

Neighbourhood Watch CPTED Audit Guidelines

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Foreword

This short guide was written for Neighbourhood Watch members wishing to reduce crime using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

It answers questions such as:

- Why is CPTED important for Neighbourhood Watch?
- Why is it important to use **effective** CPTED?
- How has crime prevention thinking recently changed?
- What are the main elements of CPTED for reducing crime risks
- How do you reduce Fear of Crime?
- How to do a CPTED Audit on a property?
- How to design **effective** CPTED interventions?

Regards,

Terence

“Reducing crime risks to improve quality of life for all”

For more information, please also refer to ‘Guidelines for Effective CPTED’ available from the Design Out Crime and CPTED Centre and Praxis Education.

What is CPTED?



CPTED is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

It is pronounced 'Sep-TED' (as in 'Big Ted', 'Little Ted' and 'CPTED')

It is how to design the physical environment to reduce crime.

Why use CPTED?

CPTED is effective at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour

CPTED can be THE most cost-effective way to reduce crime

CPTED supports the work of Community Safety Officers, Rangers, Police and others 24/7 when they are not on location

CPTED benefits increase over time

CPTED helps resolve 'difficult' or intractable community safety problems.

What is Crime?

A crime is a behaviour or activity in violation of criminal law enacted by Parliament.

Most laws in Australia are created by State governments under delegation from the Commonwealth.

Federal and State governments delegate Local Governments the authority to make By-Laws

Some organisations (e.g. Strata companies) can make By-Laws for their members.

Property owners can restrict access and behaviour on their property supported by law of trespass.



What is Anti-social behavior?

There are 5 kinds of behaviour typically referred to as **anti-social**:

- Socially unacceptable behaviours that infringe Federal or State Laws (crimes).
- Behaviours that infringe City/Shire By-Laws (infringements).
- Behaviours of one group that are objected to by another group.
- Behaviours on private properties or pseudo-public space that infringe owner restrictions (trespass).
- Behaviours that indicate failure of social support system. (e.g. living on the streets).



Crime and the Design of the Environment

Question: Does the design of properties cause crime?

Answer: No.

Question: Can design of the environment reduce crime risks?

Answer: Yes. Very effectively using CPTED.

Question: Is it intuitively obvious what are the best CPTED methods to use?

Answer: No.

Question: Can CPTED have adverse effects?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What is the best way to design to reduce crime using CPTED?

Answer: Examine and use crime evidence of what works and why. Consider the crime history and crime factors at a location and target a CPTED intervention to suit.

Differences between CPTED, Security and Policing

Late at night, a young person hops over a garden fence and sprays graffiti on the house.

Fortunately, the owners had a security firm install top quality CCTV surveillance with face recognition linked to the city's Police CCTV monitoring centre.

As a result, Police using state of art predictive policing were waiting at the end of the street.

They arrest the offender confident in his prosecution due to the face recognition evidence.

Question: How good is the crime prevention?

Answer: Total failure. The crime was committed.

CPTED focuses on designing the environment to discourage offenders from committing crimes.

A **Security** focus would be to install CCTV and alarms and locks.

A **Police** focus is to ensure the offender is identified and prosecuted.

Effective CPTED & Neighbourhood Watch

The primary role of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is to provide effective ways to help people change their environment to reduce crime and improve their quality of life.

A key aspect of Neighbourhood Watch is improving **quality of life** by reducing crime.

Why is **effective** CPTED so important for Neighbourhood Watch?

Some CPTED interventions efficiently and effectively reduce crime and improve quality of life.

Other CPTED interventions reduce crime but at the expense of quality of life.

Some CPTED interventions can even increase crime.

Effectiveness is key to successful CPTED for Neighbourhood Watch.

Repeat Victimization and Crime Risks

Crime risk is dominated by repeat victimisation:

- After a burglary, the risk of repeat burglary in the next month is 40 times the crime statistics. Over the year it is 5 times the crime statistics.
- 80% of crimes happen to only 20% of victims.
- The statistics for violent crimes are similar to burglary.

A small number of properties and victims bear the brunt of crime.

For any property this implies it is important to focus on recent crime and repeat victimisation as a priority for CPTED.

A good side of the above is that repeat victimisation means most people and most properties have a much lower crime risk than the Police statistics.

Targeted CPTED

CPTED becomes more effective when it is used to **target** a limited range of crime types in a location or property.

CPTED is even more effective when it is TARGETED and focused on recent crime and repeat victimisation at a property.

Targeting CPTED on specific crime types means resources are better used.

Effective targeted CPTED can be different at different locations, even for similar sites and land uses.

In other words, the most effective CPTED interventions may be very different on two identical houses on the same street.



dreamstime.com

12 CPTED methods

Observation indicates 12 CPTED approaches contribute to better CPTED outcomes:

- Threat Assessment
- Crime Risk Assessment
- Routine Activity and Opportunity Analyses
- Land Use and Geographic Juxtaposition Analysis
- Demographic analysis
- Natural Surveillance
- Natural Access Control
- Target Hardening
- Territorial Reinforcement
- Activity Support
- Image Management and Maintenance
- 3-Ds (Designate, Define, Design)
- CPTED process, reports and evaluation

8 Surprising Crime Prevention Insights

Crime research evidence offers some recent surprising insights of use to anyone interested in reducing crime by changing the environment:

- Crime is low and continues falling.
- Personal feelings of fear and judgments about crime risk at a specific location are NOT an accurate indicator of crime risk at that location.
- What crime prevention professionals see at their work is not an accurate indication of crime risks in the world.
- Crime risk is unevenly distributed even in small areas and among small groups. Repeat victimisation makes this more so.
- Lighting does not directly reduce crime or crime risks.
- CCTV does not directly reduce crime or crime risks.
- Applying CPTED cookie-cutter fashion typically causes problems. It can increase crime.
- New Urbanism (walkable cities, mixed-use planning etc.) increases crime and crime risks.

Neighbourhood Watch CPTED Site Audit



CPTED has changed as a result of evidence of what works and what doesn't. Effective CPTED targets actual crime risks.

A good example of this approach is the use of CPTED to tackle opportunistic burglary where access is without force. This accounts for almost 1/3 of burglaries.

Evidence indicates CPTED best practice to address this crime is to audit properties and increase target hardening; supported by natural surveillance and natural access control.

Neighbourhood Watch in Victoria has an excellent CPTED audit for reducing the risks of opportunistic burglary where access is without force.

It is called 'How Safe is My Place' and is available at:

<https://howsafeismyplace.com.au/>

Using the 'How Safe is My Place?' Audit

'How Safe is My Place?' focuses on identifying changes to reduce opportunistic burglary that occurs when burglars and thieves can simply access the premises through unlocked doors and windows or by gaining access to keys.

The 'How Safe is My Place?' audit follows a combination of CPTED and security guidance. The success of this kind of CPTED audit is evidenced by the UK Police 'Secured By Design' initiative which has successfully reduced burglary for 30 years.

To undertake the 'How Safe is My Place?' audit go to

<https://howsafeismyplace.com.au> and complete the questionnaire.

The results of the 'How Safe is My Place?' questionnaire are emailed as a report to provide guidance on improving security for the premises to reduce crime risk from that form of burglary.

NOTE: It is important the contents of completed CPTED audit reports are kept confidential.

(The reports contain valuable information for any potential burglar).

DOCCC

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Use your phone or computer to undertake these free CPTED audits/surveys. Once completed they can be printed and downloaded as a pdf or as a file.

CPTED Audit Checklist 1 is for an overall picture of a site
CPTED Audit Checklist 2 records whether particular site features are satisfactory or not.

Select the survey, register and click the confirmation email.
After registering, you can undertake as many CPTED surveys as you wish.

Design Out Crime and CPTED Surveys and Audits

Full CPTED Audits

“How Safe is My Place” targets one crime sub-type (burglary access without force)

Full CPTED audits address all crime types for a property or site.

They provide a way of identifying the **primary crime type(s)** that cause the crime risk at a location.

Full CPTED audits gather all the background information to identify the detail of a targeted CPTED intervention that will reduce primary crime risks at a specific premises.

Full CPTED audits involve collecting information about crime factors and crime risks using all the 12 CPTED methods. Detailed Police incident statistics are especially useful.

The more complete picture of crime data and crime factors from full CPTED audits enables the design of **effective targeted CPTED solutions** for *all* crime types.

Sample **full CPTED online audits** are available to use for free at:

<https://designoutcrime.org/ls/index.php>

Police Crime Statistics in CPTED Audits

Offence Division	Offence Subdivision	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A Crimes against the person	A10 Homicide and related ..	174	128	151	157	144	139	195	169	183	172
	A20 Assault and related o..	25,061	26,418	29,597	33,007	33,239	33,434	36,579	39,062	39,266	40,646
	A30 Sexual offences	4,048	4,159	4,822	5,212	5,548	5,845	6,646	7,622	8,559	8,367
	A40 Abduction and relate..	221	263	298	365	330	363	448	437	400	459
	A50 Robbery	2,265	2,468	2,421	2,045	1,934	1,847	2,142	2,469	2,493	2,781
	A60 Blackmail and extorti..	113	84	108	118	139	129	127	139	133	176
	A70 Stalking, harassment..	3,441	3,468	4,273	5,339	5,531	5,922	6,520	6,784	6,863	7,530
	A80 Dangerous and neglig..	2,024	2,039	2,301	2,340	2,781	3,061	3,625	4,407	4,209	4,053
	Total	37,347	39,027	43,971	48,583	49,646	50,740	56,282	61,089	62,106	64,184
B Property and deception offences	B10 Arson	3,115	2,838	3,206	3,674	3,171	3,150	3,932	3,093	3,143	2,905
	B20 Property damage	48,655	44,244	44,144	40,294	38,245	35,747	36,861	36,917	35,506	33,431
	B30 Burglary/Break and e..	43,966	42,735	44,776	44,670	44,340	44,247	49,764	49,317	41,158	36,617
	B40 Theft	125,958	122,342	127,052	122,330	127,730	127,095	148,447	146,160	133,019	138,194
	B50 Deception	9,761	9,789	10,841	13,507	17,908	15,912	19,164	21,449	20,773	22,494
	B60 Bribery	14	11	21	6	5	16	8	6	3	6
		Total	231,469	221,959	230,040	224,481	231,399	226,167	258,176	256,942	233,602
C Drug offences	C10 Drug dealing and traf..	2,104	1,965	2,140	2,507	2,694	3,118	3,121	2,960	2,857	2,978
	C20 Cultivate or manufact..	857	847	872	1,047	1,097	1,185	1,165	1,045	958	1,117
	C30 Drug use and possess..	6,848	7,086	8,435	9,664	9,694	11,121	10,706	11,517	11,150	12,175
	C90 Other drug offences	17	16	23	22	29	17	22	27	41	37
	Total	9,826	9,914	11,470	13,240	13,514	15,441	15,014	15,549	15,006	16,307
D Public order and security offences	D10 Weapons and explosi..	4,169	4,204	5,182	6,587	7,058	8,152	8,823	9,434	8,960	9,670
	D20 Disorderly and offens..	17,486	21,301	19,239	20,031	17,805	16,101	13,584	13,325	12,866	11,738
	D30 Public nuisance offen..	1,286	1,249	1,268	1,453	1,354	1,348	1,819	1,889	2,025	2,094
	D40 Public security offenc..	45	48	40	32	33	29	31	29	45	35
	Total	22,986	26,802	25,729	28,103	26,250	25,630	24,257	24,677	23,896	23,537
E Justice procedures offences	E10 Justice procedures	2,097	2,213	2,816	3,136	3,035	3,041	7,927	8,003	7,390	7,869
	E20 Breaches of orders	9,897	9,770	12,596	14,828	19,827	30,270	34,923	38,829	39,734	41,034
		Total	11,994	11,983	15,412	17,964	22,862	33,311	42,850	46,832	47,124
F Other offences	F10 Regulatory driving of..	27	19	20	18	22	23	9	8	3	9
	F20 Transport regulation ..	375	338	302	221	230	240	306	393	239	275
	F30 Other government re..	1,160	792	529	476	345	315	284	221	227	214
	F90 Miscellaneous offenc..	232	175	244	255	236	281	225	208	242	313
		Total	1,794	1,324	1,095	970	833	859	824	830	711
Grand Total		315,416	311,009	327,717	333,341	344,504	352,148	397,403	405,919	382,445	387,389



Fear of Crime

Fear of Crime is:

- Mostly **unconnected to actual crime risks**
- Typically higher than expected from crime risks.
- Primarily driven by media, fake news and sharing of false information

Unusual aspects of public perceptions of fear of crime:

- Individuals and groups typically believe crime rates are much higher elsewhere than where they live.
- Individuals commonly report crime rates are low where they live and there is little need to fear crime there (regardless of the actual crime rates).
- Reducing crime rates (including by CPTED, security or fortification) typically does not significantly reduce levels of fear of crime.
- Visual evidence of crime prevention methods can **INCREASE** fear of crime

Reducing Fear of Crime

CPTED factors that Reduce Fear of Crime include:

- Nearby physical presence of a person who is a figure of authority (typically in a uniform – any uniform not necessarily police, security or military)
- Reduced access to media reports of crime
- Adequate and visually obvious escape routes
- Absence of lurk-lines and entrapment locations
- Distance that a person can see to be safe is greater than the distance to safety
- Reliable, safe, local community support
- Removal or control of an individual(s) obviously responsible for crimes
- Avoid technologies that raise fear of crime for commercial reasons, e.g. the Amazon Ring video doorbell camera.



CPTED Evaluations

Professional CPTED involves continuous learning because best practices in CPTED change as a result of new evidence.

At the neighbourhood level, new knowledge from 'lessons learned' are gained from evaluating locally what worked and what didn't.

Evaluating CPTED can be done by comparing specific crime incident rates before and after a CPTED intervention for the crime types targeted by that intervention.

In a more general way, CPTED interventions can be evaluated by comparing crime incident rates before and after a CPTED intervention.

A more accurate evaluation can be achieved by first deciding on the level of reduction in crime rates for particular crime types that a CPTED intervention is intended to achieve and then designing the intervention. The evaluation tests whether the intended reductions in crime rates were achieved.

Providing CPTED Advice

It is important to be aware CPTED information gathered about a property or individuals is confidential. It could be used for criminal purposes and has liability attached.

From experience important aspects of CPTED advice include:

- A written disclaimer limiting liability for the advice
- Notification that information about the property and residents will be collected, stored and shared in a confidential manner.
- Use of a formal CPTED process
- Use of a formal CPTED Audit
- A means of securing data as CONFIDENTIAL and preferably anonymous and kept separate from client data.
- Ensuring confidential CPTED data is not emailed or shared by insecure channels.
- Provide a written report that is stored for a given time.

Resources

How Safe is My Place CPTED Audit -
<https://howsafeismyplace.com.au/>

Design Out Crime and CPTED Centre Free CPTED Resources
<https://designoutcrime.org>

Design Out Crime and CPTED Centre free CPTED Full Audits
<https://designoutcrime.org/ls/index.php>

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