

201/04

SECURITY RISKS OF BLASÉ BRITISH BUSINESSES

UK's workers putting businesses at risk by failing to take basic security measures

Security may be a number one concern for British businesses, as highlighted in recent CBI research¹, and is constantly under the media spotlight. However, Britain's workers have a worryingly blasé attitude towards security in the workplace, according to a new report² from **Lloyds TSB Insurance**. A quarter of employees admit it would take a disaster such as a major terrorist attack to make them more security conscious.

Phil Loney, managing director, Lloyds TSB Insurance, said: "If there were any time you'd expect workers to be on their guard – it would be now, in the current climate. And yet a staggering number of employees admit they're literally waiting for a disaster to happen and are doing little to protect themselves or the companies they work for."

The study revealed a catalogue of security blunders, which pose a potential threat to business property, money and confidential information. One in twenty workers (5 per cent) even admitted they didn't have a clue about their company's security measures.

One in ten (8 per cent) said they would ignore strangers if they saw them wandering around the building. Almost half (46 per cent) admitted to putting confidential information at risk by leaving their office computer on over night, while a quarter (27 per cent) had left office windows unlocked or open and a similar number (24 per cent) had forgotten to shut doors behind them. Interestingly, on almost all counts, men were more likely to demonstrate a more lax approach to workplace security than female workers.

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SECURITY RISKS OF BLASÉ BRITISH BUSINESSES/...2

A staggering one in five (18 per cent) of Britain's employees had never thought about their workplace safety. One in ten workers (11 per cent) stressed they were concerned about the safety of their own property in the office, but admitted they did not do anything about it, with seventy per cent of those surveyed failing to lock away their belongings. Almost one in ten (seven per cent) said their office had been targeted by thieves in the past.

Employers themselves have a long way to go to improve security for staff, according to the research. One in five (22 per cent) respondents said they didn't think their company had a fire alarm or smoke detector, while four in ten (39 per cent) said their employer had neither a burglar alarm or lockable windows. More than forty per cent of employees said their companies had never made it clear that the company would not be insured, if they failed to adhere to basic security procedures.

A quarter (24 per cent) of employees said they would be more security conscious if they were better informed by managers, while one in five (19 per cent) specifically mentioned a need for a clearer understanding of what their business insurance covered. Fourteen per cent said they would be spurred to take a more cautious approach to security by the promise of higher wages.

Phil Loney continued: "Businesses have clearly taken the first steps on the road to better security, but they're far from the final straight. Most companies need to do more to drive home the message that if staff fail to put into practice the most basic security measures, they may not be covered for the consequences – and that would be a disaster."

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Notes to editors:

¹ CBI/QinetiQ Business Security report, November 2004

² Research carried out by Tickbox during October 2004

For more information:

Emile Abu-Shakra/Catherine Battershill

Lloyds TSB Press Office

Tel: 020 7356 1718/2495

E: emile.abu-shakra@lloydstsb.co.uk

www.mediacentre.lloydstsb.com