

Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

Diane Mead Niblo

School of Health Sciences,
RMIT University, Australia

Mervyn S. Jackson

School of Health Sciences,
RMIT University, Australia

Abstract : The aim of this paper is to explore the interplay of proactive and reactive security systems within the hotel industry. Proactive security systems that are investigated include: check-in procedures, skippers, cash floats, theft by guests and employees, and the hotel's role in protecting guests. Reactive procedures are described and they include: scams, locker searches, policing roles, and the management of transient populations. Finally a mixture of proactive and reactive security procedures is discussed. These include: parcel pass, surveillance and technology, and surveillance of guests. This qualitative research has shown that hotel security is a complicated mix of private interests and the public use of space.

Key Words: Management, Proactive security, reactive security, Guest security

Introduction

The purpose of the paper is to examine within the management of hotels the interplay between proactive security strategies (concerned with prevention of loss), and reactive security strategies (which are organised around a problem that has already occurred). The appropriateness of proactive versus reactive strategies is explored as hotels attempt to prevent crime and react to problems of security as they occur. Seven international hotels' security were analysed using the long, semi-structured interview technique. The people interviewed were either security managers or duty managers responsible for the hotels' security. These hotels are all located in a capital city in Australia. Most of the literature regarding proactive and reactive strategies in the corporate world relate to computer security. Little has been written about hotel security and the issues concerned with prevention of crime or reacting to crime. Hotels, like other private businesses are primarily concerned with the prevention of loss through crime within their own domain. However, they must also be aware of legal risks. Although hotels are privately owned, they are also public places in which individuals are invited to patronize and consume services. These concerns make the application of preventative and reactive strategies more complex. Overall, it seems clear that a major rationale for security derives from the expectation that it will serve the ends of protecting hotel property.

Shearing and Stenning (1983) argue:

Corporate policing, as one would expect, is directed at the protection of corporate interests. More specifically, it is concerned with what happens on, and in relation to, corporate property (Shearing and Stenning, 1983:21).

Shearing and Stenning go on to point out that private security is more concerned with loss than with crime. 'Indeed, what the use of the term "loss" in preference to "crime" does is to define as a security matter anything that erodes corporate profits' (Shearing and Stenning 1983:33). Bates (1989) elaborates further:

Many public sector and experienced security professionals know that financial and labor resources directed at the prevention of crime are more cost-effective than those resources used to apprehend, prosecute, and recover stolen property (assuming that it is a recoverable loss). Furthermore, it makes good business sense to avoid losses rather than waste corporate assets trying to recover after the fact (Bates, 1989:522).

How hotels go about this, and particularly how they mix proactive and reactive procedures, is the focus of the paper.

The need for proactive control, according to Shearing and Stenning has a fundamental impact on the shape and form of private security:

... its primary concern is preventing loss. That is, private security is concerned above all with loss prevention. In consequence, their approach to security problems tends to be rather different from that of the public police, whose primary concerns have traditionally been apprehension and prosecution....In contrast, for private security the primary, and often the only, concern is prevention... where a loss has occurred, private security will generally be much more concerned with preventing future losses than with identifying the offender(s) (Shearing and Stenning, 1983:33).

Shearing and Stenning's research has been mainly in the retail industry. They argued that private security was more like policing; hence refer to private security, as private police when in fact this research argues that security in hotels little in common with the public police. Clearly, private security does not administer justice or engage in law enforcement work. Hotels are concerned with crime. What the present data suggest is that there is a broad band of criminal activity that is of concern to hotel security precisely because it is not a concern to the public police. Public police have turned their attention to serious crime and tend to ignore crime, which they see as trivial. In hotels there are many such activities, which fall within the broad category of 'mundane' crime. Gibbons describes mundane crime as the "...low visibility, and often relatively innocuous instances of

Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

lawbreaking that make up a generous portion of the crime problem in modern societies" (Gibbons, 1983:212-14). Individually such thefts are trivial and public police are not likely to spend resources on the apprehension of a hotel bar person taking a bottle of scotch or a member of the housecleaning staff taking a roll of toilet tissue. As individual crimes the money amounts appear miniscule when compared to crimes such as major fraud. Corporate owners, however, have a different view and may fire a person who is caught stealing (a reactive response) or put more surveillance around the premises (a proactive and reactive response). It is precisely because the public police are not called to these mundane crimes that private security is called upon to deal with these matters in reactive or proactive ways.

Proactive Control

Proactive strategies are those that focus on preventing crime. The proactive strategies that were found in this study related to fraud, theft by guests, theft by employees, and the prevention of hazards, such as fire and injury. The hotel industry applies a number of strategies to try and prevent theft and injury. Large hotels such as the Tea Tree, view security as definitely proactive.

Check-in Procedure

Hotels use a variety of proactive strategies to protect their interests, one of which is found in their check-in procedures. All the hotels in this research used the same procedure when guests arrive. If a payment was to be made by credit card, then an impress was taken and the proactive procedure was to contact the credit card company in order to establish a guest's credit. If a hotel guest was paying by cheque, most hotels had a 'transact function', which guarantees the money to the hotel in the event of a phony transaction. O'Toole, Millen, & Murugason (1994) noted in their study of Fraud against Organisations in Victoria that 39 per cent of those businesses that were recipients of worthless cheques strengthened their internal controls and 32 per cent of those affected indicated that they increased employee awareness training. (O'Toole, et al. 1994:11).

Another procedure that hotels use during check-in requires the guest who is paying in cash to pay at least a night's room payment in advance.

Skippers

Even with proactive procedures in place, those who attempt to leave without paying, 'skippers' can still get through the system. These procedures are set up to minimise the hotels' loss of revenue from people who leave without paying their bill. When asked if skippers were a problem at the Tea Tree the security manager said "Yes, only last week we had a fellow that was going to skip and we caught him before and had him arrested. He'd run up his account and it wasn't brought to

Diane Mead Niblo, Mervyn S. Jackson

security's attention till it was at \$5 000 unfortunately".

However, the assistant manager of the Black Wattle said that his hotel did not have much of a problem with skippers.

The senior assistant manager of the Cootamundra said that all hotels worried about skippers but they all shared information if a skipper hit one of them. He said that skippers were the number one problem. Other managers believed that the problem was not a major one.

In short, there is a degree of variation in the perception of the likelihood of guests leaving without settling their accounts. There is no doubt that the ubiquitous use of credit cards to establish instant credit has reduced this problem.

Cash Floats

A proactive strategy to prevent theft of cash by employees relates to the cash float. The cash float constitutes a fixed sum of money for a period to carry out transactions. The knowledge that there is this amount available and that the cash float will be scrutinised, sends a clear message to employees about the surveillance over pools of cash. The amount of the floats and the way they were checked varied from hotel to hotel. The assistant manager of the Black Wattle said they had few discrepancies in that area because the restaurants had cashiers who worked for the accounting department rather than the restaurant and security was better in that regard. Each cashier is assigned a \$200 float and they must return that float every night and put it in a safety deposit box for which they alone have a key, apart from security. Every few weeks they are checked to make sure that the readings on the till match the readings on the register. He said there were only ever small discrepancies because their system of keeping dockets was good.

The Black Wattle Hotel has tightened up their food and beverage computer system; it removed cash tills and it is on a computerised system where each and every staff member has an individual plastic key when they perform transactions so that the security personnel can isolate who is doing what in the till. On the weekend the Hotel Snowgum Hotel had a sizeable cash float of \$40,000 plus.

The size of the float in the small boutique hotel Cootamundra was \$250. Their procedures for checking the float were different.

The duty manager of the Mountain Ash Hotel said that they have to hand over cash to a senior person. The Redgum Hotel was not concerned if their cash floats were over or under and said that it was never huge amounts and said it was probably human error in giving out change.

In short, the size of the hotel is important in terms of the cash float. The amount ranges from \$200 to \$40 000. In the larger hotels security managers accompany large sums as they are moved from department to department. In the

Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

small hotels the procedure is similar but with the assistant managers accompanying the movement of money. The norm is for management to threaten to hold employees accountable for any loss or discrepancy. However, in practice there is a degree of tolerance, especially if it appears to be a small discrepancy based on human error.

Theft by Guests

An area of minor concern to interviewees in this study was theft of hotel property by guests. Theft by guests was not perceived to be a major problem in hotels. Jackson, White & Schmierer, 1994; Fooner, 1971, also found that hotels did not perceive theft by guests as a major problem. This research confirms that finding, although it does appear that hotels did take proactive steps to decrease the likelihood of theft. When the security manager of the Banksia Hotel was asked if theft by guests was a problem he responded that it was not a great problem.

Some hotels take certain proactive measures to ensure guests' continued honesty. Psychological attitudes may seem to have quite a significant impact on the amount of theft by guests, as a proactive measure taken by the Hotel Black Wattle to prevent some types of theft by guests demonstrates. Their guest towels no longer have a Black Wattle emblem on them.

The duty manager of the Mountain Ash had a similar view in that whilst they had their hotel name on towels, they did not keep fancy items around the hotel.

The security manager of the Banksia argued that it was becoming more difficult to steal in hotels because the proactive strategies to prevent theft worked. He said that the old hotel thief working the hotel was virtually gone now because of security patrolling the floors; it is getting harder to steal. The credit card society has reduced people traveling with a lot of cash; they are traveling with traveler's checks and credit cards.

Theft by Employees

Often times the problem of theft is given prominence by people in management and security personnel and they develop proactive strategies to prevent theft by employees (Beyleveld, 1978). Bates (1989) argues: 'Theft, which occurs in a variety of ways, represents the single greatest problem for security in a hotel' (Bates, 1989:527). This research found that there was a difference of opinion of how much theft by employees occurred. Two of the large hotels in this capital city said that theft by employees was a major concern. When the security manager of the Banksia was asked what kinds of problems he had with fraud by employees he answered that employees would take everything that was not nailed down if the hotel did not have a security department. He went on to describe the

Diane Mead Niblo, Mervyn S. Jackson

types and possible reasons for theft. He thought that because there is a high cash turnover employees feel they have a right for instance, to take dressing gowns. Employees who took one did not see it as stealing, in his opinion. Liquor was a major problem if security did not keep a check on it. The security manager said that they constantly found bottles stashed.

The security manager of the Hotel Banksia provided a document entitled 'Security incidents and figures' in which he stated that the total value of cash and/or goods stolen (as reported to security) was \$35,626.

The assistant manager of the Black Wattle agreed with the security manager of the Banksia when asked if there was a problem of theft in his hotel. He said yes: There were very small numbers of theft from guests, but theft by staff is common and theft of hotel property is common from the results of stock takes which indicate a rough figure of \$100 000 of silverware that is put into the lost, broken or stolen category per year. Since silverware cannot be broken as such, it is either lost or stolen; the likelihood is that it is stolen.

In the first interview with the assistant manager of the Black Wattle, he estimated the loss of hotel property to be higher. When asked if he could put an estimate on what theft by employees cost he said that they conducted an audit of operating equipment not counting food or beverage, only cutlery, crockery, glassware that were lost, stolen or broken and the total came to about \$280 000 for the year. It could be staff, guests or the odd thief coming into the hotel. He said that there was not a big problem with guests taking things but they have had half a dozen staff trapped by police through searches, stealing.

On the surface this figure looks quite large, however when the large hotels have an estimated food and beverage turnover of \$40,000,000 a year, without counting income from the rooms division, then Gibbons' (1987) term 'mundane crime' would seem to be an appropriate description. Small thefts multiplied by a large number of incidents can make a more serious problem. Nevertheless, the actual rate of loss appears to be slight especially in comparison with the total financial turnover of these hotels.

Mars (1973), reported that hotel employees' salaries were so low that even bus drivers made more money and they worked 25 percent fewer hours. Staff turnover is high and this may account for further alienation among employees. The security manager of the Tea Tree had a very different view on the issue of theft by employees. When asked 'Do you have problems with fraud by employees?' He said no. He went on to say, in another interview dealing with theft by employees that it was not something that concerned him in this hotel. He was absolutely certain that he was not having any major losses. The duty manager of the Redgum also said that theft by staff was not a problem.

Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

The assistant manager of the Hotel Black Wattle had a different view. A proactive procedure that he mentioned was that of rostering staff. He said they try and move staff around as much as possible so that no group becomes too friendly. This was a measure aimed at blocking possible cooperation in schemes to steal from the hotel. He said there were very few staff who are on permanent shifts.

The assistant manager of the Black Wattle had a problem of staff stealing each other's tip money. In this case, the housemaid's tips from guests were being taken from the guest's rooms.

Theft by employees absorbs a great deal of effort on the part of some security staff. However, the magnitude of this appears to be surprisingly small in comparison to the amount of business done in the hotels.

Protecting Guests

Whilst theft by guests is minimal, the need to protect guests from harm is a prime concern. Sophisticated key systems are now frequently used to protect guests. The key and lock system was seen as a major issue by the hotels Banksia, Snowgum and Redgum.

The four essential elements of modern electronic locking systems, are: automatic re-keying, where automatic key cards are changed after each guest checks out; restricted access, which is a lock that only recognises the guest and approved personnel who have been issued with special entry cards; locks that record employees who have entered a room thus leaving an audit trail; and key integrity, which allows security to 'interrogate' a lock by use of a computer (Smith, 1993:117).

Whilst the electronic locking system is considered the most secure, they too can encounter problems. An example of this was relayed in the Hotel/motel Security and Safety Management Newsletter, (1993) when a husband and wife checked into an hotel operated by a leading chain in the United States. This hotel had the computer locking key card system. A man confronted the couple shortly after their check in who was registered to the same room (Hotel/motel Security and Safety Management Volume 12, Number 1 December 1993:14).

This incident was described to the security manager of the Tea Tree and he was asked if something like that ever happened in his hotel. He responded that it did, all the time. He said it was human error that was responsible.

Another main concern for the more popular hotels is that of protecting the 'star', or special guest. The duty manager of the Redgum said the most stressful time for him was when they had Bonjovi staying with them. Some special guests bring other problems to the hotel. One famous tennis star stayed at the Redgum

Diane Mead Niblo, Mervyn S. Jackson

and after losing a tennis match came back and put a hole through the wall in his room. A popular singer threw a vase at her boyfriend. The general manager of the Redgum at the time was a fan of this tennis star and therefore he was not charged for the damage to the room.

Reactive Procedures

Hotels try and protect themselves through proactive strategies from a variety of problems. However, it is inevitable that problems arise. Things happen in hotels; people get drunk and become disorderly, people steal things and are caught, people die or injure themselves, people attempt suicide, there are bomb threats and hostage situations, as well as domestic violence. In short, any emergency has to be dealt with and security in hotels has procedures with which to deal with these emergencies.

The security/assistant manager of the Snowgum felt that things in his hotel ran smoothly and he would act if he had reason to believe something was wrong. He said that his role was one of reaction.

The Hotel Black Wattle did say that 90% of security was of a reactive nature. Shearing and Stenning (1983) argue that private security is more concerned with loss prevention than with apprehending criminals like the public police do. However, in the hotel industry, some security personnel see their role as being one of reaction more than prevention.

Scams

Whilst actual theft by guests is minimal, there are some scams that guests or members of the public perpetrate on hotels. At times a guest tries to cheat the hotel. If a guest notifies the hotel that they feel something has been taken from their room, the hotels that have security personnel call the security person on duty and the security person tries to check very carefully what happened. The security manager of the Banksia related two incidents where theft by a guest was believed to have occurred. In one such incident the security manager said that he had one incident where a guest claimed that \$200 was missing from the room. As the security manager was talking to the guest he noticed that the son had a lump in his sock and he believed that the son stole the money from his parents. He said he had to "let it ride" and that is where diplomacy, becomes involved.

When any theft occurs the most logical person to accuse is the housemaid or houseman because those people have master keys to the room. When asked how security protects staff from false accusations by guests the security manager of the Banksia said that being open minded and many years of experience on the job. Another example of a scam that was described related to businessmen traveling. They oftentimes receive a certain amount of money for expenses. Some-

Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

times the businessman calls security to report \$200 missing and the finger is always pointed at the housemaid or the bell cap who fills the minibar or porters. The first thing that this security manager did was to print out the record of calls from the room to see if the guest rang any escort agencies or massage parlours. The guest might have a difficult time explaining to his employer the expenditure of \$200-\$300 on a girl in their room.

The governing idea appears to be to reassure the guest of the hotel's concern without accepting any blame or responsibility for the incident. Even though management does not want to contact the police over small claims, they nevertheless encourage the guest to report the incident to the police in order to eliminate frivolous claims. At the same time, the management initiates an investigation by asking all possible employees who had access to the room for a statement.

Locker Searches

The procedure of locker searches is influenced by several legal considerations. First, management insists that the employee empty the contents of their locker, thus granting consent for the search. In addition, if the employee empties the locker, security personnel cannot be accused of planting evidence against the employee or of sexual harassment. Second, the need to build a case by establishing more than one witness is apparent. Finally, it should be noted that—once again—every effort is made to resolve the issue without involving the police.

In short, theft by guests is rare. As the consensus on the towels demonstrated, it is rather more trophy hunting than theft and the remedy is simple. By contrast, the theft of guest's property is taken quite seriously. Management feels that this kind of incident can hurt the hotel, given the way that reputations of various establishments pass by word of mouth.

Policing Role

Whilst private security personnel are not public police, private security may take on a policing role by reacting to crime. An incident occurred at the Banksia Hotel that involved Telecom Australia. One of the public phones on the hotel property showed a \$7 000.00 account. Since the phone was a public phone and customers must pay for their calls, the hotel was duly concerned. They contacted Telstra Australia and Telstra argued that the phone was the responsibility of the hotel and they would have to pay the account, even if fraud was involved. The security manager of the Banksia checked when the phone calls were being made and to where. The calls were all made to overseas destinations, between 2 AM and 6 AM. The security manager and his second in charge decided to keep watch on the phone to try and find out how the callers were getting through the system

Diane Mead Niblo, Mervyn S. Jackson

without paying. The two security personnel of the Banksia actually caught the two men who were manipulating the phone. The security manager said that the public police would not have the human resources to release one officer to sit and wait for several hours to catch the offender. Therefore, hotel security agents had to react to the situation and try and catch the perpetrator.

In another incident, security managers at the Banksia reacted to a number of women's purses being stolen from a large public food area owned by the hotel. In this case the security specialists stationed themselves at tables in the food court observing customers. They saw a woman stand close to a table where a handbag was hanging over a chair. The thief quickly removed the purse and went on her way. The private security team of the Hotel Banksia reacted by making a citizen's arrest. These incidents demonstrate the problem of managing large public spaces.

In essence, private security is answerable to the owners of the property they are trying to protect from loss or damage. Because organisations can no longer rely totally on the reactive forces of the public police, in order to protect themselves, they hire private security. Shearing and Stenning state that:

Private security ... seeks to promote corporate interests. As one of the primary, if not the only, objective of any business is the maximisation of profits, it is not surprising that we have found that, typically, private security's most fundamental concern is profit maximisation. Indeed, so central is this objective to the endeavors of private security that it is possible to characterise private security as policing for profit (Shearing and Stenning, 1983:32).

Transient Populations

One of the major issues for hotels is the perception that a transient population or an 'unwanted element' will enter the hotel and either cause damage or offend the acceptable standard of dress that is imposed by the large five and four-star hotels. The security managers had various responses to these perceived threats to security, which would influence to some degree what kind of security measures they would take. The security manager of the Tea Tree said that transient populations are their major security problem.

The smaller boutique hotel, Mountain Ash, believed they had a very good clientele and the reason was that they were not a prestigious five star where all the problems were. The duty manager of the Mountain Ash felt that they could deter what he termed 'riff raff' from staying at the hotel. The duty manager of the Redgum felt that because their license was such that they could only sell alcohol to guests or people having a meal, that deterred 'fools' coming in off the streets. When asked if outsiders posed a threat to the hotel he said no. A manager at the hotel Black Wattle had a different view of his hotel. When asked how many suspicious people they would get in a week he replied about a dozen.

The Mix of Proactive and Reactive Strategies

The authorities in the field have traditionally viewed private security as essentially proactive (Shearing and Stenning, 1983; Smith, 1993; Bates, 1989; Buzby II, 1981; Geason and Wilson, 1989; Crowe, 1991). They have stressed the concern of private security as fundamentally preventing criminal activity from happening. That may be the case in the industries they have studied. However, within the hotel industry, not all of its functions are totally preventative; frequently, it is observed that there is a blending of reactive and proactive functions.

The security manager of the Hotel Banksia provided an incident report document that listed all reported incidents for one year. The list stated that there were Proactive Strategies = 6 485

(53.4% of total)

To examine bag searches in detail, it is clear that what appears to be merely proactive on the surface reveals a combination of proactive and reactive elements on closer examination. In some hotels, employees are regularly required to open their handbags or any other bags they may be carrying, as is seen in the annual security report of the Hotel Banksia. The security manager of the Banksia was asked what steps he took to prevent crime in the hotel or bar. He said that it was mainly a physical presence, patrolling. Even though the bag checks yielded little in terms of stolen property, the fact that the staff know bag searches are being conducted was a preventative measure.

The security manager/assistant manager of the Hotel Snowgum was adamant in his view that bag searches were wrong because management should trust staff. The Hotel Banksia do bag searches on a regular basis. It was observed while conducting an interview with the security manager of the Banksia in the back of house area that as staff approached him to leave the premises, they automatically opened their bag to him.

The security manager of the Tea Tree also would not conduct bag searches on employees. He argued that it was basically against the law to do bag searches. What is in fact contentious is that it is not against the law to request that a person show the contents of his or her bag but security cannot force individuals to open their bags. Sarre (1994) argues the issue of consent, that being if an individual agrees to a bag search then fine. If not then private security has no recourse but to retreat.

The assistant managers of the Redgum and Mountain Ash also said they had a right to do bag searches but as a matter of practice they did not do them. The duty manager said he would only do bag searches if he felt he needed to. However, the duty manager said that they would conduct locker searches and they

Diane Mead Niblo, Mervyn S. Jackson

were surprise searches. The assistant manager of the Black Wattle in 1991 said that they conducted bag searches on a regular basis but they rarely found anything.

These comments show that there is a high degree of variation on the issues relating to bag searches. There is confusion over the law, which some managers believe they have the right to search bags and others think the law prohibits this practice. In a document from the Ministry of Consumer Affairs (undated) it stated in relation to bag searches:

The shop owner is not entitled to force a search. If he does, the consumer may sue him for assault and/or battery, for which substantial damages can be awarded, not only for physical injury, but also in respect of the insult, mental suffering and humiliation that may be caused.

In addition, there is a wide range of difference between those managers who think that bag searches are counter productive in that they make the staff angry and suspicious, thus adversely affecting their performance. In the most important example of this practice, where a major hotel conducts over 700 searches per year, employees are conditioned to present their bags for inspection as they end their shifts.

Parcel Pass

Another combination of reactive and proactive procedures is the use of a 'parcel pass' system, which is used at the Black Wattle. This system is used when employees wish to take some hotel property away from the hotel. They must fill in this form and have it signed by their supervisor. This system was implemented in reaction to a theft of hotel property where an employee said he had permission to take home hotel property, but because nothing was written down, the staff member could not be prosecuted.

When asked what they would do when they caught a thief, the assistant manager of the Black Wattle said that they sent a memo to all staff informing them that a fellow employee was fired because he/she was caught stealing and the matter was turned over to the police.

Surveillance and Technology

Another combination of proactive and reactive measures emerges from the use of surveillance cameras. Cameras can be used to catch a thief and they are also a deterrent. Each hotel had some degree of surveillance, usually by closed circuit television (CCTV). Smith (1993) argues that assuming the hotel has basic security staff in place then 'Purchasing and maintaining a well-designed CCTV system... is generally far less expensive, and far more effective, than hiring one additional officer' (Smith 1993:156). In arguing for surveillance technology,

Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

Smith contends that one CCTV monitor is more effective in that the total number of working hours for a camera is 8 760 as compared to the 2 000 hours of a human security person (Smith 1993:156). Smith discusses four uses of CCTV in the hotel industry. The first reason is for surveillance.

The second use of security cameras is for supervision. By that he means that a CCTV with microphone will allow surveillance of staff entering and leaving the premises.

None of the hotels in this study mentioned the idea of monitoring staff in this way. However, the Black Wattle was at the time of interview installing a new staff time clock, which would be hooked up to a computer so that management would know all staff that were on site. It was felt by the assistant manager that this was a good proactive feature. This is also a reactive strategy in that employees sometimes sign on for each other. This scam is known as 'ghosting' in the hotel industry. The new time clock may have been a reaction as well as a prevention of that scam.

The third reason for having CCTV cameras according to Smith is for deterrence. He argues that if cameras are in full view then the prospective offender will be less likely to pass a bad check or commit some other type of fraud if he or she sees a camera at the front desk.

The fourth reason for using CCTV according to Smith is for documentation purposes. This would enable police to use the videotape as evidence in finding and or convicting a criminal. The Mountain Ash was the only hotel that actually mentioned that they taped their surveillance. Smith says, 'Anything worth monitoring is worth recording' (Smith's emphasis, 1993:159).

An observation was made at the Hotel Banksia regarding the cameras in the lift. When the security manager of the Banksia gave a tour of the back of house and the monitor room for the security cameras, he was asked where the monitor was for the cameras in the lifts. He said the cameras were dummies, they did not actually work. He said that they were having problems in the lifts, vandalism and people urinating. The moment they put in the dummy cameras, all of the problems in the lift stopped. The cameras are visible and have a flashing blue light on top. Observations of other hotels in this study revealed that the Mountain Ash also has cameras in the lifts and they said the cameras have the same effect as in the Hotel Banksia.

Surveillance of Guests

The main surveillance of guests would be monitoring them in areas that had cameras for their protection. The Mountain Ash had cameras on guest floors as well as in the lifts and in foyer areas. The Tea Tree and Banksia have both used

Diane Mead Niblo, Meirvyn S. Jackson

cameras in guest rooms but only in consultation with law enforcement authorities.

The procedures that hotels use for security tend to be more of a combination of reactive and proactive. The use of cameras, CCTV, bag and locker searches are reactive as well as proactive procedures, depending on the circumstance. When there is a security incident people react to it. The smaller boutique hotels tend to rely more on information being passed to them so they can act. All hotels conducted floor checks and even those floor checks could be seen as reactive as well as proactive.

Conclusion

In their analysis, Shearing and Stenning argue that the shift to private funding of policing services is a reflection of the growing concern of large-scale corporate organisations with the prevention of potential criminal activity. 'Private security tends to be much more concerned with eliminating opportunities for loss than it is with responding to the offender' (Shearing and Stenning, 1988:33). Consistent with that view the activities of security personnel in these hotels indicate involvement in actions, which can be seen as proactive in the prevention of crime. All the hotels in this study had many proactive procedures in place. The check-in procedure-especially the widespread use of credit cards-has vastly reduced the number of people leaving the hotel without paying their account. The use of cameras in lifts, in bar areas and in loading areas has reduced theft. Bag and locker searches are a proactive measure that is used but with much debate as to whether they should be conducted. Floor checks are a way of patrolling and giving staff the impression that they never know when a security person may appear.

The emphasis on prevention is only part of the story that emerges from the accounts of private security in the hotel industry. It is clear for these hotels that proaction is not enough. Hotels expect that there will be a certain amount of theft by employees, and to a much lesser degree, guests. They also expect that the odd intoxicated person will cause problems, or some person who does not fit in with the image that the hotel wishes to portray will enter the premises. A small number of individuals may try to leave without settling their account. In short, in this industry at least effective security requires a mix of proactive and reactive strategies.

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Proactive Versus Reactive Security Strategies in Hotels

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About the Author



Diane Mead Niblo earned a PhD from the University of Melbourne, Australia. She is a psychologist with special interests in private security, crime and tourism. She is a senior lecturer and specialises in organisational psychology at RMIT University.



Mervyn Jackson is Program Leader for the Undergraduate Psychology program at RMIT University with interests in triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, community attitudes toward tourism, cultural influences on tourist decision making, tourist personality and tourist crime victimization.