

Jan.
2025

NEWSLETTER

Issue
#5

You cannot reverse the effects of crime. Crime cannot be undone...



Wisdom Comes After Disaster in South Africa.

A simple truth: Crime in South Africa doesn't take holidays. But people do. Every December, while families celebrate and businesses shut down, crime keeps working overtime. It's predictable. It's costly. And once again, January has arrived with broken doors, empty warehouses, and shattered peace of mind.

Continue reading on page 2.

Offerings Of a Security Risk Assessment.

Risk assessments shouldn't be about selling products, they should be about solving problems. At Alwinco, we take pride in offering Independent Risk Assessments, where our focus is solely on your unique security needs, not on pushing equipment or signing you up for contracts. There's no catch, no commissions - just honest, unbiased advice.

Continue reading on page 6.

What Are Road Spikes?

Imagine driving along South Africa's highways late at night. Suddenly, a thud. Your tire blows out. It's not bad luck, it's a trap. Criminals are placing spikes, rocks, and debris on the roads, forcing drivers to stop in dangerous, isolated spots. It's called spiking, and it's one of the most alarming tactics putting motorists at risk today.

Continue reading on page 8.

Source: STS Technical Services



André Mundell, Alwinco, Independent Security Risk Assessor

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Wisdom Comes After Disaster in South Africa.

Source: explore.com

One property I visited told a chilling story. Not one break-in, but three — each more brazen than the last. Footprints marked the floor like a grim calendar of missed chances, and still, the alarm system sat silently, a monument to complacency. Why do we learn the cost of security only after the bill comes due?

This isn't just about theft. It's about missed warnings and failed strategies. It's about families returning to homes that aren't the same and businesses rebuilding from losses they could have prevented.

Now is the time for reflection — and action. Don't let "wisdom after disaster" be your motto for 2025. Dust off your risk assessment, rethink your blind spots, and read on to learn how small, smart decisions can stop crime in its tracks before it turns your future into a statistic.

Wisdom Comes After Disaster in South Africa.

Everybody is back now. After the December holidays, it's time to get back to work and routines. But every year, something reminds us of the saying, "Wisdom comes after disaster." This December was no different. People returned



home, and businesses started opening again, only to find that crime had paid a visit while they were away.

It happens year after year, especially in South Africa. People get into the holiday spirit, relax, and forget about security. It becomes an afterthought. They leave their homes and businesses unprotected, and when they come back, the evidence is there: crime.

This time, it seemed like businesses suffered more break-ins than homes, but there was crime everywhere. Doors were kicked in, windows were smashed, sliding doors were ripped off, and thieves helped themselves to whatever they wanted.

At one property I visited, it was clear the crime didn't happen all at once. There were signs that three different groups had been there, each on a different day. You could see it in the dusty footprints on the floor. Three separate sets, spaced days apart.

Here's what probably happened: the first group broke in and took what they wanted. Then, after chatting about the easy target, someone else decided to give it a try. And because the place was still wide open, a third group eventually followed. Each time, more damage was done. What amazed me was how no alarm system seemed to do its job. Why weren't these crimes stopped earlier?

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The issue isn't just about stolen items. Some people even lost their lives this December, though this didn't get much attention in the news. The focus was more on holiday traffic and busy beaches than on the serious crimes happening in the background.

Now, people are dealing with the aftermath. Fixing broken doors, replacing stolen items, and cleaning up the mess left behind. What's even worse is that the second and third rounds of criminals often cause more destruction than the first.

The lesson? Security should never be an afterthought. It's easy to relax during the holidays, but crime doesn't take a break. If we don't stay prepared, we're just making things easier for the criminals waiting for their chance.

There was one client's case I'll never forget. If you looked at the scene, it was clear there were two separate groups of thieves involved. The first group broke in and stole televisions, tables, bedspreads, cushions (basically anything they could carry). Then, later, a second group came in and took a different approach. They stripped the house of every bit of copper they could find, even ripping pipes from the walls.

The damage didn't stop there.

With criminals not even leaving behind the contents of a fridge, it started leaking water everywhere, creating an even bigger mess. Food was spoiled, water was pooling, it was chaos. And that's why my heading is: *Wisdom Comes After Disaster in South Africa*.

In this country, it seems that too many people don't take crime seriously until they've experienced it firsthand. This baffles me, especially when the news constantly reminds us how bad crime is. Yet, people still act like it won't happen to them.

I've met people whose lives were changed forever after being victims of crime. One family left their teenage daughter at home during the holidays because she didn't want to go with them and was supposed to watch the dogs. You can imagine what happened next. That family is now dealing with the aftermath, and it will take them the entire year to recover from what their daughter endured.

I honestly don't understand how people think when it comes to security, especially during the festive season. It's like all logic flies out the window.

Businesses aren't any better. One company discovered after

reopening that their laptops, computers, and even critical databases were gone. What's strange is there were no signs of a break-in. No damaged doors or windows, nothing. It made them wonder: Was it an inside job? We don't know yet, but one thing is clear: their security was far from adequate.

This is the reality of crime in South Africa. Whether it's families or businesses, people often underestimate the risks until it's too late. And by then, they're left with the mess (both physical and emotional) to clean up.

There's another company that had a shocking break-in, this time at one of their warehouses. The strange part? It wasn't a one-time event. Nobody noticed as people quietly stole items from the back of the warehouse, day after day. This went on right under everyone's noses, and the "normal" security measures didn't catch a thing.

And then there's the issue with bank cards during the holidays.



Source: Ed Psych Solutions

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IMPORTANT FACTORS FOUND MISSING EVERY TIME A CRIME IS COMMITTED



Every year, people misplace or lose their cards. Or worse, have them stolen. Often, they don't even realize what's happened until it's too late. Someone takes their card, and small amounts of money start disappearing from their accounts, little by little. Maybe R1,000 here or R500 there.

I know of three or four families who experienced this recently. It starts with a couple of transactions, usually in the middle of the night. By the time they check their accounts in the morning, more money is gone. They quickly block the card, but the big question remains: how did the thief get their PIN?

Here's the reality: many people never change their PIN codes. If you're reading this, think about it. How many times did you change your bank PIN last year? I know people who haven't changed theirs in years. That's risky!

A good rule is to change your PIN at least three times a year. Even better, once a month. And when you do, make sure to keep it safe. Every time you pay with your card and type in your PIN, someone could be watching. Whether it's through cameras, the cashier, or even the person standing behind you.

This isn't just about bank cards, though. It's a reminder of how much people misjudge crime, especially during the holidays. They think it won't happen to them, but it does.

So, what should you do? Go back to your risk assessment report. Read it again. Remind yourself of the risks you face and take the steps to protect yourself. Crime in South Africa doesn't take a break for the holidays, and neither should your awareness.

I would ask everyone to do one simple thing: read your risk

assessment report at least three times. Don't just glance over it and assume everything is fine. Check every detail and tick off each box to confirm that the recommendations have been properly implemented. It's not enough to think it's done; go and see for yourself. Make sure everything is still in the correct condition and functioning as it should.

Addressing the recommendations in a risk assessment is not optional; it's essential. If something isn't clear, write back to your assessor and ask for advice. And now that we're in 2025, it's the perfect time to reevaluate. If your risk assessment is more than two or three years old, it might be time for an upgrade. Consider a "30/70 risk assessment."

Let me explain. A 30/70 assessment focuses 30% on old risks that were previously identified and 70% on new priorities like communication, management, processes, and how people think about security. For example, household properties are often softer targets, while businesses tend to have stronger security measures. Both need tailored approaches, but in all cases, documentation is key.

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This brings me to a critical point: we can't read each other's minds. Your family, employees, or partners can't guess your security plans. Everything must be written down and clear to everyone involved.

In your home, you should have an access plan in place. Ask yourself: if the front door breaks, what's the next step? Where will you hide valuables if you're going on holiday? These questions need answers, and those answers need to be documented. Security isn't something you figure out on the fly; it's something you plan for, year after year.

The hard truth is that most South Africans, whether they live on farms, run businesses, or manage hospitals, don't know how to properly secure their properties. This past December proved that to me once again.

We need to start seeing security as a priority, not an afterthought. Don't wait for disaster to strike before you act. Review your security, update your risk assessments, and take steps to protect yourself, your family, and your property.

Source: H.E.A.T Survival Training



Skyworth Full HD Indoor Security Camera – Incredible Connections



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Offerings Of a Security Risk Assessment.



Source: How-To Geek

Why is this so important? Too often, businesses sell "assessments" that are really just product pitches in disguise. These so-called assessments are designed to make you think you've covered your bases, but they only leave you exposed to risks you didn't even know existed.

We don't work like that. We listen to you, your concerns, your environment, your goals. Then, we dig deep, looking at your security from the criminal's perspective to find true vulnerabilities. Every recommendation we make is backed by thorough research and experience, not commission-based deals with suppliers.

In a world of evolving threats and fast-changing technology, your security plan can't be guesswork. It has to be smart, specific, and tailored to you.

Ready for a real risk assessment - one that puts your security first? Let's talk!

Independent Risk Assessment Isn't a Product Assessment

At Alwinco, we specialize in **Independent Risk Assessment** - also called security risk assessments - and we want to make one thing crystal clear: this is NOT about selling products. We don't expect you to buy equipment, sign up for contracts, or commit to anything else after our assessment.

That's the beauty of being independent, our advice is honest, unbiased, and focused entirely on you.

No Strings, No Commissions

When we recommend a solution, it's because it works, not because someone's paying us to push it. We don't earn commissions or kickbacks from any of the products or services mentioned in your Security Plan. If we do suggest specific equipment, it's because we've done our homework, and the item has proven to be the best for the job - not because we have a deal with the supplier.

Unfortunately, many companies muddy the waters by offering

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free or cheap “risk assessments.” But let’s call those what they really are: **product assessments**. Their goal is to sell you something, not to fully evaluate your security needs. The result? Clients think they’ve covered their bases, but the truth is they’re left exposed to risks they don’t even know about.

Too often, sales-driven “assessments” skip over what’s most important: **your actual needs**. These so-called solutions are usually pre-selected from a catalog or based on assumptions about what you can afford. The client’s input? Overlooked. Their concerns? Ignored.

That’s not how we work. At Alwinco, we start by listening to you. Your concerns, your goals, your environment - it’s all crucial to creating a plan that works. We don’t make guesses or assumptions. Every recommendation is backed by a thorough investigation into your specific risks and vulnerabilities.

Our approach to security is simple: **it’s not guesswork, and it’s not one-size-fits-all**. We dig deep into the details, examining your property from every angle, especially the criminal’s perspective. By identifying crime opportunities, we don’t just help you react to risks -

we help you prevent them.

Security technology evolves constantly, and we make it our mission to stay ahead of the game. From ongoing research and hands-on training to hosting seminars and meeting with tech experts, we’re always learning so you get the best advice.

But it’s not just about knowing the latest tools; it’s about understanding how they work in the real world. Fancy spec sheets don’t protect your property. Functional, effective solutions do. That’s why we ensure you understand exactly how each recommendation fits into your overall security plan.

Your Security, Your Peace of Mind

At the end of the day, our job is to give you the knowledge and tools to take control of your security. As independent advisors, we don’t push products - we provide solutions tailored to your unique situation.

So, if you’re ready for a proper security risk assessment, one that’s focused on protecting you and not someone’s bottom line, let’s talk. At Alwinco, we believe security is about more than just products - it’s about peace of mind.





The numbers don't lie. Spiking incidents have surged on key routes like the N1 and N4, turning routine drives into high-stakes encounters. Staying safe isn't just about quick reflexes; it's about knowing exactly what to do when danger strikes. Should you stop? No. Keep moving, flat tires be damned, until you reach safety.

This isn't an article filled with generic advice. It's a survival guide tailored to today's roads, where criminals are getting bolder, and your awareness is your best defence.

Let's break down what's happening, where it's happening, and how you can stay one step ahead. Your life may depend on it.

Driving in South Africa has become more dangerous than

What Are Road Spikes?

ever, with criminals using terrifying tactics to target motorists.

One of the latest trends, known as spiking, involves placing sharp objects or other hazards on the road to puncture tires and force vehicles to stop. These criminals take advantage of stranded drivers, robbing them while they are vulnerable. Spiking is not just about spikes; it often includes rocks, stones, or even large debris strategically placed on the road.

Unfortunately, spiking incidents have been reported on some of the country's busiest highways, particularly the N1 and N4. According to local authorities and community policing forums (CPF), vehicles in distress make the perfect target. If you find yourself in such a situation, the advice is clear: keep driving, even on flat tires, until you reach a safe, well-lit area or a police station. It may cause damage to your car, but your life is far more valuable.

Hotspot Areas and Times

Spiking typically happens at night when darkness helps conceal the traps. Key hotspots include:

- N4 (Pretoria to Witbank): Donkerhoek Plaza (7 PM – 4 AM), Solomon Mahlangu Interchange (11 PM – 4 AM), Proefplass Interchange (7 PM – 4 AM).
- N4 (Brits): M17 at Garankua Bridge (11 PM – 4 AM), R101 at Old Warmbaths Road (3 AM), R80 Hercules to Soshanguve (overnight).
- N1: Pumulani at Walmansthal off and on ramps (overnight).

Other regions, like the stretch between the Soweto Highway and Maraisburg Off-ramps, are also affected. Rocks and spikes are deliberately placed to damage vehicles and force drivers to stop.

Spiking is part of a broader wave of road crimes. Criminals have become more creative and brazen in their methods. For example, the 'tap-tap' hijacking tactic has resurfaced, where perpetrators lightly bump your car to stage an accident. When you stop to exchange details, they strike. Other criminals use car-jamming devices to disable your vehicle's remote locking, or worse, they kidnap victims during hijackings to delay reporting and remove tracking devices from vehicles.

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Car theft has also spiked, particularly for high-value vehicles and keyless models. These crimes are often organized and involve sophisticated technology, making vehicle recovery increasingly difficult.

Even high-ranking officials have fallen victim. In late 2023, Minister Sindisiwe Chikunga experienced a spiking hijacking firsthand. These incidents highlight that no one is immune, and everyone must remain vigilant.

Authorities are working hard to combat these crimes. Joint operations between the Johannesburg Metro Police Department (JMPD) and the South African Police Service (SAPS) aim to patrol hotspots and deter criminals. However, your awareness and preparedness remain your best defence. If you spot a hazard or suspicious activity on the road, report it immediately.

Here are some tips to keep safe:

1. Avoid driving at night in hotspot areas if possible.

2. Don't stop for hazards in the road; drive around them if it's safe.

3. Keep moving if your tires are damaged, even if it means driving slowly to the nearest safe location.

4. Stay vigilant for vehicles that follow you or accidents that seem staged.

5. Check your car's locks manually, even if you've used the remote.

Road crimes like spiking are frightening, but with the right precautions, you can reduce the risk. Remember, your safety comes first. Stay alert and report any incidents or suspicious activity to help protect yourself and others.



Source: The Citizen