



## ELECTION PROTECTIVE SECURITY GUIDANCE

# Protecting Pedestrian Queues

## Who is this Guidance for?

This series is for anyone working in the election space, but this guidance is designed with polling station staff in mind, however it may be applied to any situation where groups of individuals may gather.

## Overview

The risk to pedestrians from Vehicle As a Weapon (VAW) attack is a realistic possibility in the United Kingdom. VAW attacks are most successful when carried out against an area with a high density of people (e.g. a crowd) and/or where people are arranged in an easy to target line (e.g. a queue). The processing of voters at an election could lead to queuing outside the polling station, which could become a target for a VAW attack. To minimise the risk to queues of people, organisations can take practical and achievable measures to either deter or disrupt a VAW attack.

Vehicles (such as cars, vans and lorries) are widely available, easy to acquire and use. Vehicles may be purchased, rented, stolen or hijacked by terrorists. Consequently, driving a vehicle into crowds of people is a common attack method compared to more complex alternatives. In general, VAW attacks have been the first part of a layered attack. The attacks frequently begin on public roads with little or no warning and are often followed by a wider firearms or bladed weapon attack. During a VAW attack, the terrorist is unlikely to comply with the rules of the road. Terrorists may park illegally just before the attack, then speed, ignore traffic signals, drive on the wrong side of the road, mount footways and enter pedestrianised zones.



However, as attackers intend to harm as many people as possible during a VAW attack, they are less likely to drive in a manner that risks ending the attack prematurely, rendering the vehicle unusable or seriously injuring themselves. Consequently, the terrorist may tend to avoid obstacles, including relatively insubstantial ones.

The end of a VAW attack may look similar to a road traffic incident, with the vehicle losing control and crashing into barriers, buildings, street furniture or other vehicles. Individuals may approach the vehicle to help the occupants, inadvertently becoming targets for a follow-on bladed weapon or firearms attack.

## Considerations

- When producing online and local messaging, including signage, be mindful that detailed information can be useful to those with hostile intent. Credible, detailed information identifying an attractive target, potentially including times and number of people or even security arrangements, will be invaluable to a terrorist. Our [Security on Your Side](#) campaign material may be of value to you.
- In the first instance and where already present, queues should be positioned behind existing rated vehicle security barriers (ISO22343-1, IWA-14, PAS68 and NPSA VADS Standard).
- Further consideration should be given to the mitigation of the risks created when queues develop outside normally protected areas.

## Queues

- Work with near neighbouring premises to develop a plan for queues.
- Move queues to areas where there are usually no vehicles.
- Avoid creating long straight queues and, if possible, keep them short.



- Place “Do not join the queue” signs when its length or position increases the risk to people.
- Queues should be oriented so that they are perpendicular to potential vehicle attack routes; avoid positioning queues parallel to potential vehicle attack routes. If this is not possible, street furniture should be placed between the queue and traffic wherever possible.
- Queues should not be positioned near live traffic i.e. roads. If this cannot be avoided, they should be moved away from the kerb edge, towards the far side of the pavement.
- Where possible, orientate queues so that people within them are facing oncoming traffic and can see hazards/danger approaching.
- Consider fast dispersal/escape routes for pedestrians.

## Vehicle Management

- Reducing vehicles in the areas of queues will make it safer for pedestrians.
- Where possible, prevent vehicular access to shared areas when queues are present.
- In car parks, create a vehicle safety zone by preventing or limiting parking next to queues of people. Consider enforcing ‘no parking’ near to the queues with cones or, ideally, a more robust barrier.

- Where vehicle/queue segregation in a car park is not possible, traffic calming measures, including reduced speed limits, should be introduced.

## Barriers

- Wherever possible, queues should be positioned behind existing rated vehicle security barriers (ISO22343-1, IWA-14, PAS68 and NPSA VADS Standard).
- Street furniture should be utilised, where possible, to provide a degree of protection. Do NOT remove any security features / useful street furniture items without considering their potential protective security benefit.
- If footway widening is implemented to allow additional queuing capacity, the inclusion of temporary rated vehicle security barriers should be considered.
- Where long or multiple queues form, consideration should be given to deploying vehicle barriers along the footway to prevent a vehicle from being driven down the queue's length.
- Raise awareness of the full range of safety risks to the public through staff briefings.

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*Related guidance: [Vehicle As A Weapon : Hostile Vehicle Mitigation](#) : [Public Realm Design Guide](#) : [Hostile Reconnaissance](#) : [Recognising Terrorist Threats](#)*

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