

Robbery at gunpoint

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Working ashore or going ashore from vessels in various locations around the world has its own dangers.

What happened?

A member reports a recent event where an employee was robbed at gunpoint. The incident happened while the individual was at the roadside and in need of motoring assistance. He engaged an offer of support from strangers who subsequently produced a firearm and demanded his cash and wallet. At the time of the incident the employee did not possess a mobile telephone/cellphone and was only able to obtain assistance from a local service station.

The company concerned has issued the following advice to its employees:

- Never solicit help from strangers for roadside assistance.
- When travelling on company business, a company 'pool' mobile 'phone is required.
- Plan your travel in advance (routes, stopovers, etc.) in order that you are familiar with your surroundings should you be stopped unexpectedly (e.g. by mechanical breakdown). In addition, ensure you are familiar with the vehicle you are using, whether personal, company or third-party hire.
- Be extra careful when travelling in poor weather conditions.

The company has also repeated the following advice from the local police department on action to take during a robbery:

- Remain calm and do not resist – don't try to be a hero, take no action that could jeopardise your own safety.
- Follow the robber's directions, but do not volunteer more than asked for.
- Advise the robber of any unusual moves you must make in advance and assure them that you will co-operate.
- Make mental notes on:
 1. the robber and accomplices (including number) – approximate height, age, build, sex, race, clothing (colour, brand, material, etc.),

- complexion, hair (colour, length, style), eye colour, etc.
- 2. what they may have touched (for fingerprints).
- 3. how they left the scene (direction of travel, vehicle used, vehicle registration/license plate number, etc.)

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The effectiveness of the IMCA Safety Flash system depends on the industry sharing information and so avoiding repeat incidents. Incidents are classified according to IOGP's Life Saving Rules.

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