

The ICONWAY



From the MD's desk:

I trust that 2009 has started well for you and that you enjoyed a relaxing Easter break. It has certainly been an interesting and unpredictable start to the year for us with a record month in January and a number of new customers commencing services.

Our Noise Control staff have also been extra busy with a significant increase in the number of attendances over previous years. This may have been partly attributable to the decent weather but also probably reflects the current economic times and people choosing to party at home rather than going to hotels and other entertainment venues. The dedication of our staff also resulted in the busting of a significant crime ring - refer story over page.

We have also noticed a very significant increase in break-ins during the last two months, peaking over the recent Easter break. Whilst our average patrol response times are on a par with Ambulance and Police benchmarks, the reality is that professional thieves can clean out a business within minutes.

It is important that business owners take some accountability for their own security and ensure that their premise is as well protected as possible. ICON Group can certainly assist in this area with general security advice or by conducting a comprehensive security 'Warrant of Fitness' - refer story on this page.

Gary Morrison
Managing Director
ICON Group

ICON patrolman saves life



ICON Security patrolman Shaun Laifone is congratulated on his good work by Aaron Love, manager at Metlifecare Crestwood.

While on nightly patrol at Metlifecare Crestwood retirement village in New Lynn, Shaun Laifone, from ICON Security, smelled smoke coming out of one of the resident's units. On investigation he found the resident asleep inside, while her forgotten dinner smoldered on the stove, filling the unit with smoke and threatening to catch fire.

"Shaun's actions prevented a fire and almost certainly saved a life. I'd like to commend his diligence and quick response.

"Shaun's detailed incident report also helped us piece together what happened in the hope of preventing it happening again in the future," says Aaron Love, manager at Metlifecare Crestwood.

Shaun, who has worked at ICON for a year, modestly says any ICON security staff would do the same. He takes pride in his work and is dedicated to doing a good job - even more so where the buildings he patrols have vulnerable people inside.

Metlifecare Crestwood moved its security contract to ICON Security four years ago after being dissatisfied with a competitor's service. ICON do a comprehensive 'bed down' patrol each evening which involves a patrolman undertaking a complete sweep of the 13-acre property to ensure that all doors and windows are locked.

With 121 independent units and a resthome housing a total of 200 residents, this isn't as simple as it might sound. ICON staff have to be extremely conscientious, paying extra attention to detail to ensure residents are safe and secure.

ICON also complete four random patrols throughout the night to make sure that everything is as it should be.

"I'm really happy with the service ICON Security provides. As a company they are very proactive and always deal with any issues that arise promptly," says Aaron.

BEWARE - crime is on the rise

The current economic climate coupled with the upsurge in P usage are having a direct impact on increasing crime rates, say the experts from ICON Security.

"Reported break-ins are definitely on the increase," says ICON Managing Director Gary Morrison, who is urging business owners to take more responsibility for the security of their premises.

"Our patrols regularly find windows left open or doors left unlocked; laptops are often stored on desks in clear sight of

prowlers; and we've even had cases where product has even been left unsecured outside premises.

"Those sorts of incidents are just an open invitation to thieves - particularly in the current environment."

According to Gary, there are some basic security checks - for example, ensuring that all windows and doors are securely locked at the end of the day - that owners and managers should be implementing.

However, ICON's experts can help

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Check work history, police warn – NZ Herald April 11, 2009

WINZ forces out staffer over crimes committed 21 years ago – NZ Herald, March 6, 2009

Rise in staff fraud predicted – Stuff NZ, February 10, 2009

The examples above of recent headlines in New Zealand media highlight the importance in this current economic climate of having robust pre-employment screening procedures in place.

According to Debbie Schwarz, ICON Group's manager of Vetting Services, these procedures should include the three basic checks - reference, credit and criminal history.

"We also recommend that driver's license status and traffic offence history checks are mandatory if your applicant is going to be driving a company vehicle," says Debbie.

"You may also want to confirm any previous ACC history that your applicant has disclosed on the application form. This check will provide the previous four-year history of all claims resulting in more than seven days off work."

Other key points for employers to consider are:

• **Validating previous work history and checking qualifications:**

"You may rely to a certain extent on your 'gut feeling' during a face-to-face interview with your applicant, but it is amazing what we have uncovered after digging deeper," says Debbie.

• **The importance of timing when it**

comes to background screening.

It can take up to 20 working days for criminal history results to be processed, so this check must be initiated as soon as the decision has been made to employ.

"You must take all measures possible to complete this check within a reasonable time frame as you could find yourself in a very awkward position if adverse results come back and your employee has been on board for months."

• **Be aware of using generic application forms!**

"One size does not fit all. You should only be asking for information that is relevant to the applicant's suitability for the particular job they are applying for," advises Debbie. "Asking for irrelevant information is at best a waste of time, and at worst could be illegal."

"As part of our service we offer a complimentary review of your current application form to ensure compliance of the Privacy Act with regard to handling personal information."

For more information, contact Debbie Schwarz on 0800 4 VETTING (0800 483 884) or email vetting@icongroup.co.nz



BEWARE - crime is on the rise

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you ensure that your security precautions are up to the job of protecting your property.

The company is offering clients a Security Warrant of Fitness. This involves a full security audit, with a report identifying areas of weakness and recommendations of cost-effective solutions to improve security where required.

The Security WOF usually takes two to three hours on site, plus there's a return visit at night to assess lighting and other after hours security measures.

As a special offer to existing clients, the cost of the Security WOF is \$250, plus GST. For more details, contact Gary Morrison, DDI 4151854.

HARD LESSON FOR THIEVES

A West Auckland gang learnt some hard lessons recently when they took on ICON Group's team of security and noise control officers.

The gang broke into a neighbourhood liquor store and despite a speedy response from the ICON patrol, still managed to make off with a quantity of alcohol.

While the premises were secured, ICON's Night Supervisor and a Noise Control Officer called in to provide backup and were onsite when the shop owner downloaded CCTV coverage of the incident.

As the tape showed the thieves breaking into the store, ICON's Noise Control Officer was able to immediately identify the offenders from a noisy party he had attended earlier that evening.

ICON officers then quietly revisited the site of the earlier party and observed the offenders inside the garage drinking their ill-gotten gains. The police were contacted and arrived promptly to make a number of arrests.

Suffice to say, the police were considerably more grateful for ICON's assistance than the noisy party goers/thieves!

Schools say thanks

ICON Security's support of a new school has been recognised in the nicest possible way.

The company is one of several key service providers who are named on a plaque recently unveiled at Mission Heights Schools, in Manukau City.

ICON was initially involved last year, providing site security for the schools' builders, Hawkins Construction. The company's static guards got on top of nagging security issues and enabled the builders to complete the project on schedule.

ICON was then asked to continue their high level of security service on the handover of Mission

Heights Schools – which are a combination of a primary school and a junior college operating side by side - to the Ministry of Education early this year.

Along with other contractors who have contributed to the future of our youth, ICON Security and Hawkins Construction have been recognised by the schools in a plaque erected onsite.

Proud to be actively supporting young people in this way, ICON Security's standard operating procedures on the site have changed dramatically from strictly no access to open and friendly so families can inspect their brand new school.

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email, please contact us at info@icongroup.co.nz



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