

Guideline 3 - Managing a secure station

Crime is a risk that can be managed. This involves monitoring the nature and scale of incidents so that resources can be targeted, knowing what crime is costing you to ensure that initiatives are cost effective, and measuring results to identify whether what you are doing is working.

Management of the crime risk should be integral to the management of the station as a whole and, as such, should be considered in every aspect of the operation. Inspection and cleaning of the waiting areas, selection and training of staff, handling and transporting cash, and liaising with other local organisations, are all part of managing the station, and can all have an impact on crime and feelings of personal security.

In some cases management is all the more important because the design of the station presents risks to passenger security which cannot easily be resolved. In such cases you will need to make whatever improvements are possible (through, for example, lighting and signage) and take steps to manage the problems that remain.

Any measures introduced to improve passenger security should ensure that the specific needs of disabled passengers are addressed.

These guidelines

- identify the principles for improving personal security through management, and
- provide examples of ways in which those principles could be achieved.

Stations differ enormously in size, age, levels of patronage, nature of the surrounding physical and social environment, and crime levels. While some management principles are fundamental and will apply in all cases, the application of others will depend on the nature of the problem. You will need to identify the potential problems you have, especially those which you have not been able to address through physical design improvements, and take steps as appropriate to manage those that remain.

Passenger security: a statement of intent

Your organisation should have a personal security policy which sets out its principles and objectives in relation to personal security. This will underpin all initiatives taken to improve passenger and staff security. It should include a commitment by the organisation, endorsed at Board level. Ideally a senior member of staff or Board member should have specific responsibility for this issue, to ensure that the policy is implemented.

You should publish a statement of intent, confirming your commitment to:

- setting, monitoring and publicising standards of personal security that individual passengers can reasonably expect, and
- monitoring of passenger satisfaction.

This should be exhibited in prominent positions in the station. The display of your statement of intent may also be used to give passengers:

- a contact name and number for reporting complaints and incidents,
- your commitment to the personal security of your staff, which includes prosecuting those who threaten or assault them, and
- your policy on providing a reasonable maximum time a passenger would have to wait when summoning help from staff.

Staff deployment, role and training

Staff can play an important role in deterring offenders and providing reassurance to passengers. The desire for a staff presence can be addressed by the sensitive deployment of staff, by increasing their visibility and mobility, and by widening their range of responsibilities. This can be achieved through:

- station facilities that are staffed, with glazing to maximise their visibility to passengers (taking care that cash and valuables are not on view);
- use of public address which is clearly 'live' by informing passengers of service alterations and responding to incidents as they arise;
- mobile staff teams deployed on stations and at times that are identified as being when passengers feel most at risk;
- making existing staff multi functional to improve the service to the passenger and to create the impression of a service that takes care of its passengers; and
- using the public address system to direct information to passengers at specific locations, which gives confidence to people on isolated platforms that they are under staff surveillance.

The presence of security staff who also have a responsibility to protect passengers enhances their actual and perceived level of security. Operators who contract a security company should ensure that the company they use is a bona fide organisation whose staff have been vetted and trained to a high standard, and conform to the Security Industry Authority's regulations.

Station staff should be selected and trained to deal with the public on a regular basis, and in circumstances where there may be anxiety, conflict, or aggression. Consideration should be given to providing new staff with an opportunity to spend time with experienced staff as part of their induction training before they are required to work alone.

As part of the process of accreditation for the Secure Stations Scheme you will need to demonstrate that:

- 1. the ability to deal effectively with conflict is assessed as part of the selection of station staff;**
- 2. all induction of station staff contains an element of dealing with the public in the context of potential anxiety and conflict;**
- 3. training to deal with conflict and aggression is available to all station staff and refresher courses are offered from time to time; and**
- 4. any security company you use is regulated and registered with the Security Industry Authority (SIA).**

Staff security

Staff security is vital to passenger security. Staff who do not feel secure are unlikely to make themselves visible and available to passengers, and are unlikely to respond effectively to situations where there is potential or actual conflict or aggression. Staff security is achieved through a combination of measures, including the provision of safe facilities, and through management and training. The appropriate level of measures in individual cases should be based on a risk assessment of each job.

Examples of good practice include:

- training for staff to deal with conflict and aggression
- high physical security in the booking office, with alarms for staff to summon rapid assistance in the event of a robbery
- personal alarms for staff for their use around the station and when leaving, preferably those which are linked to a source of assistance
- CCTV surveillance of staff on duty
- a staff rest room for when they are not on duty

Ticketing and cash

The storage, handling and transport of cash presents a risk in terms of robbery and therefore for the personal security of the staff concerned.

As part of the process of accreditation for the Secure Stations Scheme you will need to demonstrate that:

- 1. a risk assessment has been made for all staff whose job involves handling cash;**

2. adequate measures have been made to protect them, based on that assessment of risk;
3. adequate steps have been taken for the physical security of the booking office;
4. where practicable, ticket machines are emptied daily so that they do not present a security threat overnight;
5. booking staff are conversant with the 'personal attack' systems in place;
6. staff handling cash have been trained and understand what they should do in the event of a robbery or attempted robbery.

Securing passenger property

Knowing that their property is secure can contribute towards a passenger's overall sense of personal security. Examples of good practice include:

- secure car parking, such that it conforms to the Safer Parking Scheme
- sufficient and convenient bicycle parking places under the surveillance of station staff, CCTV or other surveillance
- the provision of left luggage facilities

Notices which seek to limit legal liability for loss of or damage to property, by, for example, saying that it is left 'at the owner's risk' are unlikely to be perceived by passengers to be reassuring.

Maintenance

A station which is clean and well maintained creates a sense of management and control, thus reducing fear.

Some design features become a potential threat if they are not well maintained. Landscaping needs to be cut back so that it does not obscure visibility and provide opportunities for crime. Lighting needs to be repaired and replaced as necessary to maintain acceptable levels of illumination. CCTV cameras need to be cleaned regularly and video tapes replaced.

Out of date posters and timetables can be misleading and generate an impression of dereliction. Posters which portray sexual images of women can contribute to female passengers' sense of unease and vulnerability.

If a station is busy at times but quiet at others, some entrances and exits could be closed off during off-peak times to enhance passengers' sense of security, although the access needs of disabled passengers need to be considered.

As part of the process of accreditation for the Secure Stations Scheme you will need to demonstrate that:

1. you have a regular inspection of the station to identify maintenance needs;
2. you encourage reporting by passengers of damage and graffiti;

- 3. you have adequate regular cleaning and maintenance procedures;**
- 4. you have a policy and adequate arrangements for the rapid removal of graffiti;**
- 5. you have a policy and adequate arrangements for the rapid repair of damaged CCTV, passenger emergency alarms, telephones and Help Points; and**
- 6. litter is removed promptly.**

A Secure Stations certificate is valid for two years, after which you will need to apply for a new certificate. It is all the more worthwhile, then, to make sure that any improvements you have made are maintained to a high standard.