



# GUARD-ALERT GAZETTE

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1. **Message from the CEO**
2. **Home Alarm System**
3. **Obituaries**
4. **Travel tips for Safety and Security during the Festive Season**
5. **Armed Robbery – What to look out for**
6. **Good Job**
7. **Personnel Profile – Benny Chifambaitable**
8. **Panic Buttons**
9. **Crime Trends**
10. **Inspiration**
11. **Paying Bills**



**Total Security Solutions**



# Message from the CEO

Welcome to all our valued customers.

As we come to the end of the year, many are getting ready to go away for the festive season and enjoy the fellowship of family and friends. Do not let the inconvenience of crime spoil the season for you. With the current dire economic situation crime is on the increase with housebreakings and theft reportedly up by 46% whilst car thefts, robberies and armed robberies all up on previous years.

It is therefore important that you and your assets are secure to ensure peace of mind. In this issue you will find an article on tips if you are going away, and what to do and what not to do if you become the unfortunate victim of an armed robbery. There are also articles on home alarms and panic buttons. I hope you find these interesting and useful. If you are going away we are able to provide guards on a sundry basis for whatever period you require.

During the current quarter we were saddened by the passing of three of our staff, we send our heartfelt condolences and support to their surviving families, friends and colleagues. As we approach the end of the year we once again thank members of staff for their loyal service to the company. This year we have 30 staff reaching 30 years service joining the other 57 who have already achieved this landmark. We are very proud of the fact that the average length of service from our 4500 staff is over 10 years.

As mentioned before, our staff is our most valuable asset and it is our responsibility to provide workers with the right environment to keep them motivated and efficient which we believe our progressive policies regarding staff welfare and remuneration in these difficult times are achieving.

Whilst every effort is taken to ensure guards do not become targets of bribes and temptation, this unfortunately sometimes does occur. It is very important that you, the client, play your part by not allocating guards duties and responsibilities outside of those agreed between our respective managements and recorded in our Assignment Instructions.

Primarily guards should be monitoring and checking work and not undertaking the work of client staff. Should you wish to change a guard's duties from those laid down in the Assignment Instructions, it is important that this is done in conjunction with a member of our operational management and agreed to by both parties in writing.

Understanding the economic pressures facing us all, we are working hard to keep our prices as low as possible whilst trying to maintain a quality service. To this end we are unable, in the inflationary environment to carry debts over to subsequent months and we appeal to all our valued customers to make every effort to pay their bills in the month that it is presented.

In the same vein, it has become increasingly difficult for us to maintain the fees we charge to you, our valued customers for periods extending more than a month. In the same circumstances, we are being forced to adjust our fees almost in a monthly basis and we appeal to you our valued customers to bear with us during this difficult period of our economy. I thank you all for your support of our business over the last year and look forward to this continuing in 2020.

I wish you a safe and joyous Christmas and hope that the New Year brings prosperity to you and your business.

Best regards

Richard Robinson  
Chief Executive Officer



## HOME ALARM SYSTEM PROTECT YOUR HOME



House alarms form the core of your home security. When assessing how secure your home is, the key to adequately protecting you, your family and your valuables is to create several layers of security to provide an early warning system that will alert you to the presence of unwanted intruders.

Depending on the size of your house, the home alarm system can be set up to accommodate between eight and 32 zones to ensure that in the event of a burglary, our control centre will immediately be able to identify the exact rooms and outdoor areas of your home that intruders have breached. Several fixed and remote panic buttons are supplied with the security system, so that in case of an emergency you can discreetly alert us to respond to the scene straightaway.

A home owner that invests in a layered security system buys valuable time during an emergency, time that could literally diffuse serious crimes like burglaries and armed robberies by stopping intruders in their tracks. The quicker you are able to establish the presence of an intruder, before they get the opportunity to smash a window or force open a security gate, the more time you have to alert our control centre to dispatch an Reaction Crew and get your family to safety.

Layered security results in an early alarm activation and gives you more time to press a further panic button and get to safety to avoid a confrontation and potential physical injury. Layered security is about placing as many barriers between intruders and your family as possible. These barriers may include:

- Intruder detection alarm system

### Outdoor beams

- in your garden (passive infrared detectors)
- Remote panic buttons
- Anti-gate crashing kit
- Glass-smashing sensors on windows
- Internal CCTV surveillance cameras

### Electric fencing

- linked to the alarm system

Every area of a home needs to be professionally assessed to ensure vulnerable points are adequately secured, from the driveway gates, which may need an anti-gate-crashing kit, to windows and doors and even the roof, which must not be neglected as it is a fairly common point of entry for burglars. Our quality security systems are sourced from leading global suppliers and are fitted to deter, detect and detain criminals with our priority of always keeping you and your family and your home safe at all times.

Get in touch with us today and learn about all of your security options. As Zimbabwe's highly acclaimed security services provider, we are always working on behalf of your safety.



## Obituaries

Guard-Alert Group extends its sincere condolences to the families of the following members of our guard force who passed away recently

- Phineas Madzime (Security Guard) had been working for Guard-Alert for 25 years at the time of the passing having joined the company in 1994. Phineas was involved in an accident in which he was hit by a car resulting in his death. He left behind his wife Annah and 3 children.

- Brian Vengere Bodza (Security Guard) had been working for Guard-Alert for 8 years. He succumbed to a quiet, insidious disease: brain tumour leaving behind his wife Viola and 4 children.

- Munyaradzi Nyamadzawo (Security Guard), his life taken too soon by his own hand. He had been working for Guard-Alert for 2 years at the time of his passing having joined company in 2017. He leaves behind a wife and 2 children.

The above mentioned were respected and trusted members of our company who will be missed by all who worked and interacted with them.

May the Lord rest their departed souls.



# Travel tips for Safety and Security during the Festive Season



It's the festive season and most of us will be going away for the holidays. Travel can be an exciting, relaxing and eye-opening experience and it's easy to get caught up in the thrill of adventure. But, don't forget about travel security and safety considerations while you're on holiday.

Follow these travel safety tips to help you take a trip that's memorable for all the right reasons.

## 1. Do your research

Get to know your destination in depth before you arrive. Do a Google search and scan recent news for situations that may impact your travel like weather or unrest. Be aware of cultural considerations to be respectful and help you blend in better, such as modest clothing for certain cultures or holy sites.

Another important travel security precaution is to know whom to call in an emergency. Get the contact information for the nearest police station and other local emergency departments.

## 2. Protect your home

Don't forget about securing your home before you leave. Set the alarm and alert your security services provider of your travels. Use timer and motion lights. Alert a trusted neighbour. Double check all doors and windows are locked. Unplug major electronics.

## 3. Trust your instincts

This one is easily overlooked and incredibly important. You are a walking surveillance network. Your body sees and hears more things than you could ever process into coherent thought. It has the ability to sense danger. This is why gut feelings are always worth examining. If you're feeling uneasy and you don't know why, try not to write it off as irrational fear. Stop and pay closer attention to the situation and try to figure out what the problem is. It's easy to dismiss your instincts as "silly". Never treat them as such.

## 4. Play your cards right

Leave all irrelevant cards at home. They distract your focus from the few cards you really need. And their information can cause problems if it falls into the wrong hands. Make sure that you notify your bank of your trip's dates and locations. This way, they're on alert for suspicious activity and the cards are not denied when used in usual places. It is also important to jot down their contact numbers in case of theft.

Also, while travelling, consider leaving one credit card in your room in a secure location.

## 5. Stash your cash

It is to your advantage to minimize the cash you carry with you whilst travelling. Make use of credit cards as much as you can.

Organize your money for quick access and avoid revealing large wads of cash. Keep small sums close at hand for tips so you're not whipping out your wallet as much. Leave some cash in a secure place in your room to carry less on your person. While it's good to do everything you can to prevent worst case scenarios, it's equally smart to assume it'll happen and plan ahead for it. This is the thinking behind having an emergency stash of funds, stored in a safe place.

## 6. Secure your valuables

Only bring what you truly need on your trip and out of your room, and leave other valuables behind. Don't tempt anyone by leaving money or expensive items unattended in plain sight. Secure any cash, cards or forms of identity left in your room. If your room lacks a safe or has one that's easy to walk out with, use a lock on your largest suitcase. In transit, keep backpacks on your lap, between your feet or worn on your front. Don't pack valuables in outer pockets. Women should wear cross-body purses in the front and keep a hand on them in crowds. Men can keep a hand on your back pocket to mind your wallet in crowds, or move it to a front pocket if concerned. In taxis, keep bags with valuables between your feet or in the middle seat. Find out if cab fares are flat rates or metered. For flat rates (both firmly established and negotiable), agree on a price with the driver before you or your bags get in the car

## 7. Keep your friends and family updated

Whether you're going on an overnight jaunt or a month-long international journey, it's always a good idea to let friends or family back home know. Before you leave, send a copy of your itinerary to a few trusted people who can keep tabs on your whereabouts. Check in regularly with your contacts so they know you're where you're supposed to be.

## 8. Safeguard your hotel room

Even if your hotel has strong security measures in place, there are steps you can take to make your room safer. Lock and dead-bolt the door and keep your windows shut. You can buy a jammer, which is a

portable device that slips under the door for another layer of protection.

Try to give the impression that you're in your room even when you're away, such as placing the Do Not Disturb sign on the outside of your door and keeping the blinds or windows closed.

Don't let any strangers into your room, even if they say they work for the hotel. You can always call the front desk to check whether someone was ordered by hotel staff to come to your room.

## 9. Don't Share Too Much With Strangers

If you're ever tempted to make your itinerary more public, say in a Facebook post, just remember it can be a roadmap of your movements – just the sort of thing someone with ill-intentions would love to know. Avoid sharing too many details about your travel plans or accommodation details with people you've just met. For example, don't tell a local shop owner or street tout where you're staying when asked.

If someone does ask, rather than be rude, you can be vague about an area of town rather than the name of your hotel. Or lie and name a hotel you're not actually staying at.

Sometimes people will ask if it's your first time visiting their country or city. If you don't trust them yet, you can pretend it isn't your first trip. Because sharing that you're new might also signal you're a good target for scams. When feeling vulnerable in a strange place, little white lies won't hurt.

## 10. Be aware of your surroundings

Don't let your guard down to snap the perfect picture for your social media platforms. Keep an eye on your personal belongings at all times and use good judgment when talking to strangers. A big part of the joy of travelling is the opportunities it affords to meet new people and learn about their cultures. But if someone near you is acting suspiciously, or if you feel uncomfortable, leave the area immediately. Following these tips can help you travel safely, but no matter how many precautions you take the unexpected can always happen.

Get peace of mind no matter where you go! We hope this helps you stay safe and secure as you travel this festive season



# Armed robbery- what to look out for



Armed robbery also known commonly as a "hold up" or a "stick up" is an aggravated form of theft where a lethal weapon or threats of violence (intimidation) are used while attempting to take anything of value by force or by putting the victim in fear. Armed robbery is typically motivated by the desire to obtain money, and other valuable possessions. The act is classified as a violent crime, because armed robberies can result in injury and sometimes death to victims.

Anyone can be a fall victim to this violent crime however, there are ways to reduce the likelihood of this happening to you, and if unfortunately you are a victim of an armed robbery, there are ways that you should act in order to reduce risks to yourself, your family or colleagues.

### Prevention

Being prepared for an armed robbery can help prevent the robber from choosing our property. It is important to ensure that all valuables, whether work related or personal are stored away out of sight. This will reduce the risk of attracting would be thieves. At business premises, it is important to be very observant and watch all customers who might come on the business premises. That way it will be easier to detect suspicious behaviour which you should take note of.

Ensure that emergency telephone numbers are kept near at hand; however, these should only be used when it is safe to do so and will not lead to violent retaliation.

The installation of a panic button, at an easily reachable place and where it can be pressed discreetly in case of trouble is advised. The alarm should not sound loudly, but rather transmit a silent alarm to your selected rapid response service provider. This will save your life especially when faced by violent robbers.

At business premises, where possible, ensure that more than one employee is on duty at a time, as criminals are deterred by the presence of a potential witness or the chance of having to fight off more than one person. What to do in case there is an armed robbery Knowing what to do in the event of an armed robbery is the best defence. Most armed robberies are conducted by opportunists and can be prevented. Everything a victim or witness does from the time the robber enters and leaves the property is critical to their safety. A robber wants money and a quick getaway. Cooperate fully.

### In The Event of an Armed Robbery;

#### Do's

1. Stay calm. Let them know you intend to cooperate.
2. Follow their orders precisely and calmly, treating the whole situation as if it were just another transaction – this will ensure that he gets what he wants quickly and this will hopefully lead to his early departure.
3. Make sure that your hands can be seen at all times.
4. Do not make any sudden or threatening moves which may be construed as threatening behaviour by the robber. If you must move or reach for something, inform the robber first so they'll know what to expect.
5. Avoid eye contact with the robbers as they might think you want to study them for later identification to the police.
6. Don't focus on the weapon, but try to observe the surrounding area and discreetly note characteristics such as physical appearance, clothing, unique mannerisms, speech or accent and the type of weaponry used.
7. Speak only when spoken and do not try to

- negotiate with the robbers to change their mind
8. Give the robbers what they demand and do not attempt to hide any valuables
9. Hit the alarm after the suspect has left and only when it is safe to do so.
10. Note the means and direction of the escape (if you can).

#### Don'ts

1. Never resist.
2. Never outwardly panic.
3. Never scream, gesture, or do anything to call attention to the situation.
4. Never smart-mouth the robber, argue with them or try to fight them off.
5. Never assume that a gun is not real, not loaded, or that a young and innocent-looking robber will not shoot you.
6. Do not offer or volunteer more than is demanded.
7. Make no sudden movements that may anger the robber or cause them to panic.
8. Never follow a robber as he flees. You may be mistaken as another robber.

#### After a Robbery Has Occurred

1. Secure the scene to preserve any evidence. Lock the doors, keep people away from the areas that the robbers were in, and keep any and all evidence that may have been left behind by the suspects.
2. Immediately write down information about the incident—and specifically the robbers.
3. Write a narrative regarding what happened and have anyone who saw what happened do the same.
4. Only record factual information. Do not guess at anything you are unsure of, and do not share information with each other.
5. Get as much information about the escapee without going after them:
  - What means did they use?
  - What direction did they go?
  - Were there any accomplices?
  - If they used a car, the make, model, and colour or registration number?

#### Reminders:

If someone looks out of place or suspicious, say "how are you doing" or "can I help you." If they are here on legitimate business, then they will not mind you asking if they need help.

## GOOD JOB

**Our guards are always alert and on the look-out for potential crime. Let us look at a few instances where guards were vigilant in the execution of their duties resulting major savings for our clients.**

On 08.10.19 one of our security guards arrested two employees who connived to steal 3 litres of engine oil at the company where she is stationed. The matter was dealt with internally.

On 08.10.19 our security guard arrested an employee who had stolen a rear view mirror from a forklift. The matter was dealt with internally.

Attentiveness is a key characteristic a security guard should possess. While executing his duties on 12.10.19 at around 02:30am one of our security guards spotted an unknown intruder who had scaled into the premises over the durawall bypassing the razor wire into the scrap yard. The security guard

proceeded to chase the intruder and fire a warning shot while calling for help. The intruder however, managed to escape by jumping over the durawall. 8 pieces of copper wire of various lengths which the intruder had thrown out of the premises recovered behind the durawall.

On the 13th of October 2019 at about 11:25pm a security guard belonging to another security company was struck by an iron bar by four unknown persons, who had entered the premise with intention to steal. Our security guard who was guarding next door heard the noise and pressed the panic button. Our Reaction Team attended and later assisted the injured guard to Mutare General Hospital.

On 16 October 2019 one of our security officers arrested an employee whom he found in possession of various foodstuffs that had stolen from the company's canteen. Matter was dealt with internally.

## Personnel profile



**Mr Benny Chifamba -**  
Regional Manager (Southern Operations)

**It is important that our clients know who they can liaise with for their security needs on a day to day basis. This issue focuses on Mr. Benny Chifamba who is the Regional Manager.**

Born and bred in Rusape, Zimbabwe, Mr Chifamba joined Guard-Alert as a security guard in 1989. He quickly rose through the ranks and was stationed in Gokwe and Masvingo where he handled several large portfolios in the respective areas before being promoted to District Officer for Gweru in 2002.

Benny Chifamba was further promoted to Regional Manager (Southern Operations) in 2016; a position he holds to date. At this position, he covers a vast area including Chegutu, Kadoma, Kwekwe, Gweru, Gokwe, Zvishavane, Chivhu under his portfolio. Mr Chifamba holds several industry relevant qualifications which include a basic Security Guard Certificate as well as a Security Officer's qualification which he undertook at Sectra (Pvt) Ltd (Guard-Alert's training division)

On the personal front, Mr Chifamba has been married to Jane for 28 years and the couple has five children. He is a passionate Christian who spends most of his free time participating in various church activities. His hobbies include watching and playing soccer; he is a staunch supporter of Barcelona FC.

# PANIC BUTTONS



We have found that in many cases clients do not have a need to secure their property; rather they are more concerned with personal security. This is where panic alarms come into play. Being alone with potentially dangerous person is a situation that no one should ever be in, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't take the necessary precautions. One should always be prepared for these types of situations. After all, the worst part for most people is to determine the appropriate response or action to take when this happens.

You can have peace of mind that when you press your panic button we treat the situation as a priority emergency because it tells us that your life may be in imminent danger.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT PANIC BUTTONS

### What is a panic button?

- Basically, it's a button for summoning help in an emergency.
- A panic button is a small, strategically placed device that allows you to quickly call for help in the event of an emergency.
- These buttons are usually connected to a monitoring centre via a silent alarm or an audible bell /siren.
- This alarm can be used to request emergency assistance from your security service provider, the police or emergency services.

### What happens when you press a panic button?

When the panic button is pressed by a person in an emergency or panic situation, it activates the alarm by sending a signal to either a local emergency team e.g. the police or to a monitoring service. A communication system then summons for help when the alarm is activated. The duty of the security centre is to then send an emergency response team to respond to the site.

### When to use a panic button?

The most important thing to know is WHEN to trigger the panic alarm. Emergency response services should only be called when absolutely necessary and false alarms could be a waste of time, money and resources. Therefore, you should use the panic alarm when you are absolutely sure that

1. You are in danger of being harmed
2. Someone else close by may be in danger
3. When the person you are with is about to or has already harmed himself
4. If there is a medical emergency

### Are panic buttons effective?

- Panic buttons are small, wireless, and easily accessible which makes them useful to everyone in need of assistance in an emergency. They can activate an audible or silent alarm as soon as an intruder or threat is encountered.

- In the event of a seriously dangerous event such as a home invasion, it may be difficult to get to the phone to call for help. A panic button however, means that with the simple press of the button, our control room will be alerted and help will be sent over immediately.
- Panic buttons are often kept in a convenient pocket, on a belt loop or even around the neck and a single push initiates a call for help.

### Where can I get a panic button?

These are available from Guard-Alert Electronics. If you do not have a panic system then you should investigate getting one as we believe they are the most cost effective system to prevent you from being held hostage for long periods in your own home by robbers. Having a panic button may save you a lot of agony in the future ultimately save your life so do not hesitate to call us to get your today.

A panic alarm is extremely useful in protecting you, your property and most importantly, your loved ones when you are at home and in desperate need for help. And, considering the increase in the incidences of home burglaries around Zimbabwe at the moment, the need for such sophisticated protection is higher than ever. Panic buttons save lives on a daily basis. You and your family can breathe a little easier knowing that in case of an unfortunate emergency in your home, access to help is just the press of a button away.

# CRIME NEWS

## NATIONWIDE

We, Guard-Alert, are concerned over armed robbery and murder cases that have been recorded in various parts of the country over the past few months. These are on the increase with the criminals getting more violent. It is unfortunate that perpetrators of this heinous crime have completely lost respect of the sanctity of human life and we urge the general public to exercise extreme caution in all they do so as to avoid falling victim to this menace to society.

Listed below are a few things to take note of that will help in preventing you from becoming a victim of this potentially fatal crime.

### House robbery facts

- 8 out of 10 robberies are conducted with the help of information from maids, gardeners and former employees
- Robbers will monitor your home for as long as 2 weeks
- Most attacks occur between 7pm and midnight as people are relaxed, sleeping, cooking, watching TV and the security systems and alarms are not activated. Robberies can continue until 4am.
- 97% of robbers are armed
- On average, an armed robbery gang has 4 members.
- An average of 30% of all house robbers has either committed murder, or won't hesitate to commit murder.
- Most victims or targets are affluent persons who openly display their wealth e.g. wearing expensive jewellery
- Most attackers' homes or 'bases' are 10 to 30 minutes drive from the target address.
- Robbers scout a neighbourhood to see how tight

security is. This is what determines whether they go in or not. Having a good neighbourhood watch in the area can be a major deterrent.

- Robbers are mostly deterred by
  - Electric fences
  - CCTV
  - Detection beams
  - Dog
- Before you leave your house;
  - Make sure that all shrubs and trees are trimmed back so that they do not allow a burglar to conceal himself while attempting to gain access into your house.
  - Do not leave anything around the yard that might help a burglar get into your house. Ladders, stackable boxes and any garden tools should be locked away, preferably in a cabinet. Many burglars use the property owner's own tools to break into their home.
- Since robbers can watch your movements for as long as 2 weeks, try to deviate from your usual routine regularly. Leave and return home at different times. Use different routes and visit different shops.
- Be careful who you let into your home. Take extreme caution when hiring domestic workers and other service providers.

Drivers beware! Thieves have devised a new method of carjacking. Beware of a small piece of paper on the back window of your vehicle. The logic behind this is to get you out of your vehicle to remove the paper that will be obstructing your view. When you reach the back of the car that is when the carjackers appear from nowhere,

jump into your car and take off taking not only your vehicle, but all your valuables in the car. If you see a piece of paper stuck to your back window, just drive away and remove the paper later.

We live in an age where a Personal Identification Number (PIN) is used to gain access to almost anything and anywhere. Members of the public are warned against using obvious numbers such as one's birth date, anniversary date or ID number as their PIN. You should ensure that numbers used cannot be connected to yourself making it that much harder for a thief to be able to figure out what your PIN is.

Motorists are warned not to give lifts to strangers as criminals now pretend to be genuine commuters. The criminals usually travel in groups of two to four people who pretend to be travelling independently. After travelling for a while, the criminals then produce weapons and threaten the driver and other passengers in the car robbing them of their valuables and in most cases dumping them in a remote area as the thieves use the car as their getaway vehicle.





## INSPIRATION

- Keep your face always towards the sunshine - the shadows will fall behind you. – Walt Whitman
- The world is full of magical things patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper. – Bertrand Russell
- All is you need is the plan, the roadmap, and the courage to press on to your destination. – Earl Nightingale
- The power of imagination makes us infinite. – John Muir



### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Help us keep your account up-to-date

We sometimes have difficulty in tracing which customer's payments are on our bank statement. In order for us to be able to reconcile our accounts we ask you please to:

1. Put your account reference number on the deposit
2. Send proof of your payment to [accounts@guardalert.co.zw](mailto:accounts@guardalert.co.zw) for all Guard-Alert payments and to [billing@gae.co.zw](mailto:billing@gae.co.zw) for all Guard-Alert Electronics payments .

**We At Guard Alert  
Wish You All A Merry Christmas  
& Prosperous New Year**