Speech presented by Adam Graycar, Director, Australian Institute of Criminology:

"Issues in crime prevention for retail businesses"

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Issues in Crime Prevention for retail businesses

For Australian Retailers Association

12 February 2003
AIC research into crime against retailers

- 1992 survey of businesses across Australia
- 1999 survey of retail businesses in Australia
- Extensive papers and publications on fraud, shoplifting, employee theft, robbery, burglary
- Evaluation of “Business Watch” crime prevention program
- Survey of ethnic retail businesses in NSW
- Telephone survey of online credit card fraud against retailers
Aims and objectives of AIC research

1. To determine nature and extent of crime against retail and other types of business

2. To identify effective crime prevention strategies

3. To provide retail and other types of businesses with relevant information to assist them determine their risks of crime, and provide practical advice on preventing crime
AIC 1999 survey of retailers – In brief

- 3834 respondents
- 49% experienced a crime
- 27% experienced burglary
- 21% experienced shoplifting
- 10% experienced cheque/credit fraud
- 6% experienced an armed robbery
AIC 1999 survey of retailers – In brief

- 1.7% of all retailers in sample accounted for 24% of burglaries in the survey

- Estimated that the cost of crime for these retail sectors nationally was about $170 million in 1999.
What do we know about crime against retailers?

1. Different types of retailer suffer different types of crime

   E.g.

   - Liquor retailers
   - Pharmacies
   - Service stations

   - Burglary,
   - Shoplifting/theft
   - Vandalism
- Supermarkets: Shoplifting/theft
- Convenience stores: Shoplifting, Robbery, Burglary
- Bookshops: Shoplifting
- Newsagents
- Online retailers: Credit card fraud
What do we know about crime against retailers?

2. Crimes against businesses are proportionately higher than against residences.

3. Crime is unevenly distributed. Some businesses suffer a lot of crime while other businesses do not suffer any crime.
What do we know about crime against retailers?

4. Repeat victimisation is common.

5. Crime is costly and time consuming for businesses.

6. Many crimes go unreported to police, particularly incidents of shoplifting, vandalism, credit card fraud.
What do we know about crime against retailers?

7. In general, the four most common crimes for retail businesses are:

Burglary
Shoplifting/theft
Vandalism
Cheque/credit card fraud
What type of goods get stolen?

Key attributes of “hot products”

- Concealable
- Removable
- Available
- Valuable
- Enjoyable
- Disposable
What to do about crime

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)

- Target hardening (making crime more difficult)
- Improved surveillance (to identify offenders)
- Better cash control (to reduce "attractiveness")
What can the AIC do for the Australian Retailers Association? (for example)

1. Provide relevant, up-to-date information about levels of crime and types of crime experienced by retailers in Australia (based on AIC research and literature reviews).

2. Provide practical advice on how to prevent different types of crime, such as burglary, shoplifting, credit card fraud, robbery.
What can the AIC do for the Australian Retailers Association? (for example)

3. Provide concise information leaflets about exactly what to do when a particular type of crime occurs.

These could be designed so as to be pinned up within a business premises and immediately accessible to all staff.
What can the AIC do for the Australian Retailers Association? (for example)

4. Conduct an in-depth survey of members of the Australian Retailers Association to identify the types and extent of crimes suffered by members, and the financial and psychological impact of crime on members.

5. Conduct relevant and targeted training sessions to deal with the above.
What can the AIC do for the Australian Retailers Association? (for example)

6. Produce a series of “tips and guidelines” on crime prevention specifically designed to meet the needs of members of the Australian Retailers Association.

7. Provide information about the effectiveness, availability and cost of potential crime prevention measures.
8. Design a separate section of the Australian Retailers Association website (crime prevention) which would be exclusive to ARA members, but would provide extensive information about crime prevention for retailers. This section of the website would be very easy and quick to access, and would allow members to find whatever they are looking for relating to crime prevention. Relevant links would also be provided.