



ARMED ROBBERY >>> PREVENTION

FOR CLUBS & HOTELS



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FOREWORD >

Being the victim of an armed robbery is a very traumatic experience. Apart from the obvious immediate physical dangers of being confronted by armed offenders, the psychological effects can be profound and long-lasting. Some victims never fully recover from their ordeal.

And while the physical and psychological safety of potential victims must always be our first concern, armed robbery involves loss. Loss of money and property is always a consideration, but it is the potential for the loss of your venue's reputation as a safe place for both staff and the public that can have the greatest effect.

The good news is that over the past decade or so there has been a significant drop in armed robberies across New South Wales. There are a number of reasons for this, but important among them is the improvements made by businesses of all types in security and cash handling procedures. Technology, such as CCTV, alarm systems and cash security devices have played a major role, but having well thought-out and strictly followed security procedures has been demonstrated to also be a big factor in reducing the risk of your business becoming a victim.

The nature of the business carried on by hotels and licensed clubs, with relatively large amounts of cash turnover, means they are an attractive target for potential armed robbers. While the overall trend for armed robbery is significantly down, hotels and licensed clubs have emerged as one of the most vulnerable businesses for this crime.

The NSW Police Force, WorkCover Authority of NSW, ClubsNSW and the Australian Hotels Association (NSW) are committed to working together with you to help prevent you, your staff and patrons become the victims of armed robbery. This guide has been jointly produced with practical tips on how to prevent an armed robbery, but also has important information on how to respond should your business become a victim, and what to do in the aftermath of an armed robbery.

I encourage you to contact your local police station to arrange for a safety assessment of your venue by a specialist Crime Prevention Officer and to use the information in this guide to reduce the risks.

Commissioner Andrew Scipione APM
NSW Police

ARMED ROBBERY >

Being robbed by one or more offenders armed with a weapon is an extremely traumatic experience.

While the incidence of armed robbery offences across NSW is declining across many business types (including banks, post offices and cash-in-transit), offences committed against licensed premises (clubs and hotels) remains at concerning levels. Hours of operation, access points and cash handling are some of the reasons why this may be the case. However, there are strategies and measures that can be taken to minimise the risk of a robbery being committed on your venue.

This booklet has been developed in partnership between the NSW Police Force, ClubsNSW, AHA (NSW) and WorkCover NSW to provide a range of tools that will assist in reducing the risk of an armed robbery occurring, and, should an incident occur, advice on how to react during an armed robbery.

By taking reasonable and practicable precautions to ensure that your workers and patrons are not exposed to risks arising from armed robbery, you will be able to demonstrate that you have attempted to meet your duty under Work Health & Safety Laws.



HOW A ROBBERY IS PLANNED >

Some robberies are spontaneous and are usually committed by one or two offenders. Robberies of licensed premises can involve greater planning and are usually perpetrated by multiple offenders.

Before committing a robbery, many offenders will undertake some form of surveillance of the premises, in order to know the layout and operating procedures of a venue. This may involve asking apparently innocent questions of staff and patrons about business procedures, and making notes or plans of the interior/exterior of the premises.

Be alert for ...

1 Strangers outside the premises who might be observing the premises and staff activity.

All staff (especially security staff) should monitor car parks and other external areas of the premises for suspicious activity. As a precaution, suspicious activity should be reported to police.

2 Individuals asking questions about the venue's operational procedures.

Information of this type should never be disclosed to any member of the public.

3 Individuals whose actions are out of character.

For example, people loitering around the venue, people whose clothing is out of character (winter clothes on a summer day, sunglasses or motor cycle helmets indoors etc).

4 Licensed premises should keep records of all suspicious or odd activity noticed and inform their local police.

Anything unusual may turn out to be of importance after a robbery has occurred. If in doubt, call the police.



PREVENTION STRATEGIES >

Do not wait until a robbery has occurred to update your security procedures and systems.

1 Ensure all staff are provided with information, instruction training and supervision to ensure security procedures are relevant and applied in practice.

Staff should be consulted in the development of procedures and be given the opportunity to provide feedback on potential improvements.

2 Have a list of relevant telephone numbers.

In an emergency, ring Triple Zero (000). Have your local police station phone number readily available near all telephones, and ensure all staff can identify emergency exits.

3 Install CCTV recording devices.

- a) Monitor activity in and around the premises.
- b) Capture activities at various locations throughout the venue, including entry and exit points and any cash-handling area.
- c) Consider whether the CCTV camera has a clear line-of-sight of the area and that there is appropriate lighting.
- d) When using CCTV, try to avoid time lapse cameras which switch from one area to another (as these cameras often fail to capture critical events in certain areas).
- e) Maintenance is critical. Regularly review your CCTV system to ensure that it is in working order. Cameras must be cleaned and checked for correct positioning, recording devices must be serviced and maintained, and existing footage should be reviewed regularly for clarity and integrity.

4 Provide good lighting.

- a) **Provide a clear, well-lit view of the premises.** Strong lighting can make an offender highly visible and will act as a deterrent.



- b) Ensure an open, uncluttered environment in and around the premises, especially in potential concealment spots.
- c) **Maintain unobstructed views.** Prune all trees and shrubs to provide clear visibility and ensure that curtains, posters and advertising material are kept to a minimum.
- d) Particularly in external areas, dark spots should be identified and illuminated, either permanently or with movement detection sensors. Ensure that the car park area is well lit.

5 Install an externally-monitored alarm system.

- a) An alarm system that is not externally monitored by a security company is not a sufficient deterrent.
- b) **Externally-monitored alarm systems** need to have 24-hour monitoring and the security company must have appropriate response protocols and police notification procedures.
- c) **Ensure that your alarm system** complies with police requirements.

6 Managers and security staff should carry portable duress alarms ('pendant alarms').

- a) Availability and use of pendant alarms should be on a 'need-to-know' basis.
- b) Remember: police will require secondary confirmation of an alarm's activation before they can investigate.

7 Minimise accessible cash.

- a) **Install time delays on all safes.** Time delays can minimise the amount of money stolen and provide staff with a valid reason to only hand over visible cash.
- b) **Install drop safes and chutes** where the contents cannot be accessed by staff. This prevents vulnerable periods where the safe has to be open for staff to deposit cash.
- c) Drop safes in conjunction with effective cash management procedures can significantly reduce the amount of cash in circulation in tills and floats.
- d) **Avoid the handling or movement** of large amount of cash.



- e) **Where possible, do not handle or move cash in the presence of patrons.** Avoid any activity that will give the general public the affirmation that large amounts of cash are available on the premises.
- f) Where possible, **have an enclosed area for handling and counting cash.** Always keep this area secure and out of sight of the general public. The area should be monitored by CCTV cameras and should have a strong, lockable door.
- g) Don't establish a routine that makes cash-handling procedures predictable.
 - Vary times for securing or counting takings.
 - Vary banking times.
 - Where possible, don't complete cash counts at close of business. This is the most likely time for an armed robbery, there is limited visibility, fewer witnesses and less traffic for getaway.
 - Consider counting before start of business during daylight hours.
- h) If large amounts of cash are to be moved, consider using professional security companies. Don't remove money until the security company has arrived on the premises.
- i) If you need to move the cash yourself don't get into a routine. Transfer the cash at irregular times and vary the route.
 - Don't go alone.
 - Don't wear a staff uniform to the bank.
 - Don't use bank bags.

8 Avoid opening and closing the premises alone or with a skeleton staff.

- a) The more staff on-site, the less confident offenders will become.
- b) Security staff should be trained in on-site for closing procedures, not just crowd control.

9 Limit your exposure.

Your local Crime Prevention Officer (CPO) can provide advice and assist with conducting a security audit of the premises. This can be arranged by contacting your local police station.



10 Keep security and operational procedures on a need-to-know basis.

- a) Closely control the custody, issue and duplication of keys, security codes, etc.
- b) Never disclose security procedures to the general public, including family and friends.
- c) Emphasise to all staff the importance of discretion.

11 Install height markers at entry and exit points to the premises.

- a) A cheap and unobtrusive measure, this will assist witnesses in judging the height and build of offenders. Witness accounts of height can vary widely.

12 Critical Incident Support.

- a) This assists staff to manage the effects of critical incident stress and provide appropriate assistance after exposure to traumatic incidents if and when it is required. An early intervention strategy is essential with provisions for longer-term follow up if required.



DURING THE ROBBERY >

The personal safety of staff and patrons is more important than any money or stock lost.

If you or your venue is the victim of an armed robbery, your first priority should be to remove the threat from the venue as quickly as possible and with no harm to staff or patrons.

1 Follow the offenders' instructions at all times.

Do exactly as they say and nothing more. Remember the offender will be nervous and tense.

2 Don't initiate conversation with the offender.

Speak only when spoken to and listen to what they want.

3 Stay calm and quiet and avoid any sudden or unexpected movements.

If you are told to do something, explain in advance what you have to do to comply. For example, "I am now going to open the cash register."

4 Don't attempt to retaliate or attack the offender.

The personal safety of staff and members is more important than any money or stock lost.

5 Avoid eye contact and show your hands.

If you need to move, keep your hands where the offender can see them and explain what you are doing.

6 Don't activate alarm systems unless it is safe to do so.



7 Where possible, try to make mental notes of the offenders and the situation, including:

- a) The physical appearance of the offenders (height, build, hair colour, eye colour, physical condition, piercings, tattoos, ethnicity, facial hair and any other distinguishable trait).
- b) Clothing worn by the offenders (shoes, pants, tops, hats, glasses and gloves).
- c) Voice (language, use of names, accents, speech impediments).
- d) Weapons used (machete, taser, knife, pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, baseball bats).
- e) Physical environment (what they touch, where they walk, entry and exit points and if applicable, the getaway vehicle).



AFTER THE ROBBERY >

Don't touch anything and don't attempt to clean the crime scene.

Following an armed robbery your first priorities should be to ensure that first aid is administered to any injured persons, traumatised persons receive treatment and that the relevant authorities are notified.

1 As soon as it is safe to do so, activate the alarm system and immediately call Triple Zero (000).

2 Have information ready for the emergency operator.

State the venue's address and if possible, a description of the getaway vehicle and the direction that it was last seen travelling in.

3 Attend to any injured person and provide medical assistance and initiate your critical incident support.

Arrange for counselling for all staff. Under Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws, you must take all reasonably practicable action to protect the health and safety of your staff.

4 Even if there are no physical injuries, armed hold ups are traumatising.

As a precaution, call an ambulance to deal with shock and stress attacks.

5 Shut and lock all external doors to the premises, and if possible, isolate the crime scene.

6 Don't touch anything and DON'T attempt to clean the crime scene.

a) The crime scene area must not be interfered with, as this will result in contamination.

b) Don't clean up anything moved, discarded or displaced by the offenders.

c) Police must be given every opportunity to examine for forensic evidence that may not be visible to the naked eye.

7 Relieve any affected staff and ask all witnesses to remain in the venue until police arrive.

a) If patrons insist on leaving, obtain their name and contact details for police to follow up.

b) Separate all witnesses so that they can maintain an independent recollection of events. Try not to let them compare observations.

8 When the police arrive.

- a) Provide as much information as you can to the police.
- b) You may be required to provide a statement and assist in the identification process. Do not be reluctant in providing information.
- c) Ensure that all witnesses complete an *Offender Description Form* – a copy can be found at the end of this booklet.

9 If the media arrive.

- a) You and your staff have a right to privacy and this should be respected.
- b) Don't contact or speak to the media without advice as this may compromise the police investigation.
- c) Don't disclose to anyone other than the police how much money and/or stock was stolen.
- d) Don't provide or sell CCTV or other security footage of the incident to the media. This may compromise any police investigation and could lead to the offender gaining notoriety.
- e) Contact ClubsNSW on 02 9268 3000 or the AHA (NSW) on 02 9281 6922 for guidance and support on how to handle any media request.



ROBBERY PREVENTION CHECKLIST >

This checklist has been developed as a guide for assessing your venue's risk of armed robbery. Answering 'No' to a question indicates areas where you could take action to improve the security of your venue.

Question	Yes	No	Comment
Is your street number prominently displayed at the entrance of the premises?			
Do you have warning signs prominently displayed around the perimeter of the premises?			
Are boundary fences and gates locked and regularly maintained?			
Is the landscaping around the premises trimmed so to provide a clear line-of-sight?			
Have you installed CCTV recording devices, and are these maintained regularly?			
Is there good security lighting in and around the premises? Have all potential concealment spots been illuminated?			
Is the premises' switchboard protected so it cannot be tampered with?			
Do you have height markers on all entry/exit points?			
Are all entry/exit point doors of solid construction and fitted with a deadlock device?			
Are all perimeter windows of solid construction and secured to restrict unauthorised entry?			
Does the premises have an externally monitored alarm system?			
Does the premises have a duress facility, including pendant alarms for selected staff?			
Have you installed drop and/or time delay safes to restrict available cash?			
Is cash handled in an appropriate manner away from the general public?			
Are there security staff on-site for close of business/cash counting procedures?			
Are professional security companies used when transporting large amounts of cash?			
Are all staff aware of relevant security procedures?			
Are all staff trained in what to do in the event of a robbery?			
Is your local police station number on speed dial on all venue telephones?			
Have you had a safety audit conducted by your local police?			



Description Form

If you're a victim or witness to a crime, please complete this form by yourself. If you are unsure of an answer, don't guess - leave it blank. If there are other witnesses, record their names at the base of page and ask them to complete these descriptions on a piece of paper.

NSW Police Force

		DESCRIPTION OF OFFENDER	CLOTHING (Use diagram to show particular marks/ patterns)
<p>Labels on diagram: Hair Earring Stained or missing teeth Eye colour, Pimples, Facial hair, Scars, etc., Jewellery, Tattoo Scar, Tattoo, Ring, etc., Make of shoe Gloves</p>	Age:	Upper body:	
	Race:	Lower body:	
	Build:	Headwear:	
	Weight:	Footwear:	
	Height:	Bag:	
	Complexion:	Other: (Include: Jewellery/scars/tattoos/deformities etc):	

BEHAVIOUR - (include words/spoken, accent & mannerisms)

.....

.....

To report suspicious activity,
 phone **Crimestoppers** on
1800 333 000.
 In the event of an **emergency**,
 phone **Triple Zero (000).**

COMPLETED BY

<input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Victim <input type="checkbox"/> Witness	Name (print):	Signature
	Address:	Date / /
	Contact No.: (Home)	Time:
	(Work)	

OTHER WITNESS

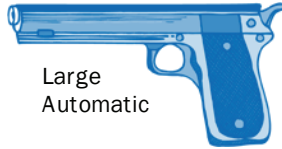
Name (print): Contact No.: (Home)

Address: (Work)

..... (Mob)

FIREARMS

HANDGUNS



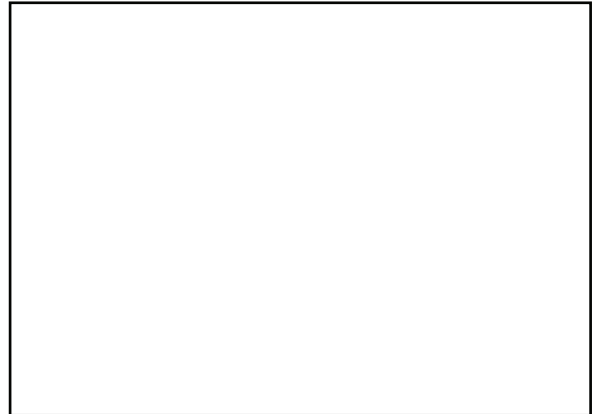
SAWN OFF SHOTGUNS



OTHER WEAPONS



Other - Illustrate



Descriptions:

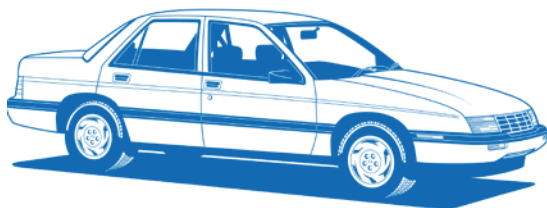
-
- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Syringe | Blade Colour: | Handle Colour: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club | Blade Width: | Handle Material: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Screwdriver | Blade Length: | Handle Length: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

VEHICLE (damage, accessories etc.)

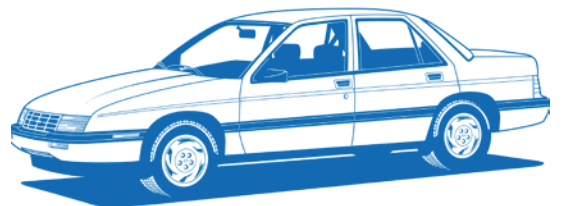
TYPE

- Sedan
- Station Sedan
- Utility
- Panel Van
- Bicycle
- Motor Bike
- Other Vehicle

Driver Side



Passenger side



State Reg.	Reg. No.	Year	Make	Model	Colour

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Automatic | <input type="checkbox"/> Damage | <input type="checkbox"/> Modified |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bucket seats | <input type="checkbox"/> Extras | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cassette | <input type="checkbox"/> Floor gears | <input type="checkbox"/> Rust/Primer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Column gears | <input type="checkbox"/> Instruments | <input type="checkbox"/> Seat Covers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Custom wheels | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual | |

To download copies of this guide, visit
www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/crime_prevention

For more information, contact your local Crime Prevention Officer.

