Police Response

There are 2 levels of Police response:
- Immediate/Urgent
- Withdrawn: No police attendance, keyholder response only.

Response is withdrawn following three false calls in a 12-month period. Restoration of response will only be considered once the system complies with the police policy on re-instatement. Your alarm maintenance company will be able to advise you accordingly.

What happens if Police remove response?

The system will be key holder response only. Losing response may necessitate the customer:
- notifying their insurance company
- employing a private security company to respond
- increasing the security of their premises

Noise Nuisance

Your attention is drawn to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environments Act 2005 (Copies from HMSO and www.opsi.gov.uk)

To avoid noise nuisance the alarm should be fitted with an automatic cut out to stop the alarm ringing after 20 minutes. Failure to do so may result in prosecution.

Alarm systems must have two key holders, trained to operate the alarm, able to attend within 20 minutes, contactable by telephone and with their own transport.

Useful Contacts

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www.police.uk gives access to a Police Force map and contacts:
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Choosing the supplier

Before choosing an alarm system, check that the physical security of your premises is up to scratch. Take all the usual security precautions like fitting BS 3621 5-lever mortise locks, or replacing doors with BS PAS 24 or IP5 1175 tested doorsets, and fit security lighting and window locks.

Remote signalling alarms send a signal to a commercial Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) who will alert the police that a response is required. Whilst commonly used for commercial premises there is nothing to stop them being installed in homes, particularly in remote locations or for valuable possessions. Both the alarm installer and the ARC will have to be qualified to install this type of alarm and also be recognised by the police.

NSI and SSAIB will give you details of their member companies who operate in your locality.

Before deciding on a particular company it is suggested that you ask the following questions:

- Have I checked the address and credentials of the company and seen proof of identity from the representative before disclosing personal and security information?
- Is the company subject to independent inspection and if so which organisation?
- Is the installation of an alarm a requirement of my insurance company and if so, is the company acceptable to my insurer?
- Can the company representative provide me with a list of police rules for occupiers of premises with electronic security systems and written confirmation that the system and the company are currently acceptable to the local police for response to alarms?
- Have I sought written quotations from at least two alarm installers?
- Does the company operate a 24-hour callout service and emergency attendance within 4 hours?

Does the quotation:

- Specify that the installation will be to EN 50131-1, (PD6662 Scheme for the implementation of European Standards), or BS 8418 for a detector activated CCTV system.
- Include the terms of maintenance and monitoring contracts?
- When investing in security it is advisable not to deal with cold-callers or “doorstep” sellers. If you have doubts about the legality or sales techniques being employed by salespeople you should contact the Police or Trading Standards for advice.
- Police recognised installers are able to obtain a Unique Reference Number (URN) for each installation. When the alarm activates, the Alarm Receiving Centre will quote this URN to the police on a dedicated telephone number. The URN will allow the police to locate the correct record for the premises and respond. This response is dependent upon compliance with the ACPO Security Systems Policy and the nature of demand, priorities and resources which exist at the time a request for police response is received.

Police Policy on Alarms

The police waste valuable resources attending false calls. As a result of this the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), have a policy aimed at reducing false calls. It identifies the standards of installation and the sanctions that will apply for systems that fail to comply.

Installations

The police policy requires all new installations to be fitted with the means to pass confirmed messages i.e. confirmed technology. There are currently 3 acceptable types:

- Sequential: Means that the first alarm activation will be keyholder response only. If the alarm activates a second time in a different area and within a designated time period this would be identified as confirmed and the police would be called.
- Audio: The alarm opens up microphones allowing the alarm receiving centre to listen for criminal activity.
- Visual: The alarm activates cameras allowing the alarm receiving centre to look for any criminal activity.

It is important, therefore, that you choose a recognised installer who can offer you quality equipment, which does not have to be expensive or complex and that you, your family or work colleagues feel confident in operating. If your alarm malfunctions, ask the installer to visit straight away to identify and repair any faults. Failure to do this could result in the reduction or the loss of police response.
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Recognised Companies

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