



SECURITY ADVICE FOR THE WEALTHY THE HARD FACTS

by Ed Hill, Managing Director of Intrepid Risk Management

The lifestyles of celebrities and the super-rich is always guaranteed to arouse our curiosity. However, this presents a curiosity that is sometimes tinged with a hint of envy. The glossy magazines that publicise their lifestyle seldom reveal the jealousy, resentment and for some, the devilish motivation to try to take some of that wealth by whatever means necessary.

A lifestyle filled with beautiful homes, designer clothes and expensive cars is what most of us dream of but this ostentatious lifestyle can have a somewhat sinister downside. The super-wealthy may be the subject of envy are usually high on the criminals' radar.

A series of well-publicised incidents involving high profile celebrities prove that no one is immune from attack. Simon Cowell was the victim of a burglary at his home in Holland Park; singer Rita Ora was targeted at her London home by intruders who made off with £200,000 of her possessions and an audacious attack on Kim Kardashian at her hotel in Paris made global headlines that further reinforces this point.

Sadly, security is an area that is often overlooked. All too often, wealthy individuals fail to grasp the importance of security and invest in the cheapest option. Though more cost-effective in the short term, it is not uncommon for these individuals to later invest in their security with an open chequebook when they or their loved ones become the unfortunate victim. Despite the continued cutbacks to the police and the subsequent upsurge in crime, most people are

not situationally aware or security conscious. For whatever reason, considerations for their security don't seem to come naturally to them.

There are a few basic considerations to keep in mind:

House staff - the enemy within?

Arrests conducted by French police in the aftermath of the Kim Kardashian robbery in Paris revealed that one of the suspects was her chauffeur. Taking on household staff can be problematic as we would advise that the following should be a consideration:

- Conduct regular background checks – all staff should have their background and employment history thoroughly checked before employment. However, those checks should be continued at least every six months. The individual circumstances of a staff member may change where they may fall into debt, attain a criminal record or develop an addiction that could question their trust and integrity. This may also be true for friends and family members too!
- Confidentiality agreements – as above, thorough background checks should be conducted on everyone who visits your house. Also, everyone should be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. This provides a written commitment that no information will be shared outside of your house and also sets the tone that you mean business.
- Strict social media policy for all staff – social

media has rapidly become a way of life for most people. However, information shared on social media platforms may leave you wide open to attack. When former England footballer John Terry had £400,000 worth of personal belongings stolen from his Surrey home in a burglary, police later linked the raids to a series of photographs of him on holiday that he'd posted on his Instagram account.

General tips

• Stay under the radar – this may be difficult for some but when out of the home, try not to draw attention to yourself. You don't have to become a recluse but consider dressing down and leaving the expensive jewellery at home. The aim is to blend in with the crowd and go unnoticed as opposed to standing out.

• Don't skimp on security – it can often be overlooked but is appreciated when it succeeds in protecting prized assets. Seek expert advice, continue to review your procedures and view it as being a sound investment as opposed to an unwanted cost. Security must be taken seriously and if you want to deter the bad guys, then you must be prepared to pay for it. Period.

• Do not set patterns – in addition to the points briefly highlighted in this article, setting patterns is one definite way of presenting an easy target. If you head out to the gym or hairdressers at the same time every week, then you're making your habits and routines predictable, thereby making it easy for someone to plan and prepare an attack.

Being wealthy is what many people aspire to be however the reality is that wealthy individuals are always at risk of being targeted. Criminals are becoming increasingly more sophisticated and

violent crime is more commonplace. Continued government cuts to police manpower levels may mean investing your own funds into the safety and security of you and your family but surely you can't put a price on that?

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