



PROTECTING PATRONS AT OUTDOOR EATING VENUES



OVERVIEW

Many restaurants and eateries use sidewalks, parking lots, and streets to expand outdoor seating and provide a welcoming patron experience. Terrorists and other violent offenders may target these venues with hostile vehicle attacks. Additionally, negligent drivers could impact an outdoor venue, causing unintended harm. For example, in July 2022, a criminal fleeing police in a stolen vehicle plowed into a table outside a restaurant in Chicago, Illinois.¹ Both customers and staff were injured, with five requiring hospital transport.

Because there is often little to no warning prior to a vehicle ramming incident, city officials, law enforcement, and managers of outdoor eating venues should consider implementing protective measures to reduce the risk of a hostile or errant vehicle incident.

A hostile vehicle attack occurs when a perpetrator deliberately rams a motor vehicle into a building, crowd of people, or another vehicle with the intent to cause harm or damage.

CONDUCT A VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT



To reduce the risk of a potential incident, consider conducting a vulnerability assessment. This serves as an important first step

in understanding the threat environment, identifying vulnerabilities, and assessing consequences to enable informed decisions on security improvements. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) maintains the Protective Security Advisor (PSA) program, which can provide access to resources in support of an assessment. These protection and vulnerability mitigation experts who facilitate local awareness and public gathering protection can also provide access to other risk mitigation tools, products, and services.

COST-EFFECTIVE PROTECTIVE MEASURES



Owners and operators of outdoor eating venues are encouraged to coordinate with local law enforcement to inspect venues for security gaps, to seek advice on obtaining and placing barriers, and help develop an effective Emergency Action Plan. Maintaining two-way

communication between law enforcement and facilities is also critical. If restaurants use streets to expand outdoor seating, local law enforcement may ensure local traffic vehicles cannot approach seated patrons. Restaurant managers are encouraged to train staff to recognize and report suspicious behavior to their managers and to local law enforcement. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) "If You See Something, Say Something®" national campaign provides additional information on how to recognize and report the indicators of terrorism-related suspicious activity.²

Public safety requires that pedestrian and vehicle traffic be physically separated. Using barriers along footpaths or integrating walkways into new developments that limit vehicle access can help reduce collisions between vehicles and pedestrians, as well as discourage potential hostile actors.

1 Minyvonne Burke, "6 people injured when car jumps curb and hits diners, staff outside Chicago restaurant." NBC News, July 9, 2022. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/6-people-injured-car-jumps-curb-hits-diners-staff-chicago-restaurant-rcna37465>.

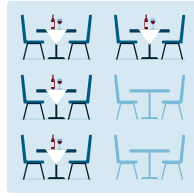
2 Department of Homeland Security, "If You See Something, Say Something®." dhs.gov/SeeSay.

COST-EFFECTIVE PROTECTIVE MEASURES

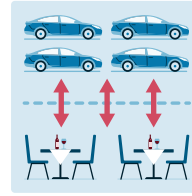
Cost-effective measures to help protect outdoor venues could include:



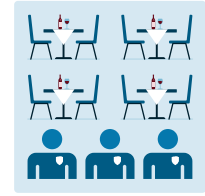
Remaining in contact with law enforcement and/or your local fusion center for access to relevant information.



Reducing outdoor seating capacity to limit crowd size.



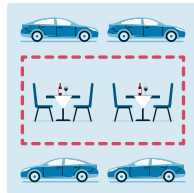
Sitting outdoor dining areas as far as possible from parking lots and vehicle traffic.



Increasing visible security staff presence during peak dining hours.



Clearly communicating through online reservation applications and on-site signage where traffic is permitted, as well as required ingress/egress points.



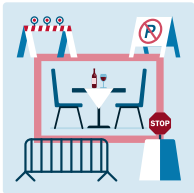
Requiring employees to park in locations that create a protective perimeter around outdoor dining areas.



Using landscaping and/or natural features, such as sturdy trees or reinforced planters, as barriers that could withstand a hard vehicle strike.



Providing STOP THE BLEED®, CPR, AED, and emergency first aid training to staff who might be positioned to respond after a vehicle incident, as well as pre-staging key medical supplies in accessible areas.



Using appropriately designed and installed commercial barriers to separate outdoor eating areas and create penetration standoff. Installing traffic-calming measures, such as speedbumps or other obstacles, in road lanes or parking areas around the dining area's perimeter.

SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR INDICATORS

Restaurant employees and management can reduce the chances of a successful hostile vehicle attack by remaining vigilant and reporting suspicious behavior that may include:



- Individuals loitering in an unauthorized area where vehicles are parked or serviced.
- Individuals loitering, parking, or standing in the same area over multiple days with no reasonable explanation.
- Individuals attempting to gain information about the operations and security of areas where large crowds gather.
- Vehicles with altered or fraudulent tags lingering near or among crowds.
- Nearby operators, especially those with larger vehicles such as heavy trucks, who appear unfamiliar with how to drive their vehicle (e.g., grinding gears, stalling out).
- Overt threats toward the restaurant, its staff, or the community communicated via means such as social media.

REVIEW AVAILABLE TRAINING RESOURCES



To support local law enforcement, restaurants, and outdoor eating venues with enhancing security against such threats, CISA provides access to a wide range of training, exercises, tools, and other resources to help prevent and protect against hostile vehicle incidents, including vehicle ramming and vehicle-borne improvised explosive device threats. Law enforcement, local government agencies, and restaurant owners and operators are encouraged to leverage these free resources to enhance security.

VEHICLE INCIDENT PREVENTION AND MITIGATION SECURITY GUIDE

cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/vehicle-incident-prevention-and-mitigation-security-guide

- Comprehensive resource offering a framework of Plan-Prevent-Protect to help those tasked with patron and staff safety to secure their premises against vehicle threats.

VEHICLE RAMMING SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

cisa.gov/vehicle-ramming-self-assessment-tool

- User-friendly tool to help owners and operators examine vulnerability to a vehicle attack and develop planning considerations to reduce risk.

PROTECTIVE SECURITY ADVISORS (PSA)

cisa.gov/about/regions/security-advisors or email central@mail.cisa.dhs.gov

- A cadre of subject matter experts located throughout the country who conduct infrastructure security and vulnerability mitigation activities at the local level.

TABLETOP EXERCISE PACKAGES

cisa.gov/resources-tools/services/cisa-tabletop-exercise-packages

- Discussion-based template resources to help owners and operators initiate conversation within their organizations about addressing threat scenarios, including those from vehicles.

SECURING PUBLIC GATHERINGS ONLINE RESOURCES

cisa.gov/securing-public-gatherings

- A compendium of resources for securing public gatherings.

ACTIVE SHOOTER PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

cisa.gov/active-shooter-preparedness

- Information regarding the types of threats posed to publicly accessible areas and resources with options for consideration to support risk mitigation activities against the active shooter threat.

DHS OFFICE FOR STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

dhs.gov/LEP-resources

- Resources that provide access to information regarding the types of threats posed to publicly accessible areas and resources with options for consideration to support risk mitigation activities.