



CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE RE TIGER KIDNAP

There are two broad groups of kidnap offences. Conventional kidnap involves the taking and protracted holding of a person, against a demand for ransom, usually from the victim's family or employer. The second type involves the short-term hostage taking of family members of someone who has immediate access to cash or valuables. The captives are frequently held overnight and the aim of the criminals is to frighten their victims to such a degree that they will not contact the Police, even when, as often happens, they have an opportunity to do so. This is referred to as a 'Tiger Kidnapping' and it is this offence, which the advice in this paper is designed to address.

Our objective

Our primary objective is to prevent a kidnap happening in the first place. The easiest way to look at this is to study what the criminals need to make these kidnaps successful, from their perspective.

These can be summarised as:

- A victim who has access to large amounts of cash or valuables
- A victim who can be kidnapped with close family members and held without their absence being reported
- Police not becoming aware of the kidnap whilst the crime is in progress

If we can remove any of these factors or reduce them to such a degree that the risk for the criminal outweighs the likely payoff, the crime will probably not occur.

Practical advice

The advice offered can be divided into 2 distinct areas:

- What a business can do to protect itself and its employees (*risk management*)
- What vulnerable staff can do to prevent them becoming a victim (*personal security*)

❖ Risk Management

Anyone who has access to large amounts of cash or valuables is vulnerable to tiger kidnapping.

The best means of prevention is to reduce the payoff to a level, where the risk to the criminal outweighs the potential consequences.

Businesses should consider: -

- The level of cash or valuables held and reduce these to an absolute minimum
- Sensitive information or material must be strictly limited to those who need to know it in order to do their jobs effectively. No one should have access to sensitive information solely on the basis of position or appointment.
- Ensuring that no-one has access to enough cash or valuables to make them an attractive target to criminals and make this fact known
- Measures to compartmentalise the holdings into smaller quantities
- Off-site control for critical locks or access to large quantities of cash or valuables
- Effective use of CCTV systems to monitor vulnerable areas
- Minimising contingencies by encouraging pre-booking, by customers, of the collection of large quantities of cash or valuables
- Educating staff to notice and report anything unusual which may indicate a colleague is acting under duress
- Encouraging staff to report kidnaps in progress and rely on the system designed to deal with these
- Frequent review and updating of the above procedures

❖ *Personal Security*

The aim is to prevent criminals having easy access to your home or business premises to kidnap you or your family. If they need to make a lot of noise (e.g. smashing down a door) they will not continue in case the Police have been called.

○ At Home

- Identify callers before opening the door; if in doubt, don't open the door
- Use solid doors and good deadlocks.
- Keep windows locked.
- At night, close curtains before turning on lights
- Keep front boundary hedges and fences low to maximise your view
- Keep rear boundaries high to maximise your security and privacy
- Keep young children in sight or, if leaving them with someone, ensure that this person is aware that they may be at risk of kidnapping.

- Lighting
 - Effective use of lighting can considerably improve your personal safety
 - Consider sensor/timer activated lighting
 - At night, leave a courtesy light on at your front door
 - Always have reserve lights (such as torches or candles) to hand
- Key Care
 - Keep strict control over your keys
 - Do not allow duplicates to be made without your permission
 - If a key is lost; fit a new lock
 - Never conceal keys outside the premises
 - Always be vigilant and report anything suspicious

❖ Travelling

- By vehicle
 - Be alert, especially when leaving or entering your home/premises
 - Vary your routes and times of journeys
 - Travel with company where possible
 - Report any suspicious vehicles or people
 - If you think you are being followed; contact police immediately and avoid becoming isolated
 - Be suspicious of anyone trying to get you to stop or leave your vehicle
 - If possible, keep windows closed and doors locked
 - When stopping; do not allow yourself to be boxed in, leave enough room to manoeuvre
 - When parking, do not leave anything in your vehicle that may identify you or your business
 - Try to avoid parking anywhere that may become dark or isolated before your return
- Walking
 - Keep to busy, brightly lit areas where possible
 - Avoid short cuts across waste ground, deserted parks and unlit alleys
 - Be alert to your surroundings

If a kidnap occurs

If you or a colleague/friend/relative has been kidnapped it takes great courage to report the matter to the Police. The criminals depend on victims being so fearful for their family that they will not report it until some time after the proceeds have been handed over and the criminals have escaped. This means trusting the criminals more than your colleagues or the Police.

The Police have extensive experience of dealing with serious incidents where lives may be in danger. If a kidnap in progress is reported or discovered, the priority is always the safety of the victims and the Police will not undertake operations, which would be likely to increase the risks of harm or injury to them. There is a tried and tested system in place for dealing with tiger kidnappings, which has been so successful in the past that, for a number of years, these crimes did not occur. This system has been reviewed, improved and updated and you can be sure that the matter will be dealt with by senior, experienced officers, from the outset.

Remember; the Police will not arrive at the victim's house with lights and horns blazing or do anything to provoke a hostage situation.

If you would like advice on this, or any other crime prevention matter, contact your local Crime Prevention Officer. Their assistance can include visiting your home and business to advise you on security measures which best suit your particular circumstances. A list of Crime Prevention Officers can be found on the Police website at www.psni.police.uk or by contacting any Police Station.