

LOSS CONTROL TOPIC

ROBBERY PREVENTIVE MEASURES

According to FBI statistics for 2007, over 5,900 depository institutions experienced a robbery incident. Over \$74 million in cash and other securities were stolen and over \$14 million recovered by law enforcement officials. Firearms were used over 1,800 times and demand notes used over 4,000 times.

Acts of violence against employees or customers occurs in about 4.5% of robberies, resulting in fatal injuries to an average of 13 people a year, 10 of which are the perpetrators themselves.



The FBI has compiled a profile of the typical robber as a young, male, repeat offender with a substance abuse problem who acts on the spur of the moment without a disguise. He does not usually case the location prior to the robbery and has no post robbery escape plan. A weapon will be threatened in 95% of the robberies with a weapon actually observed 64% of the time. He will most likely target a branch location without bullet resistant barriers at the

teller stations. He will be in a very unstable state and prone to impulsive or violent behavior if panicked.

Prevention

While there is no way to completely eliminate the threat of robbery at depository institutions, there are some preventive measures that can help to reduce the exposure.

- Closed circuit digital recording surveillance cameras with clear views of all teller stations and premises entrances and exits with prominently displayed signage announcing their presence. There should be sufficient

lighting to ensure a clear image on enlargement. The equipment should be regularly serviced by qualified technicians

- Bullet resistant barriers at all teller stations. This proved to be a very high deterrent factor to potential perpetrators
- Regular interaction with police liaison officers to monitor local crime activities
- Security guards hired from protection agencies or off duty police who have the training to properly respond to robbery attempts. Unqualified security guards can become a liability if they improperly attempt to intervene and create an explosive situation
- A security employee who greets customers at the door. This discourages perpetrators who are trying to hide their faces
- A “No Hats” policy with a sign requesting removal of all headgear.
- Height markers at all exits to assist witnesses in assessing a perpetrator’s height
- A holdup alarm system with hidden trip devices at teller stations and throughout the premises that complies with United Laboratories standards for central monitoring stations
- An unobstructed view of all teller stations from the majority of locations within the premises
- Frequent removal of excess money from teller drawers
- Tellers trained to stay calm, comply with the robber’s demands, trip the holdup alarm and retain any demand note. Since most perpetrators are “amateurs” who are usually in a very unstable state, keeping them calm and complying with their demands is important
- Dye packs and serialized currency in limited amounts of \$50 and \$100 for surrender to the perpetrator
- Police contact through the local police liaison officer

Opening and Closing

Another important robbery prevention tool is the establishment of a secure opening and closing procedure. There is a type of robbery known as the “Morning Glory” where perpetrators will assault employees as they open up the premises for the day, take them inside and demand money, or they may have sequestered themselves within the premises during the night by some means. This type of robbery can usually be prevented by taking a few precautions.

- Assign at least two employees to the task
- Have one employee stay in a locked automobile with the engine running while the second employee opens up the premises
- Each day, the two employees establish an “all clear” signal that the employee who enters the premises gives to the other employee in the car after the premises has been thoroughly checked. It is important that they not use the same signal every day as this can be spotted beforehand and demanded by a sequestered perpetrator
- If the employee in the car suspects trouble, they should circle the premises and call police immediately and wait in the car until they arrive
- The opposite closing procedure can take place with a employee waiting in a locked car until both are safely underway in separate cars

What to do after a Robbery

Each employee should be trained in what to do following a robbery. Each should be delegated a separate assignment to:

- Call police/911, open police communications
- Lock all doors. No one should leave until police give their permission
- Check on the condition of everyone present. Render first aid if needed
- Secure all cash and securities
- Protect the immediate crime scene and any physical evidence

- Have everyone write down their description of the perpetrator(s)

While the incidence of physical violence is relatively low, the psychological impact of a robbery on employees and customers can be profound. This is particularly true of robberies during opening and closing activities which can involve terrifying threats of physical harm. After robberies, tellers are usually traumatized for days, weeks or even years and productivity can drop to 80% for weeks. Following a traumatic event, most people want; removal to a safe place, accurate information, reassurance and possibly medical assistance. It is highly recommended that you have the names of some local crisis intervention services available for possible referral.

Source Materials

Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, www.FBI.gov

OSHA, Workplace Violence www.osah.gov

New York Bankers Association, Robbery Prevention Recommendations, "Bank Robbery 'Best Practices'", May, 2003, bankersonline.com

These guidelines are intended to offer general suggestions for follow up discussion and should not be considered a substitution for legal or qualified security advice and you are strongly urged to seek professional help in these areas.

Copyright, 2001 FinSecure, LLC