

Subject: FW: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE: Home security assessment request
Attachments: Guide for Members of Parliament - Understanding your Security Risks.PDF

From: Protective Security (DPC) [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 1:29 PM
To: Moira Deeming <Moira.Deeming@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Cc: Tabitha Frith (DPC) [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE: Home security assessment request

Good afternoon Ms Deeming,

I'm getting in touch because the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) recently contacted the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) after identifying you may have security concerns at your home. The request has come to us as DPC looks after residential security arrangements for Ministers, and other MPs on an exceptions basis after establishing evidence of a threat or occurrence of a security incident. Our offering consists of arranging for the installation of agreed security measures at the MP's principle place of residence.

Please see the information below on our process for conducting an assessment and what the next steps are based on the evidence or lack of evidence of an increased threat. If this is something you are interested in pursuing, please let us know and we will proceed with requesting Victoria Police undertake an assessment. **Please note that this assessment can take several weeks to be completed and will depend on Victoria Police's availability to complete the assessment.**

DPC's residential security policy

The provision of residential security measures for Members of Parliament is based on the identification and subsequent confirmation that a threat is evident or that an actual security incident has occurred. To confirm the evidence of a threat or security incident DPC engages Victoria Police to undertake a vulnerability assessment, which may include an analysis of your public and online presence/activities as well as an assessment of Victoria Police's intelligence holdings (such as current or past investigations, reported threats or security incidents etc.).

If there is evidence of an increased threat:

- If Victoria Police confirm there is current evidence of a threat or actual incident then DPC will work with you to agree the measures to be installed at your home. The range of measures we would provide may include: a monitored alarm system, a sensor lighting package, a custom steel security screen door fitted to the front door, and/or 3M window film applied to the front, ground floor, street facing windows (and front door/side panel windows if applicable).
- Any vulnerability assessment provided to DPC will be made available to you.
- DPC will arrange with you, or your representative suitable times for the providers of the agreed measures to attend the home to 1) quote the works and then 2) install the security measures.
- DPC will maintain the equipment installed whilst you are an MP, or your circumstances change or you advise us otherwise.
- The measures may be installed at the principle place of residence only.
- Special conditions apply if the home is rented (please advise if this applies to you).

If there is no evidence of an increased threat:

Should the assessment find there is no evidence of increased security vulnerabilities, noting that there will always be a certain level of residual risk in any situation, DPC will not proceed with the installation of security measures at your home. Any vulnerability assessment provided to DPC will be made available to you.

I also attach the Guide for Members of Parliament, Managing your personal safety and security risks, which was developed earlier this year and provided to all MPs. I hope it offers some practical advice and information to help

you improve the safety and security at your home. As the guide says, it is based on the common themes identified whilst conducting vulnerability assessments for Ministers and MPs over an extended period of time.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you wish to discuss this further.

Kind regards,

Alana

Protective Security Team

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Guide for Members of Parliament

Managing your personal safety and security risks

Limitations/Disclaimer

The information in this guide should not be seen as an exhaustive list of advice and is not a guarantee of absolute protection. It should be used in context of building and maintaining awareness of your behaviours and the actions you can take to improve your and your family's protective security outcomes.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria Police, Department of Parliamentary Services and any other government agency or Victorian Government representative does not accept any responsibility for any damage or loss, however caused, suffered by any individual or corporation arising from the information provided in this guide.

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Introduction

This guide has been developed to assist you to become more aware of personal risks in the home and out in the community, whether on official business or personal activities. This guide provides general information and poses questions to assist you with risk mitigation strategies.

Reducing personal risk should be thought of in a layered security or “defence in depth” approach and should be considered, measured and/or implemented based on your specific personal situation. To improve your personal protective security, the core objectives of *Deter, Detect, Delay, Respond and Recover* can be applied to reduce the likelihood or consequence of a potential security threat.

The information in this guide has been informed by the common themes and issues identified when conducting Protective Security Vulnerability Assessments for Ministers and MPs, and has been compiled by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in consultation with and support from Victoria Police, Counter Terrorism Command. The guide complements advice provided by the Department of Parliamentary Services to MPs and staff regarding security at electoral offices and attendance at Parliament. This guide sets out actions you can take to reduce the risk of harm to yourself and your family.

Security climate

The terrorism landscape

The national terrorism threat level is currently at *PROBABLE – Credible intelligence indicates that individuals or groups have developed both the intent and capability to conduct terrorist attacks in Australia*. The current national terrorism threat level has been in place since September 2014.

Although the threat level is ‘probable,’ attacks on political figures and violent protests in Australia are rare, and most threats or protest activity conclude peacefully. Where violence has occurred, it has generally been opportunistic rather than planned. It is expected that issue-motivated groups will continue to hold protest and counter-protest activity for the foreseeable future, particularly in response to local and international events linked to conflicts or in response to local COVID restrictions. Violent protest tactics are not expected, but incidental acts of violence may occur when opposing groups meet and agitate each other. It is assessed that protesters are more likely to use provocative and disruptive tactics to gain the attention of MPs or the public to their cause.

Deter, Detect, Delay, Respond and Recover

The techniques of *Deter, Detect, Delay Respond and Recover* aim to protect people, information, and assets from harm. These techniques can also be applied to security in the home:

Deter – Deter or discourage unauthorised people from attempting to gain access to your property. Implement measures that unauthorised people would perceive as too difficult, or that would need special tools and training, to overcome.

Detect – Detect any unauthorised access as early as possible. Implement measures to work out whether an unauthorised action is occurring or has occurred.

Delay – Delay any unauthorised attempt for as long as possible to allow a security response to be activated. Implement measures to slow the progress of a harmful event.

Respond – Activate your security plan, whether it be to retreat to a secure “safe” room or evacuate the premises. An effective response counters the anticipated activity of an unauthorised person within a time appropriate to the delay measures.

Recover – Take the steps required to recover from a security incident, such as repairs or upgrades, and address any post-traumatic stress related to the incident.

Developing a security plan

Consider developing a security plan that details what you would do in a variety of scenarios – not only in the event of an intruder, but also for other emergencies, such as a fire.

Considerations when developing your security plan

- How you and your family would respond if someone was trying to enter your home from different access points and family members were in various parts of the home.
- Where an intruder would most likely enter your property – are there access points over your fences that an intruder could use to gain access?
- Evaluate where the highest risk lies – would it be easier to enter via the front or the back?
- Could an intruder enter your property unseen, using fences or thick vegetation as cover?
- Consider what you would need to do if you were in your office, if everyone is asleep, or if everyone is spread across the home doing various activities.
- Plan escape routes from key points in the house and think about provisioning a safe room.
- Rehearse the plan under various scenarios – at different times of day, when a household member is home alone and when everyone is present.
- Make sure everyone knows who to call and establish a safe meeting place or evacuation point outside the home.
- Talk about and practice your plan and the various scenarios.

Assessing your online security

Your digital footprint is the record of all your interactions online. An online search could reveal insights into where you live, how you socialise and who your friends and family are.

Considerations when reviewing your online presence

- Find out how to manage your digital footprint and how to own, shape and monitor it. Read and action *My Digital Footprint: A guide to digital footprint discovery and management*, which, although produced for a UK audience, contains useful information.

Go to www.cpni.gov.uk/security-campaigns/my-digital-footprint and scroll down to public guidance.
- Review the security settings of your and your family's social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Remove or archive old posts that reveal personal details about you, family and friends and ask them to avoid posting items that reveal personal details.
- **Before** posting photos, remove the metadata sitting behind the photos – particularly the location data. Depending on your phone, in photos, you can select a photo, select the information icon and adjust the location to no location.
- Facebook and Instagram generally don't publish location data of your photos, however, Facebook retains the location data if you haven't deleted it before you post. In the privacy settings of your mobile device, consider switching off '*allow apps to request to track*'.
- Avoid posting photos that contain evidence of where you live, such as street signs, 'for sale' signs, shop signs and window reflections that show details.
- Adjust your security/privacy settings to limit visibility of your personal social media accounts.
- Review your LinkedIn or career profile so that it's not flagging details that make you a target for foreign governments, individuals or organisations seeking to influence you for access to government systems. For example, where you have had responsibility for sensitive security policies or projects in your career.
- Ask family members (including parents, children and their partners and grandchildren) to remove details of where you grew up and/or suburbs where family live or have lived in the past.
- Avoid using work email addresses for personal business.
- Use one email address for online and in-person shopping and similar activities, and another for your personal official business such as banking, utilities, and government organisations, such as VicRoads.

- You may wish to limit contentious comments on public social media that could inflame a situation or provide perceived cause for someone to act on their aggression. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right in Australia, and a hallmark of a robust democracy like ours.

Consider being conscious that when expressing your right to freedom of speech, others may rightly or wrongly consider controversial or provocative.

Considerations when reviewing who can find your address

- Take steps to remove property listings by speaking to your listing agent. You can remove sold property details from Realestate.com.au by going to **help.realestate.com.au/hc/en-us/articles/115002778686-Adding-or-removing-a-listing**
- If you still use a land line, check to see if your address and phone number appear in the White Pages. Take steps to get a silent number and have the listing removed **help.whitepages.com.au/residentiallistings/my-residential-listing/**
- Register to become a silent voter and consider whether close family members should also register to become silent voters, especially if their details are widely available online. **www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Special_Category/silent-electors.Htm**

NOTE: The AEC will notify the VEC of your silent voter registration.

Assessing the security of your home

Take the time to assess the security of your home as though you were a potential intruder.

If you see a suspicious person outside or hiding on your property, **immediately call 000.**

Consider these steps to improve your home security.

Doors and windows

- Apply window tinting/frosting to reduce the ease of being viewed in the home during the day and install blinds to glass front doors and side window panels that can be drawn at night and lessen chance of silhouetting.
- Replace glass door panels with laminated glass to make it harder to break the glass and open the lock. Consider the quality of glass doors and window frames if they were to be struck or forced with implements such as garden tools.
- Install a 180-degree peep hole in the front door if it has no glass panels and you can't be seen from outside through other windows.
- If you have a pet door, check whether a person could fit through it to gain access to the house or reach in to unlock a window or non-deadlocked door.
- Check that door locks are fully functional, meet Australian standards and can't be easily forced open.
- Install a steel security screen door.

Keys

- Avoid leaving keys near or in the door or windows.
- Avoid attaching a key tag to keys that provides personal details such as name, address and home phone numbers.

Inside the home

- Make a habit of keeping handbags, backpacks, work satchels etc. in a location not easily sighted from outside the house.
- Close curtains/blinds at night, particularly at the front of the house.
- Avoid leaving documents with sensitive personal details lying around.
- Emergencies, such as a deliberately lit fire, may be used to force an evacuation from the home. Installing, regularly checking, and maintaining smoke alarms and practising your security plan helps to reduce risks. Consider reviewing and actioning advice from Fire Rescue Victoria www.frv.vic.gov.au/smoke-alarms
- Purchase and maintain fire extinguishers.

Fences and gates

- Ensure that fences and gates at the front of the home limit places of concealment and allow neighbours/passers-by to sight a potential intruder.
- Ensure that if your gates are lockable, they are not keyed the same as the house.
- Walk the border of your property to consider where a potential intruder could gain access. Secure rubbish bins, ladders, bikes, and anything that could be used as a step into your property.
- Review the condition of fences - can fence palings be easily removed to provide an access point?
- Speak to your neighbours about items against their fences that could assist a potential intruder to gain access to your property.

Garages and sheds

- Intruders generally don't bring their own break-in tools. Take steps to secure tools/items you have stored around the home, such as hammers, pinch/jemmy bars, crow bars, shovels, knives, gardening tools or heavy objects that could be used to gain access to your home.
- Ensure that garages and sheds are kept locked and secured when not in use.

Lighting

- Check that your external lighting works.
- Ensure external doorways, garage doors and walkways are well lit.
- Consider internal timer switches for use at night when nobody is home to mimic usual lighting patterns.
- Keep trees and shrubs around the home trimmed to reduce dark spots that could be used for concealment.

Mail and letterboxes

- Keep your letter box locked and ensure that mail can't be removed from the delivery slot.
- Consider using a Post Office box to avoid getting personally addressed mail delivered to your home. Australia Post also provide a free parcel locker service for online purchase parcel deliveries auspost.com.au/receiving/collection-points/use-a-247-parcel-locker

Power meter boxes

- If your electrical switchboard is located outside the home, consider securing it with a utility company approved lock.

A locksmith can install one suitable to your switchboard. You will need to contact your energy provider to let them know you have installed a lock or contact them to seek advice.

Rubbish bins

- If going away for an extended period of time, have a neighbour take your bins in.
- Avoid placing sensitive or personal material in the bin without destroying it first. A shredder can be used to destroy paper material.

Improving personal safety in the community

Taking steps to reduce the risk of personal harm when out in the community is relatively easy, but should depend on your personal situation and mental health and wellbeing. Building personal safety behaviours should not cause anxiety, and may take some time and practice to become habitual.

Good habits when out in the community

- Increase your awareness of what is considered normal, particularly close to home.
- Learn to recognise usual cars and people in your neighbourhood. Notice when things seem out of place (such as a vehicle sitting in the street with people inside it, doing nothing).
- When out walking, remain aware of what's going on around you. Limit the use of headphones for taking calls, listening to music or otherwise focusing on your device. Extra precautions may sometimes be needed
- Look and listen for unusual activities going on around you, such as people staring at you, following you and, obviously, verbally engaging with you, particularly if it's aggressive in nature.
- Understand your comfort level for maintaining awareness of personal protection when out in the community, whether it be on official business or for personal reasons.
- Consider taking photos of unusual activity if safe to do so.
- When in unfamiliar locations, quickly scan the environment to see if there would be an escape route.
- Be conscious of your daily habits – how often do you leave home at the same time, travel the same route for work and personal business or stop at the same stores? Consider varying your mode of transport, routes and times. Also consider varying the movement habits of others living with you.

If you identify concerning behaviour, alert police. Consider also letting someone know you are feeling worried or anxious, such as a family member or friend.

Considerations when attending official events

- Consider security as a normal part of the planning process. Plan for a range of scenarios that could affect your safety, ranging from very minor to a life-threatening event.
- Plan escape routes and evacuation gathering points before the event.
- Freedom of speech is a fundamental right in Australia, and a hallmark of a robust democracy like ours. However, political figures remain attractive targets by disgruntled constituents, terrorists, and extremists around the world. Always be conscious of this when expressing your right to freedom of speech that others may rightly or wrongly consider controversial or provocative.

Summary of common concerns

The following list of concerns has consistently been recorded when conducting residential vulnerability assessments. Some of these may be relevant to your personal security or your residence, and can easily be addressed by following the guidance in this document.

Common open-source search concerns

- Large amounts of personal information (open source) available on the internet, predominantly from certified social media pages on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Personal social media accounts (such as Facebook and Instagram) that are largely viewable (poor privacy settings).
- Internet searches that quite often reveal the details of family members (including parents, grandchildren and children's partners).
- Availability of significant details of where you grew up, and details of suburbs where your family live or have lived in the past.
- Availability of education details and affiliations to associations.
- Home address and phone number able to be located through electronic White Pages check (open to anyone to search).

Common personal security concerns

- Not shredding documents with sensitive personal details prior to disposal in bin or recycling.
- Not contacting police if a suspicious person is seen outside or hiding in the garden.
- Some MPs are silent electors (not on public facing electoral rolls). Most, if not all, did not have close family members listed as silent electors as well, despite their details being widely known.
- Most MPs have mail delivered to the home address to unsecured mailboxes (leading to an ability to confirm addresses through mail deliveries).

Common security concerns in and around the home

Doors/windows

- Glass on doors or adjacent to front doors not able to prevent silhouetting at night or viewing of occupants during day or night.
- Security screen doors, if installed, not kept locked.
- Windows not fitted with deadlocks or keys left in window locks.
- No security door fitted or, if fitted, not suitable.

CCTV and alarms

- CCTV, if present, not able to be easily operated or not working at all.
- No alarm system.
- Existing alarm system unable to be operated due to unfamiliarity with system, not being suitable or not working.
- Alarm system not activated, and/or codes forgotten.
- If alarm fitted, no panic/duress button or pendant.
- Panic/duress buttons not readily accessible/location forgotten.

Outside the home

- No sensor lighting or, if fitted, not working.
- Poor perimeter fencing.
- Gardening tools, knives, jemmy bars and hammers etc. left unsecured in the garden/yard.
- Garden sheds not locked.
- Side gates not locked or able to be locked.

Inside the home

- No emergency or evacuation plans.
- No or non-functioning smoke alarms.
- No fire extinguishers or fire blankets (or they are unusable or need re-gassing).

