to warn you if there is a particular spate of forgery incidents in your area.

### **Supplier fraud**

Retailers should be alert to suppliers who knowingly send short deliveries or sub-standard goods, or send incorrect invoices. Retailers who have more than one outlet should be particularly careful, as their stock-checking systems are more complex, which makes short deliveries more difficult to spot. Fraudsters will try and take full advantage of this.



### **What can you do about it?**

- Ensure that all stock-checking processes are thorough, and check that each delivery meets the requirements of the original order.
- Check the invoice carefully – make sure that you are not being overcharged.
- Check that delivered goods are not faulty. This is particularly important with electronic goods. It is also important to make sure that any technology within the packaging of a product, such as bar codes or electronic tags, is fully functional.
- Be very careful about making any advance payments for deliveries. Fraudulent companies will disappear with the money, or deliberately go into liquidation.

### **Closed-circuit television**

Closed-circuit television (CCTV) can make a big impact to both detecting fraudsters, and deterring them from your premises. However, it is important to remember that:

- In order to be used as evidence in prosecuting a suspect, CCTV pictures need to be of sufficient quality, and need to be stamped with the date and time.
- For a full deterrent effect, CCTV cameras need to be positioned so that they are in full view of customers. You should also consider displaying signs, which warn customers that CCTV is in use.
- In order to get the full benefit from CCTV, discuss the matter with your local crime prevention officer.



## PREVENTING BURGLARY

### The definition of burglary

*A person is guilty of burglary if he or she enters any building as a trespasser intending to do any one of four things: steal, cause damage, inflict grievous bodily harm, or commit rape.*

### You can help prevent burglary at your premises

This is one of a series of booklets providing information about crimes committed against retailers. It offers practical advice about what you can do as a retailer to deter and prevent burglars from breaking into your premises. The booklet offers ideas and options and these can of course be discussed in more detail with your local crime prevention department.

### What is the scale of the problem?

#### Recorded crimes

Home Office crime statistics do not separately identify burglaries against retail premises.

The Criminal Statistics for England and Wales do however separately record all non-residential burglaries (which include those committed against retailers) and these offences have grown by some two-thirds since 1989; although numbers fell slightly during 1993.

#### Surveys

The first Commercial Crime Survey by the Home Office shows that retail premises face a much higher risk of burglary than people's homes.

The British Retail Consortium's (BRC) annual survey of crime against retailers showed that – in 1993- there were 57 burglaries for every 100 retail premises. There were some 179,000 burglaries against retailers and the average loss (excluding those from post offices) was £1,228 per incident. The overall loss suffered by retailers was some £332 million, which was made up of stolen stock valued at £231 million, costs of a further £62 million in repairs and a further £39 million from trade lost after incidents took place. Only 3% of stock was recovered.

#### Ram raids

Ram raids have caused great concern in recent years. The BRC's 1993 survey indicated that there were 17,750 such incidents, some 3% of all the burglaries committed against retailers. About the same value of stock is stolen in these incidents, but they do lead to substantially greater repairs (some five times greater than in the average incident).



## **Repeat attacks**

Police forces are becoming increasingly concerned about how often crimes are committed against the same places or individuals. The data in the BRC survey from single outlet businesses shows that many shops suffer repeat burglaries: over three-quarters of all burglaries committed against retailers are second, third – or even more frequent – attacks against the same premises in the course of the year.

## **Different types of retail burglary**

### **Smash and grab**

These burglaries, characterised by the violence of the burglars' entry, are the most common. Burglars may use paving stones to smash windows, scaffolding poles to lever up protective grilles, or power tools to cut padlocks or grilles off. In some cases they take only the goods in the window but more often they take high value stock on the shop floor. In ram raiding incidents, stolen vehicles are used to ram their way into shops. As with other crimes involving the misuse of motor vehicles, ram raiding raises serious public safety issues. The amount of damage caused in each incident also makes repairs particularly expensive.

Smash and grab attacks are usually to the front of the building, although rear shutters on out-of-town sites are a common target. They are carried out at great speed to avoid the effects of the alarm. Most are over within a minute.

### **Opportunistic**

These burglaries lack obvious planning. Burglars usually enter through the most vulnerable points: through a roof-light, forcing a window, perhaps finding an insecure door. Sometimes they smash a window and steal from the window display. They seldom try to overcome the alarm system although they may take pains to avoid setting it off. Usually they take relatively little – typically only what can easily be carried off. 'Soft' targets who do not carry high value stock and do not go to great lengths to protect their shops are often the most vulnerable.

### **Sophisticated**

In these incidents, burglars overcome alarm systems in various ways. They may cut the signalling of the alarm system, fill exterior alarm bells with foam to stop them sounding, and smash strobe lights. In some cases, the burglars avoid the alarm system either as a result of careful observation or through inside information. In others a common ploy is to set the alarm off repeatedly and wait until the police and key holders stop responding to it. With the alarm disabled the burglars have more time to act and will usually enter unobtrusively, forcing side or back doors or windows. Their usual target is high value stock and sometimes the safe (which is often removed entirely). Often their exit route is different from that used for entry. Once they have the run of the building burglars have been known to open up loading bays and bring in vehicles.

## What can you do about it?

### Slow them down

Time is a key factor in most burglaries. Burglars will put themselves at risk of being caught for as little time as possible. For them the risks are highest when they are conspicuous to passers-by or in the short time they have to complete their burglary after a burglar alarm has gone off. To prevent burglaries effectively, you should delay burglars at these times for as long as possible in order to make the risk seem unacceptable. The best way to do this is to put your resources into more than one of the types or levels of physical protection advised in this booklet – the more barriers you create, the more you will slow them down.

### Train your staff

You need full support from your staff. Teach them about the burglary prevention measures you have taken, and the correct use of any equipment you have installed.

- **Reporting suspicious circumstances**  
Explain to staff the importance, for example, of keeping a watchful eye for suspicious people or vehicles to prevent people 'casing' your premises.
- **Get them involved**  
You can develop their commitment to crime prevention by asking their opinions and ideas about the measures you are taking or propose to take.
- **Key security**  
Above all, you should build key security into your staff-training programme. Ensure that only specially selected staff has access to certain keys or combination locks, and that keys to secure areas are not left within the shop. Selected staff or managers must thoroughly understand their responsibilities for locking and securing fastenings on windows and doors, cabinets, internal offices where cash may be held, safes, roof lights and any other exits.
- **Help from your crime prevention officer**  
Your local crime prevention officer will be able to develop your awareness and knowledge about suitable crime prevention measures for your shop. He or she can also advise you about vetting new staff to reduce the risk of burglaries and other retail crimes being organised or assisted from within.

### Look after stock and cash

- **Removing high value goods from window displays**  
You can protect portable high value goods such as jewellery or camcorders by removing them from display windows overnight, and locking them in a safe, or a secure room or cage. But be aware of the drawbacks – the extra workload on you and your staff, and the likelihood that empty windows will attract less window-shopping and therefore less 'informal' policing. (Having more people around increases the chance of there being witnesses who can call the police.)
- **Hiding stock**  
Burglars will be less likely to break into your stock room if you hide what is in it boarding or whitewashing over the windows.
- **Leave the till open**  
By leaving the till visible, open and clearly empty, any burglars seeking cash are likely to lose interest.

- **Reducing stock**  
The less you have in stock to attract the thief, the less can be taken. By coordinating with suppliers you can introduce 'just in time' deliveries, use catalogue deliveries or home deliveries to reduce stock levels. But while such methods may minimise stock taken in a burglary, they are unlikely to deter a burglar unless he or she knows stock levels are low.
- **Bank your cash**  
If you do not leave cash in the store overnight it cannot be stolen in a burglary. Night safe facilities are available after opening hours. If you do not use a specialist cash collection agency be sure you vary the route you take to the bank and the times you leave the shop.
- **Dummy goods**  
In some cases, using dummy goods, (such as coloured water in wine bottles in off-licence displays, or empty CDs and cassette tapes) will deter some opportunistic burglars who only seek display goods, but you have to make it clear that the goods are fake. This approach will not deter burglars seeking high value stock from inside the shop.

### **Physically protect the target**

- **Strengthening potential entrances**  
Use high quality (hardwood) doorframes and doors, steel reinforcing and anti-thrust bolts on vulnerable doors, and bars on vulnerable windows. Glass panels in doors are particularly vulnerable to attack and ideally they should be avoided or boarded up. Ask for materials that comply at least to BS8220 for the construction industry as a minimum standard of strength. And the locks on doors should be at least up to the quality of a five lever mortice lock conforming to BS3621.
- **Grilles and shutters**  
These can be an excellent way of deterring burglars, but externally fitted varieties will need planning permission. There are three main types:
  - Internal grilles are usually a thin lattice mesh that is lowered just behind the window. (Note that these do not protect the window and glass replacement is often the greatest cost in a burglary);
  - External metal grilles are usually of the 'tube and link' design;
  - External roller shutters (made from solid aluminium or steel strips or laths which can have 'windows' punched into them to allow window shoppers a glimpse of your wares).External grilles and shutters usually roll up into a housing behind the fascia while the shop is trading; some are taken down in sections and stored inside the shop. External shutters are strongly resisted by some planning authorities. Firstly, badly designed or solid shutters prevent window-shopping and create a fortress – like hostile environment, reducing the numbers of passers-by at night. Which in turn may increase the level of crime. Secondly, their horizontal design and projecting housings seldom fit aesthetically with the design of a building, (and this is of particular importance in the case of listed buildings and conservation areas).
- **Fit grilles inside**  
You can protect high value goods within the shop floor area by securing high-risk display cabinets, such as for tobacco displays, with protective grilles and shutters.



- **Glass 'film'**

A reasonably cheap way of improving the strength of glass windows against smash and grab attacks is by applying a plastic film, available in various grades, to the rear of the window. This is a good deterrent but filmed glass windows are slightly less clear than non-filmed windows. Mirror-finished film on rear windows will both increase the strength of the glass and fully restrict a burglar's view into rear storage areas.
- **Laminated glass**

This is very difficult to break through in a 'smash and grab' attack because it is made by bonding a layer of tough plastic between sheets of glass, and this will hold the window together even after the glass has broken. However, to be effective you must ensure that window frames and fixings are equally strong, and bear in mind that you will often have to pay to replace the glass, even if the burglars were not able to take your stock.
- **Safes**

A good quality safe will protect cash and valuable items overnight but you should take the added precaution of bolting it in place and positioning it discreetly. If you have, or are fitting a burglar alarm, you can include sensors inside the safe that will set the alarm off if the safe is opened. But beware buying a fire safe that doesn't necessarily protect against theft, and vice versa. Your insurers will be able to help you choose a suitable safe and suggest minimum standards of specification.
- **Secure cages**

Secure cages in the stock room can provide additional security for high value stock. They can be constructed using expanded metal sections or created by increasing the protection within an existing internal room.
- **Vehicle traps**

Fixing bollards into the ground around your premises will protect against ram raiders, but you will need to consult your local planning authority and your landlord. Some designs of bollard can be removed during trading hours. Large concrete plant containers can be used as an alternative to bollards. 'Road blocker' devices can be used to close off vehicle entrance overnight. Much depends on your location and circumstances. Your crime prevention officer can advise you.
- **The overall design**

If you are planning a move to a new building or intend making major refurbishments, you have an excellent opportunity to build preventive measures into the design of your premises. For example, you can build stall risers, put in multi-pane windows, ensure telephone lines are hidden and protect vehicle approaches. The Secured by Design scheme has been developed to help identify builders who have consulted the police and have incorporated specific crime prevention measures. The use of the Secured by Design logo is available to those who meet the required standards. You may also seek advice from your police force's architectural liaison officer (ALO) who is trained specifically in building design to prevent burglary and other crimes.
- **And if it happens...**

Remember that if you have been unfortunate enough to have been burgled, the statistics show that *your risk of being burgled again is much higher*. So you will need to use the advice in this paper to upgrade your defences and not merely put things back the way they were before the burglary. Obviously if an attack takes place you will have very little time to liaise with planning authorities, the police and so on – so make contingency plans now, and arrange what you will do if the worst happens.



## Watching and deterring intruders

### – Intruder alarms

You may deter some potential burglars if you display evidence that you have fitted an intruder alarm. Others may be scared off if they are breaking in and hear alarm bells go off. The alarm can be linked by phone line to a monitoring station, which will call the police if the alarm is activated. If your alarm is remotely monitored in this way, so that the police can respond to it, then you will normally be required to have a 10 minute delay between the alarm being activated and the bells sounding. This will increase the chances of the police making an arrest, (but will mean that your alarm will no longer have the potential to scare burglars off in the way that it would if the bells sounded immediately.)

There are many types of alarm varying in sophistication: some allow alarm systems, once activated, to be verified by listening in or viewing them remotely. You can also install systems that prevent burglars from de-activating the alarm by cutting telephone signal wires or tampering with the bell. Your insurer, and your local crime prevention officer will be able to offer further help or advice, and provide you will lists of the most established and reputable alarm dealers in your area.

### – Video surveillance

Burglars are deterred by closed circuit television cameras monitoring the outside or inside of the building at night and they can also help police to detect the burglars. Today's Digital Video systems allow control rooms to monitor premises from remote distances. This reduces the time to commit a burglary drastically for the offender. A location protected by an intruder alarm augmented with camera monitoring is considered a much more difficult target than a premise lacking these protective measures.

### – Controlling vehicle access

If a burglar cannot bring a vehicle close to your premises because his access is barred you eliminate the ram raider and become less attractive proposition to burglars who depend on vehicles to drive stock away.

### – Locking escape routes

Commercial burglars often plan to use exit routes that are different from their entry routes. In view of this, you need to make it as difficult to get out, as it is to get in. Make sure windows, doors, panic escape bars and internal doors are well locked overnight, and shut off the power supply for loading bay shutters. Make sure rear windows, doors, escape routes, and internal doors are well locked, and isolate the power supply for loading bay shutters.

## Lighting

If you install lights that are activated by someone approaching your shop you may deter some potential burglars. Where your shop is overlooked by passers-by you will increase the chances of an intruder being noticed if you simply increase the level of lighting both inside and outside the building. But take care: if your shop is never overlooked at night (say because it is in an out-of-town shopping park) then increased lighting may simply make it easier for burglars to work.



## PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST STAFF

### **The definition of violence**

*While many may apply more stringent definitions, the Health and Safety Executive's working definition of violence is broad ranging. It is 'Any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his or her employment.'*

### **You can help prevent violence at your premises**

This is one of a series of booklets providing information about crimes committed against retailers. It offers practical advice about what you can do as a retailer to deter and prevent violent, threatening or abusive behaviour in your shop. The booklet offers ideas and options, which can of course be discussed in more detail with your local crime prevention officer.

### **What is the scale of the problem?**

#### **Recorded Crimes**

Home Office crime statistics do not separately identify offences of violence directed at retail staff or committed at retail premises.

The Criminal Statistics for England and Wales do however show that violent crimes make up only 6% of all crimes recorded by the police. Of these, robberies account for 19%.

#### **Surveys**

Retailers' own figures on the scale of the problem are generally less reliable than those for property crime. Evidence from internal surveys shows that even where victims face physical violence, between 20 and 30% of incidents are not reported to management and/or head offices.

The 1994 Commercial Victimization Survey conducted by the Home Office, showed that 1 in 5 retail premises were affected by violent crime in 1993. This was most commonly non-injury assaults and threats to staff.

The British Retail Consortium's (BRC) annual survey showed that 12 055 staff were physically attacked in 1993-94, 90,241 staff were threatened with violence, and 209,645 were verbally abused (these figures include the victims of robbery). These figures almost certainly underestimate true risks but do represent a welcome fall on similar data for 1992-93.

### **The main types of violence in retail premises**

Retail staff is at risk in two ways. The goods and cash held at retail premises puts them at risk from criminals who will use violence to steal. And contact with all sections of the public puts them at risk from people who become violent when they are angry.



Incidents usually fall into one of four main categories: theft; troublemakers; angry customers and drunk, drugged or disturbed customers.

### **Theft**

- Robbery – when others use force – or the threat of force against retail staff – to steal.
- Confronting or trying to detain customers who steal can frequently result in violence (such incidents will not be classed as robbery because the victim was not subjected to violence at the time of the theft, but afterwards). In the larger stores these incidents are dealt with by uniformed guards or store detectives, which puts them more at risk.
- Dealing with suspicious payment cards can sometimes lead to violence if staff is required to retain the suspect card (especially when the card is being 'overused' by the correct user as opposed to actually 'stolen').

Although rarely, shop staff who have helped in preventing or detecting crime, are sometimes the victim of reprisal attacks later, and not necessarily whilst at work. And they can also face threats of violence intended as a coercion to collude in crime – for example staff might be intimidated into turning a blind eye to (or assisting with) customer theft, under-ringing transactions on the till or not checking payment cards correctly.

### **Troublemakers**

In some cases youngsters – often in groups – can deliberately create conflict, for example by causing a disturbance to hide the fact that they are trying to steal goods.

Youths innocently playing for long periods on demonstration video games may cause staff to feel uneasy. So too may a large group of young people who accompany a single purchase of goods.

### **Angry Customers**

Disputes with customers over goods and services can sometimes lead to violence.

Complaints and requests for refunds are notable 'flash point'. Genuine customers can get angry if they cannot immediately get what they want, but the situation is often made more sensitive because many demands for refunds are known to be fraudulent.

### **Drunk, drugged or disturbed customers**

Retail staff face possibility of violence when dealing with mentally disturbed people, or those under the influence of drink or drugs.

### **What can you do about it?**

Preventive strategies need to be based on a sound understanding of what 'triggers' attacks. This requires close consultation with staff that faces the risk of violence or has been victims. With larger businesses, discussion groups with staff victims can provide useful guidance on how violent incidents arise.



## Establish a policy

Establish a store policy for the prevention of violence and ensure all staff is aware of it. Emphasise that staff safety comes first, the protection of property second. Remember to brief new employees on store policy and procedures.

## Train your staff

Training is an important part of managing and preventing the risk of violence to staff and can help to defuse violence:

- **Customer service – train staff:**
  - to greet customers politely;
  - to avoid long queues developing so customers don't get frustrated;
  - to put emphasis on good customer service, for example helping customers to find the product they are looking for.
  - To deal with complaints – training may include 'positive listening', owning the problem and keeping the customer informed of progress. (Staff at all levels need to be trained in dealing with complaints even if their role is only to pass the complaint on.) and
  - To be on the lookout for body language and signs of anger, tension or stress in customers – such signs are avoiding eye contact, nervousness, adopting a hostile, aggressive stance, etc.
- **Share experiences**

Give young or inexperienced staff the chance to benefit from older, experienced staff who have often developed techniques for dealing with difficult customers. This will help to build confidence in advance of an incident arising.
- **Start and end of the day**

Opening and closing times are particularly high risk occasions. Never open or close the store alone.
- **Avoiding triggers**

Staff should be warned to be aware of the actions that in difficult circumstance can trigger violence. For example, invading personal space by standing too close to people, touching, turning their back, shouting or retaliating to abuse or swearing.
- **When an incident occurs**
  - If someone is using threatening behaviour, back away – tell staff to get behind the counter to separate themselves from the offender;
  - Make sure staff know how to raise the alarm and how to operate security equipment, for example where the panic buttons are located;
  - Staff should be assured that they are not expected 'to have a go' but to put personal safety first;
  - Staff should not resist or follow violent offenders;
  - Ask staff to remember as much information as possible about the offender so that when police are called an accurate description can be given and
  - Ask staff to remain calm and non-confrontational to minimise risks.

## Store design and layout

Store design is usually intended to create a welcoming and stress-free environment. These aims will also tend to prevent violence. Particular attention needs to be given to queue management and good lighting. The colour scheme in furnishings and décor and the volume and type of background music can help reduce aggressive behaviour.

There is a range of ways in which store layout can contribute to the safety of staff. For example:

- counters can be constructed to provide areas of comparative safety through the use of raised flooring, and wide surfaces to separate the public from the staff;
- Lines of sight can be kept free by keeping shelving units/goods/screens at a low height so that staff can keep each other in view, and see if an incident is developing;
- The view into the shop from the street can be maximised to increase the public's view – don't cover windows with posters, etc at eye level;
- It may be possible to provide access to a secure location which staff can use in an emergency and
- The environment around the store can be improved by lighting, etc to reduce the risks to staff as they are entering or leaving.

### **Remember...**

Most people assume that a threat of violence is less damaging to the victim than actual violence. In many instances the fear and anxiety caused by threats or an outburst of verbal abuse can cause extreme emotional distress. Conversely, actual violence against more hardened staff members may result in less serious consequences. The best judge of the seriousness of any incident is the victim.

- **Supporting victims**  
Staff who have been subjected to any form of violence need to receive the support of their employer. The need for sensitive handling, and appropriate support for victims – applies in all incidents of violence. It is often not just the injured person who is affected: staff not directly involved, or not even at work that day, may suffer the psychological effects. Managers should be aware of professional counselling which is available, and local victim support schemes.
- **Employer's duties**  
Employers in the retail sector are under an obligation to protect their staff against foreseeable risks (under section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974).

### **Monitoring the risk**

The recording of incidents – as well as assisting with detections – will enable retailers to develop sound preventive strategies based on experience. It is important to actively encourage staff to report all incidents, in addition to providing a simple, accessible reporting mechanism.

### **Deploying your staff**

Generally, the chances of a member of staff being assaulted are reduced by the presence of other staff or security cameras.

Problems, too, can be reduced if the appropriate staff are on hand at the times of greatest risk. It will help if young, inexperienced or otherwise vulnerable staff are not the only ones on duty at these times. A mix of age and sex among staff on duty builds confidence and is mutually supportive.

Employing staff with strong links in the community enables them to use their local knowledge to identify, and if necessary, deal with troublemakers.



## Working with others

### – **Business Watch**

Groups of retailers can work together to reduce the fear of violence. Typical schemes are:

- A ring round system – which can be set up amongst a group of local retailers;
- A pager system – shared by local retailers (these can be rented at low cost) and
- A radio link – this can also provide warnings about the approach of known troublemakers, can be used to summon assistance and can have access to the local police.

### – **Summoning help**

If a situation seems likely to result in violence you need to summon help quickly. Commercial panic alarms can be used to summon police assistance. Having enough phone extensions to always be close to one can be helpful. (It's no good saying 'I'm going to phone the police' if your only phone is on the other side of the room.) Stores with a number of staff need to have a system (like a bell in the staff room or Tannoy message code) to unobtrusively summon extra staff.

## Bringing in outside help

The presence of uniformed guards can help prevent violence, and can provide specialist trained support in managing an incident. You need to determine when or where guards can be used to best effect.

Although the cost of guards may be too high for some small retailers, there may be opportunities to share the costs with others. Talk to the crime prevention officer at your local police station.

As with any 'overt' defence the presence of guards may intimidate shoppers, and in some cases guards can become the target of taunts and abuse. Some shopping centres have resolved these problems by dressing guards in more 'civilian' wear rather than the usual 'militaristic' uniform.

## Keeping watch

### – **Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)**

The presence of CCTV may deter acts of 'premeditated' violence such as deliberate 'trouble making', and if they are of sufficient quality and stamped with the time and date it's more likely that offenders will be caught and prosecuted. CCTV needs to be obvious to have a deterrent effect, and display signs are good for this.

### – **CCTV recording**

Recording an incident is the only solid proof in case of lack of other reliable witnesses. Digital Video recording can provide a higher quality of evidence than analogue recording equipment.



## Thinking ahead about high risk situations

- **Preventing shop theft before it occurs**  
Some retailers operate a policy whereby customers are approached immediately and offered help if they appear to have concealed an item without intending to purchase it, or are demonstrating behaviour typical of shop thieves (looking round at the staff, and taking little notice of products). This can generally prevent the theft without the conflict associated with making an arrest.
- **Dealing with credit card fraud**  
Staff need to be trained in the correct procedures for dealing with suspected credit card fraud, and for avoiding confrontation when retaining cards. It can help if they have access to a phone that is out of earshot of the customer. However, in some retail operations it may be greater security risk for staff to leave the till area than to use a phone at the till.
- **Responding to alarm call outs**  
Key holders attending premises out of hours in response to alarm activations are at risk of violence, and need to be trained in the correct procedure – which is generally never to enter the premises alone.
- **Making arrests**  
Managers need to have a clear policy, and make sure their staff are trained, and have the ability to carry it out. Staff can be trained to tackle thieves in the least confrontational way (for example, emotive words like 'theft' can often be avoided). And, again, staff need to be trained not to put themselves at risk by chasing a suspect into the street, particularly into deserted or unsafe areas.
- **Dealing with troublemakers**  
Addressing the problems caused by local troublemakers, especially gangs, is usually best done in partnership with other retailers, local authorities, the police and other local community groups. An aggressive response to violence and intimidation will only make the situation worse. Staff needs to be trained not to respond in this way.
- **Working away from the store**  
Any staff that leave the store to visit customers (for example, management staff who do home visits to resolve complaints; engineers and delivery staff) need training to keep safe. They need to keep strict appointments regime, ensure the store knows who they are expecting to visit, avoid dangerous situations, minimise the amount of cash and valuables kept with them and, where appropriate, have a means of keeping in regular contact with base.

## MAKING ARRESTS

### Good practice advice for retailers

This advice is an outline of the law on theft and a guide to good practice for those dealing with shop theft.

Further advice may be obtained from your local police, legal adviser or trade association.

- Arrest should be a last resort.
- It will take a lot of your time.
- It carries risk and can leave the retailer feeling dissatisfied with the process and the outcome.
- Reducing the risk of crime will both help protect your profits and make sure the people who work with you are safe.

### Introduction

The advice given here should be used as a good practice guide and will help you to make an arrest safely and legally. It is likely you will be presented with a dishonest customer at some time and you may feel the person should be arrested. So since this is about a legal process, let's start with some definitions and rules.

### What is Theft?

The Theft Act says any person who dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving them of it, is guilty of theft. This means a person who takes goods from your shop without paying for them, and with the intention of keeping them, is stealing.

You will need to prove:

- the goods existed and were taken by the thief
- they were removed from your control
- payment was avoided
- the intention was to keep the goods permanently

### What is an Arrest?

Taking away a person's liberty – preventing them from leaving your store because of theft. You do not have to touch them, but they must be told they have been arrested and the reason why. If they resist you may use force, but only such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to effect or assist in the lawful arrest of an offender, or to defend yourself.



### **What are your powers of Arrest for Theft?**

Any person may arrest without a warrant

- Anyone who is in the act of committing a theft
- Anyone whom they have reasonable grounds for suspecting to be committing a theft

and where you know a theft has been committed, any person may arrest without a warrant

- Anyone who is guilty of the theft
- Anyone whom you have reasonable grounds for suspecting to have committed a theft

### **When can you make an Arrest for Theft?**

- When someone is in the act of stealing something
- Where you have reasonable grounds to suspect that they are in the act of stealing something
- Where someone has already stolen something
- Where you have reasonable grounds to suspect they have already stolen something

### **Who can make an Arrest?**

Any person who has witnessed a theft, or any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a theft has taken place. Reasonable grounds are more than just suspicion. This may be staff seeing someone removing an item from the store and alerting you, or where a customer has deliberately hidden something in a bag or in their clothing. Do not rely on allegations by staff or other customers – use your own judgement.

### **What should you be certain of?**

You have evidence that goods have been stolen

You have kept the suspect under continuous observation or you are sure that the goods have not been dumped. If not, do not intervene – it is better to let the person go and take a note for next time than risk an allegation of wrongful arrest.

You have seen the suspect pass through the checkout without paying or attempting to pay

### **How should you make an Arrest?**

Never attempt to make an arrest if it is unsafe to do so. Do not put yourself at risk, your welfare is more important than any property. Let the suspect go and call the police.

Whenever possible have someone to witness the arrest and be on hand to help you.

Stop the customer beyond the area set aside for payment – while this will in many cases mean outside the store, if you feel it is unsafe, they may be stopped within the shop just before they leave.

Ensure you keep the suspect in sight for continuity of evidence and to prevent dumping of goods and accusations of wrongful arrest.



If you have seen the suspect hide the goods on their person or in a bag, and you have kept them under continuous observation, then an arrest can be made there and then in store, as the offence of theft is complete.

Introduce yourself and explain you believe they are in possession of goods that may not have been paid for.

Ask them to return voluntarily with you to the shop so that the matter can be sorted out. Do not deal with the situation whilst on the street. You may be in danger from the suspect, accomplices or members of the public.

Note any replies or explanation made. Remember at this stage you are still enquiring not accusing.

If the person declines decide if you are now going to formally arrest the suspect.

Once in the shop go somewhere private and ask the suspect to empty their purchases out. You are not permitted to search a person as it may amount to an assault. If you feel they are still hiding goods – in coats or pockets – point and ask them to turn out the pocket. If they refuse, inform them you will have to call the police. Make sure they do not ditch goods – for example, during visits to the toilet or other diversions.

Remember, there is no way of physically restraining a suspect or preventing them leaving your premises short of making a formal arrest. So be certain this is the course of action you want to take.

Once the goods are emptied out, ask to see the customer receipt and check them off against it. If there are no discrepancies and there is no other evidence of theft, apologise, offer regrets for the inconvenience and an explanation for your actions.

If there is still a discrepancy between the purchases and the customer receipt, use the till roll to cross check.

Note any replies or other relevant conversation.

Once you have decided there is evidence of theft, decide whether it is appropriate to formally arrest the person and call the police, or whether you wish to deal with it by way of a store caution or store banning. Always obtain details of the suspect and record full details of the event in your store incident book.

### **What should you ask the police to deal with?**

If you are going to call the police it should be because you expect them to take some form of action. You may feel the offence is serious and the person needs to be charged. There may be other reasons for calling the police. For example, shop theft is one of the major ways young people enter a criminal career – the police should generally deal with juvenile offenders so that their parents and other agencies can be aware of their behaviour and take steps to prevent re-offending. Or you may feel it is appropriate for a caution, in store or at the police station, to be given by the police.



### **If you are going to call the police make sure that:**

You have all the evidence to hand – the stolen goods, customer receipt, till roll, witnesses' details, Video recordings and a good account of what happened.

You know why you have called the police and are able to explain this to the officer.

You can express a view of what you feel should happen to the suspect and why.

There are general guidelines (agreed between police and the British Retail Consortium) on the sort of cases you should call them to.

There may be local variations or special circumstances where you feel other cases should be included – such as where there are serious problems with schoolchildren, vagrants and drunks, families with known problems or gangs of youths. Discuss these issues with your local police and try to get together with other traders to present a fuller picture of your difficulties.

### **What evidence should you give to the police?**

- Be able to identify and describe:
  - The store layout, lighting, checkouts, location of goods and any other relevant features.
  - The suspect – height, age, colour, clothing and other identifying features such as hair, glasses etc.
  - When you first saw the suspect (and any accomplices) in your store, why you became suspicious about their behaviour before the theft, your observations or any observations.
  - Details of the theft and goods stolen.
  - How the suspect left the store – how they failed to pay for the goods.
  - How you approached the suspect and what you did.
  - Details of conversations with the suspect, word for word. Make notes as soon as possible.
  - How you made the arrest – including the time and place of the arrest.
  - What happened after this and where.
  - A list of 'exhibits' – including details of the stolen goods, the till roll and customer receipt, security camera recordings, details of witnesses who may help you, details of any bags, clothing or other items in which the stolen goods were hidden.

*Video evidence is important so make sure you have clear recordings and offer them to the police. Be prepared to give details of your system.*

### **Cases which should normally be referred to the police**

- Where there is evidence the theft was planned.
- The theft involved property of significant value to your business.
- The suspect is known to have a previous caution or conviction for theft.
- The victim of the offence is vulnerable, was put in fear, suffered personal attack, damage or disturbance.
- A weapon was used or violence was threatened or used.
- A group carried out the offence.
- The suspect was the ringleader or an organiser of the theft.

There may be cases where you are unsure of the right way to deal with a suspect. Call the police to help you in these cases. The police will decide whether to take a person in to custody and remove them to the police station for further action. If the police officer decides to deal with the suspect by either cautioning them or taking no action at the time, you should ask for the reasons – there may well be good reasons relating to the evidence or the circumstances of the suspect but you are entitled to know why.

If you follow this guidance you will provide the police with a better case upon which to make a decision. The majority of shop thieves do not go to court, but are dealt with either in store or by alternative means even when the police are called. Part of your job is to be professional about how you deal with shop thieves and why you call the police. It will help if you develop a store policy as to what cases you are going to deal with and why, and what cases you will call the police to and why.

Apart from those cases shown in the section Cases that should normally be referred to the police there will be others, which are deserving of their attention. Think through those cases, which are a particular problem for you or other retailers and where you think there will be benefits from a local policy for calling the police.

### **Cases that should not normally be referred to the police**

There are circumstances where police will not normally arrest an offender but you may still need to call them to deal with the person – by taking them to hospital, a place of safety or home to parents. You should have a policy for cases such as these.

- Where the offender appears mentally ill or disturbed in their behaviour.
- Where the offender is old and appears confused.
- Where the offender is very young.
- Where there would be no benefit by proceeding to court.
- Where the value of goods stolen is very small.
- Where the offender readily admits the theft and you do not think it will recur.

### **Work together to tackle crime in your area**

You are not alone! Team up with other people who are working to tackle crime in your area.

Join or form a local Business Watch scheme or link up with other retailers to share the latest information on crime prevention and risks in your local area.

Local partnerships. Get to know your local community police officer and make sure the groups involved in tackling crime in your area know the problems you face and what they can do to help you. Here are some other options.

- Ask neighbourhood, street or community wardens to keep an eye on the situation.
- Ask the local mediation service to work with everyone involved to settle problems.
- Work with Truancy Watch or other partnership schemes to encourage children to go to school or contact your local education authority.
- Ask local police or housing officers to take action against antisocial residents.



## About Quadrox NV

Quadrox is a company specializing in Network Video Security products.

Our products enable companies to leverage their networks and the Internet to deliver better physical security and more powerful and cost effective Network Video applications and services to employees, customers and business partners. Quadrox WebCCTV product family provides an efficient and reliable infrastructure by which enterprises can distribute, update and manage video sources and content over corporate Intranets, Extranets and the Internet.

## Quadrox vision.

Quadrox believes that the cost reduction realized through the migration from analogue to network video systems will result in many devices being equipped with camera vision and recording capabilities.

One of the first markets in which this will take place will be the Retail market because of the high crime rates, the considerable loss incurred and the slim margins.

*Quadrox vision is that in future every POS system will be equipped with Network Video Recording capabilities and a Camera.*

Today it sounds as futuristic as it sounded twenty years ago that every POS system would have been equipped with a printer and networking capabilities. Who needed networking anyway and what could you do with it?

10 years from now people will wonder how we managed without Video Recording at the POS.

Today we worry when we don't have our GSM with us, and lack communication capabilities. In future people in retail won't like working in unsecured POS areas.

## References:

© Crown copyright 2003 based on the work of the [crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk) website published by the UK home office.

Tilley, Nick. *The prevention of crime against small businesses: the safer cities experience*. Home Office Police Research Group. London.

McCulloch, Helen. *Shop theft: Improving the police response*. Home Office Police Research Group. London.

Burrows, John. *Retail crime: Prevention through crime analysis*. Home Office Police Research Group. London.

Tilley, Nick & Hopkins, Matt. *Business as usual: An evaluation of the small business and crime initiative*. Home Office Police Research Group. London.

Phillips, S. & Cochrane, Raymond. *Crime and nuisance in the shopping centre: a case study in crime prevention*. Home Office Police Research Group. London.