



## **GUARD-ALERT REACTION AND CRIME NEWS APRIL 2019**

**Dear Valued client**

**Welcome to the reaction and crime news April edition. Unfortunately, with the continued deterioration of the economic environment, the crime rate continues to escalate and thieves are also getting more creative. In all cases, Guard-Alert security urges continued vigilance whether at home or at the business premises.**

### **REACTION NEWS**

#### **HARARE**

On **03.04.19** an alarm alert signal was received from a residential property in Zimre Park at **10:43am**. Upon arrival, the Reaction Crew noticed that unknown intruders had entered client's residence where there was no front gate. They proceeded to the kitchen door forcing it open. The intruders then proceeded to the kitchen pantry and attempted to dismantle the alarm panel box. They entered client's bedroom and stole a 48 inch plasma TV, 3 laptops, 4 pairs of men's suits, a pair of women's trousers and RTGS170.00. The case was reported to the police.

On **13.04.19** a burglary signal was received from a commercial property at **5:30pm**. Crews responded and conducted site checks on the closed shops which showed that premise was secure. However at **6:25pm** a phone call was received from the client confirming a theft occurrence at property. Site indications revealed that unknown intruders had entered the shop through the roof. Various clothing articles were confirmed stolen. Client was however, reluctant to file a police report.

A burglary signal came through on 14.04.19 at 04:02am from a commercial property in Glen View. The Reaction Crew conducted site checks from outside the shop which was closed and left satisfied that all was secure. The client however phoned the control room after noticing a breach inside the shop during opening times. Unknown intruders had tampered with the ceiling in an attempt to gain entry into the shop but were disturbed by alarm which activated the siren and scared them away. Nothing was stolen.

## **BULAWAYO**

On 03.4.19 at 3pm the Reaction Crew attended to a panic alert from a local retail shop, on arrival, they discovered that security personnel had apprehended an adult male for theft of Body Lotion bottles. The suspect was taken to the nearest police station.

On 09.4.19 at 02.50am, a panic signal was received from a residential property in the city, thieves had entered into the premises, and on hearing the alarm sound they jumped out and ran away. Reaction crew attended the scene and found all in good order.

On 09.4.19 at 2.34pm, a panic signal was received from a retail store. Upon arrival, the Reaction Crew found out that there was a shoplifter who had been caught by the security personnel at the shop. The accused was transported to a nearby Police station.

A burglary signal activated from a local firm in the CBD on 17.4.19 at 8.43pm. The Reaction Crew was dispatched and upon arrival, they discovered that the front entrance door was not locked. This was communicated to the client and he was advised to return and secure the premise. The client returned and confirmed that nothing had been stolen or damaged.

On 19.4.19 at 01.25pm, a panic signal was received from a local Supermarket. The Reaction Crew attended and found the resident security guards in possession of an adult male who had been caught trying to walk out with alcoholic products hidden in his clothes. The accused was transported to the nearest police post.

## **GWERU**

On the 01.04.19 a panic signal was received from a residential property in Brackenhurst. The client had activated the panic alarm after hearing noises in the house. Intruders had entered clients premise through the bathroom window and proceeded to the bedroom where client was sleeping. Two cell phones, USD100, RTGSS\$100 and some items of clothing were stolen. The client was urged to file police report but was reluctant to do so. The siren scared the intruders away preventing them from stealing anything else.

On the 07.04.19 at 11:20pm an alarm signal was received from a residential property in Athlone. The client was contacted and he put reaction crews on hold whilst investigating what triggered the alarm. Upon noticing intruders in his yard, he requested for Reaction back up. Site checks by the attending crews showed that unknown intruders had forced open the

kitchen window before removing the burglar bars. Intruders were interrupted by the siren which scared them away. Nothing was stolen.

## **MARONDERA**

On 29/04/19 at around 11.45pm a panic alarm signal was received at our control room from a leading Retail Supermarket. The Reaction Crew attended and upon arrival, they were given a report by the private guard who was on duty at the supermarket that he had pressed the panic button when he saw three intruders breaking into a Shop (not a Guard-Alert client) which is just adjacent to Retail Supermarket. Our Reaction Crew then rushed to the nearest police station to alert the police and transported them to the crime scene. The security company contracted by the shop arrived at the crime scene 40mins later to find our Reaction Team and the police already there. Items stolen include poultry chemicals. The thieves a had pickup truck without number plates and they are still at large.

## **CRIME NEWS**

### **NATIONWIDE**

The ZRP have issued a warning about an upsurge in the theft of motor vehicles, thefts from motor vehicles and smash and grab incidences in the country. One of the most Recent modus operandi being used by criminals is that they approach a motorist at an intersection claiming that he/she has hit a pedestrian or another motorist. Unaware that they are being tricked, the motorists disembark from their vehicles to check the “victim” leaving keys on the ignition. The criminals then immediately get into the vehicle and drive away.

In view of the foregoing, motorists are advised to:

1. Adjust speed when approaching traffic light controlled intersections so that one proceeds straight as the traffic light turns green without necessarily having to stop.
2. Keep all vehicle doors locked and windows opened not more than 2-4cm when driving.
3. NOT entertain strangers at road intersections and be prepared to take off should you observe suspicious people around your vehicle.
4. Exercise caution when driving along roads with tall grass and maize crops as robbers use these as hideouts while targeting motorists.
5. Ensure that all valuables including laptops, handbags and briefcases are hidden in the boot of your car or under the seats before commencing your travel.
6. Physically check if doors are locked after using the remote to lock the vehicle.
7. Activate alarm systems on your vehicle
8. Avoid driving or travelling at night outside city limits.
9. Use safe overnight parking.

## **HARARE**

Members of the public are urged to avoid carrying large sums of money as they risk losing it to criminals. A Harare man lost a bag containing US\$4 100 and R53 000 to four thieves at Mbare Musika after they misled him into believing that his vehicle had a dent before snatching the bag.

The incident occurred on a Saturday afternoon at around 4pm and police have since arrested two of the suspects who were captured by a CCTV camera installed at a nearby tuckshop but have not recovered the money. The two accused persons, who were part of a gang of four, approached a 32-year-old man who was seated in his vehicle and led him to believe that his car had a dent at the back. When the man went to check his car, the criminals then stole the bag that was in the vehicle.

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In a separate incident, a woman was robbed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April around 2pm in Norton. She had posted pictures of a car she was selling on Facebook and received a call from a potential buyer and they arranged to meet. They met in town and decided to go for a test run along Bulawayo Road. When they had passed Norton, the potential buyer suddenly drove into the bush, threatened the woman and her niece, took their cell phones and all their personal documents and drove off with the car leaving them stranded in the middle of nowhere.

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A car was also intentionally spiked along the road from Glenara Ave turning left onto Airport road. Whilst changing the tyre, several items including a laptop, a smart phone, passports, a black leather wallet with credit cards were stolen from the vehicle. Nothing has been recovered.

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On **10.04.19** at **11.30am** our security guard arrested an employee contracted by one of clients in the motoring industry who had stolen 6 x 750 ml sheens. The accused was handed over to police and will appear before the magistrate.

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On the **12th of April** at around **02.33pm** some alleged suspects were arrested after a tip off by Guard Alert security guards. A Toyota Runx parked under a big tree was observed and the occupants were not doing any shopping. The guards phoned Rhodesville police who send some undercover police. All the 5 men in the vehicle were arrested. Branch Manager of the Supermarket at this Shopping Mall was informed and was happy about the development.

## **GWERU**

Two Gweru men, attacked and seriously injured a security guard using machetes during a robbery and were sentenced to an effective 7 years in prison each, for attempted murder. The two were also asked to pay back the complainant \$135 he had used for his medication.

## MARONDERA

On the **5<sup>th</sup> of April** at around **07.15am** a call was received from Private school in Marondera to the effect that there had been a break in at their dairy project. Items stolen were a computer, a printer and chemicals for cattle. Two employees of the school in Marondera were arrested after being found in possession of stolen items. The two, an internal security guard and a workshop employee hired a vehicle which was being driven by a Police CID detail who then alerted the Police who were at the road block leading to their arrest. Their houses were searched and various items which includes spoons, knives and cloths valued almost \$4000-00 was recovered. The internal security guard was taken to court, found guilty and sentenced to 8 months imprisonment.

## SECURITY TIPS

### ❖ Alarms

Crime alert tips supplied by the I.C. Crime at Belmont Police Station In Bulawayo reveal that most premises that report a burglary and loss of property have no Electronic Security Systems i.e. Alarms, CCTVs, Access Control Systems. This makes it easier for intruders to gain access without facing any deterrent. In most cases the burglars have proceeded to break the safes and leave with high values of cash.

### Advice

- Electronic Systems are a modern day method of assisting security guards, they help in either restricting intruders or providing evidence on how a crime was perpetrated, it is in line with this background that firms that are lagging behind should quickly consider the installation of these systems for better improved security on their premises.
- Cash should not be lodged in the Safe at close of business, clients should make it a policy to seek overnight storage of Cash from Security Companies as they are better equipped and knowledgeable on how to safely keep cash in whatever quantities.

### ❖ Vegetation and lighting

Unlawful entry and intrusion cases have been rampant in the month being reviewed. It has since been established by stakeholders in the security industry both public and private, that most industrial premises have been leased out and the firms operating from the rented premises are mostly doing very little in terms of pruning the surrounding vegetation, and installation of sufficient lighting. It is in line with this background that most intruders ambush themselves in the thick bushes and dark areas in various premises and sneak into buildings sometimes after tying the guard who is usually alone on the premise.

### Advice

- All premises should be cleared from overwhelming vegetation i.e. trees, hedges especially those that are close to the perimeter durawall or fence.
- There should be sufficient lighting around buildings and where possible motion sensor lights should be installed.

#### ❖ **Reputable security service providers**

The security department is of paramount importance as it is the cornerstone of all Loss Control objectives to any organization, as such it is vitally important for clients to always engage tried and tested firms who have stood the test of time. Engagements with “fly-by-night” operators exposes companies and the entire industry to high-risk as they tend to cut-corners in their operations as they may not afford costs associated with Standard Service Provision such as follow ups through visits and the employment of suitably qualified guards.

#### **Advice**

- Companies should assess the risk against the benefits of engaging a Security company considering the size of that firm against the value of the business they will take care of before making any contractual agreements.
- Clients should make it a point to prioritize use of ISO certified organizations that have an obligation to meet a certain Standard in their provision of services.