



HOSTILE VEHICLE

MITIGATION CHALLENGES

Debbie Heald MBE reveals measures that can be taken to keep the public safe from hostile vehicle attacks and ram raids

Hostile vehicle attacks have become the weapon of choice over the past few years, and it is no surprise considering that it is such a swift and easy process for an individual to gain access to a vehicle, whether through legitimate means or otherwise. And while hostile vehicle attacks are typically associated with acts of terrorism, organised criminal activity such as ram raids are on the rise with the impact of both types of vehicle attacks having far-reaching consequences.

Mitigating the risk at the source is extremely difficult, which is why it is crucial to secure those areas most at risk from the potential of an attack. Over the years we have seen vehicle attacks increasingly take place in crowded places, particularly during celebratory events such as Christmas markets or high-profile crowded places such as London Bridge and Westminster. However, we are increasingly seeing vehicles used to undertake what is perceived to be victimless crimes such as ATM and retail ram raids, as evidenced with recent incidents at retail stores such as Louis Vuitton and Hugo Boss in Leeds.

With the option to install via surface mount, the Matador can remove the need for excavation

Terrorism-based attacks from those acting in a lone wolf capacity have been on the rise in recent years. The Barcelona attack in 2017 resulted in 13 deaths and 50 injuries, the Stockholm attack in 2017 saw five people killed and a further 14 wounded – an unexploded home-made device was found in the hijacked lorry, which could have resulted in further deaths if detonated – while the Bastille Day attack in Paris in 2016 saw 87 deaths and 458 injuries. The loss of life is the most significant price to pay from a hostile vehicle attack and those who are injured often require significant medical and mental health support, something which can last for many years after the incident has taken place.

Ram raids by organised crime gangs are also on the rise, and while these might be perceived as victimless crimes, there are often far-reaching consequences to individuals, businesses and communities as a result of these. ATM ram raids, which increased by 80 percent in 2018, are unique by way of the type of vehicles that are used to undertake such acts. Farming and plant machinery such as forklift trucks, tractors and diggers are primarily used during this type of crime, and there have been reports of rural communities left without access to cash for over four months. Whereas families who live above buildings housing ATMs being left, so far at the very worst, homeless.

While it is straightforward and relatively cheap to purchase or hire a vehicle, there is the potential for

this to result in red flags to authorities enabling potential attacks to be thwarted, in particular as hire companies seek to enhance security checks prior to hiring vehicles. In turn, this has the potential to result in a rise of vehicle thefts or hijackings to undertake such attacks – as evidenced with the Stockholm incident. Individual vehicle owners, therefore, need to consider more protective measures alongside factory-fitted alarms, such as CCTV and fold-down bollards to prevent the theft of their vehicles.

EXTRA MEASURES

Whereas vehicle hire companies should consider extra protective measures on their fleets, such as additional security measures on key storage, increased security checks prior to vehicle hire, through to enhanced perimeter protection. At Heald, we have seen an increase in fleet companies installing HVM bollards and road blockers not to protect their premises from attack, but to prevent vehicles being stolen from their premises to undertake HVM attacks.

While new-build environments often have flexibility on the mitigation measures they put in place, installs within legacy environments and typically within crowded, built environments can present multiple challenges. Often underground infrastructure results in a challenging environment to install hostile vehicle mitigation measures due to existing cabling, pipes and sewerage systems.

Such issues have resulted in manufacturers rising to the challenge and developing innovative ways

PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO FEEL AS THOUGH A RING OF STEEL OR CONCRETE IS SURROUNDING THEM

to combat such threats using shallow-mount and surface-mount products, which can offer the same if not better levels of protection as their legacy counterparts and meet relevant standards such as PAS68 and IWA14.

Heald has invested heavily in research and development over the past few years, which has led to us bringing many new products to market, including the world's first sliding bollard solution – known as the Matador. Having listened to the needs of the market and identified regular install issues, it has created a product which not only requires minimal, if any, excavation but still allows permitted vehicles to be granted access to the perimeter that they secure. Available as a surface-mount and shallow-mount install, Heald's award-winning Matador requires a maximum of 160mm excavation when opting for an electro-mechanical operation or has the potential to be surface mounted with the manual, electro-mechanical and hydraulic operation types, removing the need for excavation altogether.

As evidenced in recent years, celebratory and seasonal events have been a primary target for vehicle attacks. As such, hostile vehicle mitigation manufacturers have had the challenge of enhancing and developing product ranges to meet short-term needs through cost-effective solutions, which require

▶ minimal excavation – if any – along with rapid deployment of such products.

With heightened media reports of HVM attacks, it is imperative that local councils and event’s organisers consider the benefits of investing in such measures and the type of products they use. Individuals want themselves and their families to feel safe when attending large-scale events, while at the same time they don’t want to feel as though a ring of steel or concrete surrounds them. Ensuring visitors feel safe and secure while minimising anxieties will guarantee such events are successfully attended and they continue to be for years to come.

Typically, automated products – those that slide or retract – are powered hydraulically and require significant use of oil and energy to operate. With the use of greener energy increasing and the public’s

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appetite for a more sustainable way of living, it is imperative manufacturers embrace this challenge.

Again, Heald has focused on enhancing its tried and trusted product range with the Matador (and a variety of other products) now having the option to be operated both hydraulically and electro-mechanically. The latter of which results in 80 percent less power required to operate the product, making it ideal for a limited or temporary electrical supply or events where generators may be necessary.

Aesthetics of a product are also crucial to the surroundings in which they are installed. Depending on the location, security managers may want it to be evident that HVM measures are in place. However, in some instances, it might be that a security product needs to blend in with its surroundings to

be complimentary or sympathetic to the areas and buildings in which they protect. Similarly, products which blend in with their surroundings also reduce the potential for heightening anxieties of the public.

It’s crucial that public services such as police forces and councils along with architects and planners are able to work together with manufacturers to enable our towns, cities and communities to thrive through ensuring individuals and communities are protected, feel safe and continue to enjoy public spaces ●

ABOUT HEALD LTD
 Founded in 1986, Heald Ltd designs, manufactures and installs a range of innovative hostile vehicle mitigation systems. It is an international company, family business and world-class innovator in the field of perimeter security technology. As the largest manufacturer of quality security equipment in the UK, over 70 percent of its products and services are exported internationally.

Heald’s products have secured some of the world’s most high-profile events including the London Olympics and the World Snooker Championships. While permanent installations of the Matador can be found securing the historic French Quarter in New Orleans and the world’s first EM Matador installation is fitted in a high-profile pedestrian area in Stockton-on-Tees, it is also installed at hotels, airports, parliament buildings, power stations and other high-profile locations throughout the world.

Heald has been recognised by some of the industry’s leading professional bodies and has received accolades from IFSEC Security and Fire Excellence, HSBC Global Connections International Business Awards, Home Office ADS Security Innovation, Counter Terror Excellence in Innovation and the Security Excellence Awards.
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The Raptor combines the high security of a roadblocker with the flexibility of a shallow-mount bollard

