



Securing CRE Spaces

Staying Ahead of Threats

How to identify and mitigate the threats faced by retail and mixed-use commercial real estate.

www.mallcommapp.com



Why threats to your CRE assets are all too real

Any CRE asset that houses multiple tenants or where the public gathers in large volumes, brings the challenge of keeping people safe. Effective risk management is critical, but it demands a cohesive and holistic approach to identifying and managing security risks.

Such threats may be (somewhat) predictable such as extreme weather, or more unpredictable such as crime or terrorism. Whatever the cause, find out everything you need to know to secure your CRE space, including the hard stats, expert opinions and proven strategies to help you stay ahead.

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#1

Rising Retail Crime

Retail crime has escalated following the global cost of living crisis, with both petty and organized retail crime soaring. Globally, inflation may have fallen from its record peaks, but consumers are still under strain and retail is sadly still viewed as an easy target.



The UK Predicament

Shoplifting incidents doubled between 2023 and 2024 to 16.7 million, according to the British Retail Consortium's (BRC) Crime Survey 2024¹ at a cost that has also doubled to £1.8 billion. According to the Office of National Statistics², instances of shoplifting remain at their **highest level in 20 years, up 30%** for the year ended March 2024.

The figures also show an **increase in violence and abuse against shopworkers, up from 870 cases a day to 1,300** in 2024 or nearly half a billion incidents a year, according to the BRC. A rise in organized retail crime (ORC) is largely to blame.

£1.8B cost of shoplifting incidents between 2023 and 2024

Violence in the US

In the US, more than two-thirds (67%) of retailers surveyed for the National Retail Federation's Retail Security Survey 2023³ said they had seen increased in-store violence from ORC perpetrators. Repeat offenders are particularly aggressive, with **53% of retailers witnessing increased violence** from this group. The 2024 figures are likely to paint a similar picture.

67% of retailers surveyed said they had seen increased in-store violence

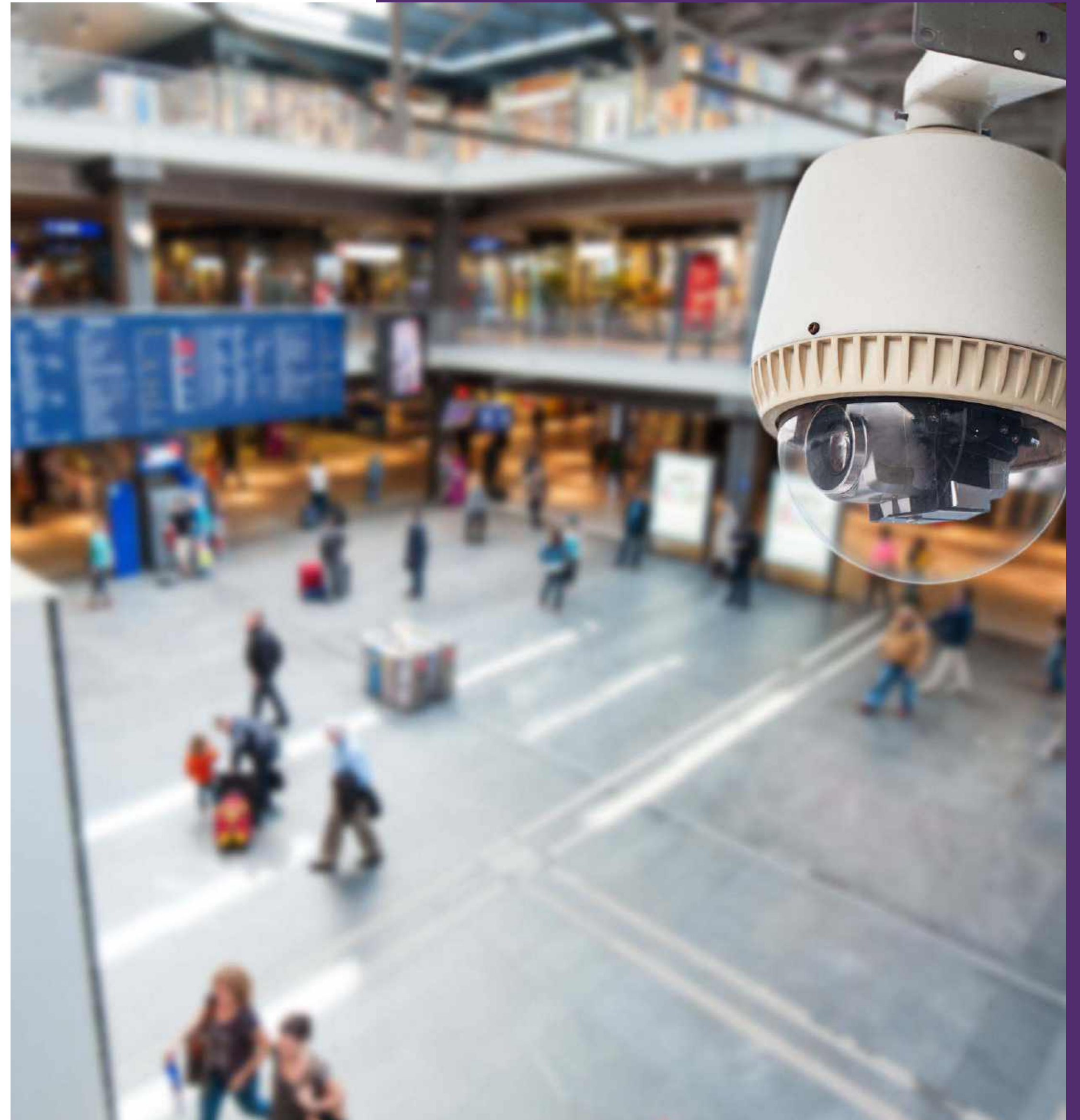
Reform in the UK

Retail Crime Action Plan

Launched in the UK in October 2023, the Retail Crime Action Plan⁴ sets out a five-step plan **introducing the new offence of assaulting a retail worker**. It included proposals to simplify the reporting of retail crime and information sharing between businesses and the police. It was confirmed in the King's Speech in July 2024, when the new Labour government outlined its Crime and Policing Bill⁵, **aiming to help halve serious violence over a decade**.

College of Policing's Guidance

The CoP⁶ outlined measures to **improve the investigation of retail and business crime** which gives retailers a crime reduction toolkit. This includes **guidance on shopworker safety, including training** videos you can incorporate into your strategy.



⁴ UK Gov <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fighting-retail-crime-more-action>

⁵ Gov.UK https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6697f5c10808eaf43b50d18e/The_King_s_Speech_2024_background_briefing_notes.pdf

⁶ College of Policing <https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/investigation-retail-crime>

The US' Lobbying Success

Combating Organized Retail Crime

In the US, retailers and the NRF have been lobbying for support⁷ for the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act⁸. The act, introduced into Congress in 2023, aims to **make it easier to prosecute theft as a federal felony** and to establish a system for governments to share resources on crime through the Organized Retail Crime Center. More than 34 states have passed ORC laws, according to the NRF. **California alone invested more than \$241.4 million**⁹ to tackle organized retail crime in 2023.

Being seen to take retail crime seriously in your CRE environment is essential to ward off ORC perpetrators with inaction only exacerbating the problem.



⁷ CNBC <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/10/26/retailers-lobby-congress-to-pass-combating-organized-retail-crime-act.html>

⁸ Congress <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/140>

⁹ Reuters <https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/organized-retail-crime-multi-billion-dollar-problem-2023-06-29/>



Retailer Action to Combat Crime

Retailers want to see that their crime prevention measures, which cost them more than £1.2 billion in the UK in 2024, are being supported by the centers where they have stores.

£1.2B

cost of UK crime prevention
measures in 2024



What you can do to help

01

Centralize guidelines

You can incorporate **shopworker safety guidelines** with any accompanying training videos into your Property Management Software or App, so everyone within your commercial space **knows where to view training** ahead of time. Any updates to training can be sent via push notification to your center, and you can track read receipts to gauge engagement.

02

Share with Security Teams

Sharing information such as **images of known offenders** with security teams can help them proactively spot high-risk situations ahead of time. Giving your Security personnel access to your center app can allow them to find these images and familiarize themselves with **faces to watch**.

03

Get close to the Police

Closer cooperation with the police and security personnel is key to preventing crime. You can get involved with initiatives such as the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) and the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA) in the US. The **2024 Store Walk Initiative**¹⁰ connects retailers and local prosecutors to better understand how to beat retail crime in specific areas. The two associations also partner for the **Vibrant Communities Initiative**¹¹, helping to increase information sharing between all stakeholders and test new technology solutions.



¹⁰ RILA <https://www.rila.org/focus-areas/asset-protection/retailers-prosecutors-collaborative-retail-crime>

¹¹ RILA <https://www.rila.org/rila-ndaa-vibrant-communities-initiative>



Asking the tough questions

Retailers can do their part, but are governments doing enough to combat retail crime?



Stephen Springham

Partner & Head of Retail Research
Knight Frank



“Right now, retail crime is a virus without a deterrent.”

“One retailer I spoke with cited a loss of £16 million per year across their London stores from theft alone. Management staff in shopping centers are limited to holding the criminals until the Police arrive, where offenders are sometimes even given a cup of tea and a lift home. Until the Law changes, retailers are also limited with what they can do. Industry bodies like The British Retail Consortium need to be a lot more vociferous about theft, because it’s a real problem.”

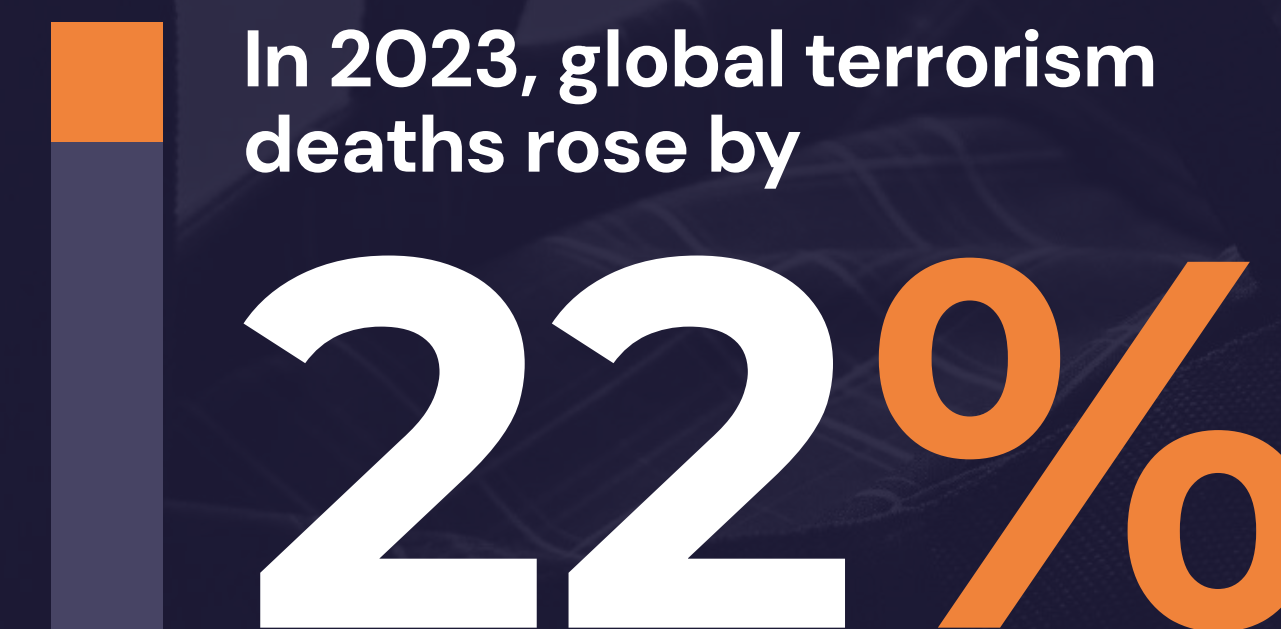
#2

The Spread of Terrorism

Terrorism may be less common, but it's a growing global issue that businesses now must be prepared for. Rising tensions, political aggression and international wars all fuel its threat.

In 2023, global terrorism deaths rose by 22% to 8,352 from 3,350 attacks, according to the Global Terrorism Index 2024¹². The death toll was the highest since 2017.

In the UK there have been 15 domestic terror attacks since 2017, according to UK government figures¹³, while 39 late-stage plots have been disrupted. The US was the victim of 16 attacks in 2023, according to the GTI. Meanwhile, the Middle East and North Africa, alongside sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, **accounted for 94% of all 2023 terrorism deaths.**



The Financial Impact

As well as the profound physical and emotional damage to victims and survivors, there's the economic cost. In 2023, the UK government estimated a total direct cost of £171.8 million¹⁴ for the five terror attacks that took place in the UK in 2017.

£171.8M estimated direct cost of
UK terror attacks in 2023



David Fuller-Watts
CEO at Mallcomm



“The immediate financial risks can be easy to calculate but it’s the follow-on costs that can be devastating. If your reputation is tainted with the view you have an unsafe environment, people won’t come and stores won’t open. We’ve heard of staff refusing to open stores due to feeling unsafe, and this issue needs to be tackled from the inside out.”





Asking the tough questions

How aware are you of the risk of terrorism within your commercial space, and what are the key questions asked on the ground in regard to prevention and management?



Lee Jackson

Senior Vice President, Digital Solutions at JLL



“Generally, owners are highly aware of the risks terrorism poses. One key question would be 'How can I (the property owner) better enable and engage with the community for both preventative measures and to improve reaction times in the event of an undesired occurrence?’

“By making it incredibly easy for the employees, office workers and residents of a project to apply an “if you see something say something” culture, reporting suspicious behavior and incidents promptly to the owners becomes easier.”

The Anti-Terror Legislation & Initiatives

While responsible CRE owners are well aware of the threat and unpredictability of terrorism, new anti-terror legislation will make it a legal responsibility for them to do more to reduce the risks.



The Campaign Effect

A UK PERSPECTIVE

Martyn's Law will be introduced as part of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill¹⁵ that will **enhance protection against terrorism** in public spaces. Named after Martyn Hett, a victim of the 2017 Manchester Arena attack, this law mandates that all public venues with a capacity of more than 100 people **must implement training and security measures to prevent terrorist attacks**. The legislation classifies venues into two tiers based on their capacity. Each tier will have specific duties to ensure safety, including risk assessments and practical security measures.

MEANWHILE IN THE US

In the US, the Department of Homeland Security launched its “If You See Something, Say Something” campaign in July 2010 in conjunction with the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative¹⁶, which produces various campaign materials specific to states or jurisdictions. 14 years on the campaign remains as strong as ever.

How to firm up Security

01

Incident Reporting

Ineffective reporting and communication can have a detrimental impact on security in shopping centers. **Too often, manual systems are in place** with multiple layers to alerting the right people when a serious incident occurs. It's crucial for information to be disseminated instantly to multiple stakeholders in times of crisis, and to achieve that centres must embrace a **digital-first approach**.

02

Sufficient Training

A lack of training in incident reporting can lead to confusion and delay during emergencies. Crucial reports may be completed incorrectly or there may be insufficient knowledge on recognizing **what suspicious behaviour is actually classified as**. Make sure everyone is kept in the loop with **clear and consistent protocols** that are easy to access.

03

Data Analysis

Without accurate data, shopping centers are unable to **analyze trends**, vulnerabilities or other patterns which could improve their security strategies. Information relating to an emergency such as **response times, engagement with critical messages, and how quickly situations were resolved** need to be analyzed, so future responses can be optimized.

04

Effective Communication

The need for a centralized system for communication is paramount in a crisis. Yet, many shopping centers have **ineffective channels in place that aren't utilized**. Manual methods, further hampered by **hard-to-find lists of key stakeholders block incident responses**.

Centralize your comms to save more than just time.

05

De-silo your Teams

The success of your security operations is directly impacted by the **coordination among security personnel, management, and retailers**. A lack of coordination risks known threats or suspicious activity not being shared properly, preventing a response to security problems.

Put everyone on the same platform to ensure information flows correctly.



David Fuller-Watts
CEO at Mallcomm

“Limiting the damage faced in high-risk situations comes from meticulously oiled processes, instant communication and a solid relationship with police and terror agencies. You can’t control what you can’t predict, but you can limit the damage. Following strict lockdowns, protocols and evacuation procedures can go a long way to preventing further harm, and ultimately saving lives.”





Mitigating Measures from the Landsec Portfolio



Marc Myers

Retail Director Central London and Outlets, Landsec

Security and Terrorism

“Landsec takes the threat of terrorism very seriously and have implemented a comprehensive risk management framework to address this threat.

Our Security and Resilience function for the Landsec portfolio is led by a Director of Security and Resilience. He provides the Landsec Board with the required assurance, audit and accountability of the ongoing security and resilience of the portfolio.

We are confident to say we are a business leader within the UK for Security and Resilience; we have developed close working relationship and influence with the UK Government, Security Services and UK policing. We continue to influence the shape of security related legislation and best practice. Indeed our Director chairs several Home Office and policing Boards looking at new legislation for example Martyn’s Law.

We are acutely aware of the potential risks of terrorism within our publicly accessible locations which include significant office buildings and a large portfolio of retail shopping centres. We recognize that owning and managing properties in high-profile locations necessitates a proactive and robust approach to security and safety.”

Approach to Safety

“With regularity we risk assess our properties addressing any areas we feel might have vulnerabilities. Together with our partners we have advanced security technology with clear protocols in place to detect and deter potential threats.

We invest in state-of-the-art security technologies and procedures, including surveillance systems, access control, and emergency response mechanisms, to ensure the safety of our properties, our customers, and guests and of course our teams.



Marc Myers

Retail Director Central London and Outlets,
Landsec

Our teams are well trained. We actively engage with our stakeholders, including customers, brands, employees, and local communities, to foster a culture of awareness and preparedness. Regular training sessions and exercises are conducted at site level to ensure our Brand Partners and customers know how to respond to an incident.

We continuously review and improve our strategies and processes to ensure they remain effective and relevant in the face of evolving threats.”



#3

Extreme Weather Events

Extreme weather and natural disasters can also threaten CRE. In the UK, Sheffield's Meadowhall Shopping Center saw heavy flooding wreak havoc in 2019 with customers taking refuge overnight¹⁷. Now, with their thorough flood defence programme, extreme storms are more manageable.



Costly impact of weather events in the US

Weather events can be more extreme in the US. It suffered 19 confirmed weather/climate disasters¹⁸ accounting for more than **\$1 billion in losses each in the first half of 2024** (to August 8), according to figures from the National Centers for Environmental Information. These included **tornados, hurricanes and wildfires** in addition to severe storms. In 2023, there were 28 events in total, **costing \$94.9 billion and accounting for nearly 500 deaths**.

\$94.9 BILLION
lost from extreme weather events in 2023

Unprecedented rainfall in the Middle East

Meanwhile in the Middle East, **intense flash floods occurred in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates and Oman** in April 2024 when a year and a half's worth of rain fell in one day. Flagship shopping centers Dubai Mall and the Mall of the Emirates were among the many CRE centers which experienced flooding.

Although there is often a reluctance to draw a direct link between climate change and extreme environmental events, it's known to increase their regularity and severity. In the case of the Dubai storms, scientists from the World Weather Attribution group cited climate change as the cause for the **record rainfall to be 10-40% heavier**¹⁹.

10-40% HEAVIER
climate change cited as cause for the record rainfall



Asking the tough questions

How prepared are commercial spaces for extreme weather events, and is there more prevention that can be done?



Lee Jackson

Senior Vice President, Digital Solutions at JLL



“Generally owners are underprepared for extreme weather. The unpredictability of extreme weather events makes it challenging for property managers to ever be fully prepared.”

“We are seeing an influx of risk zone assessment platforms enter the market, which enable owners to better understand high risk assets within their portfolios. This enables preventative measure planning to be prioritized to assets deemed higher risk for things like floods or wildfires.”

“Hurricanes and earthquakes are part of the disaster management process for buildings in high-risk areas. Having robust policies, staff training and communication for evacuation helps people escape serious harm. But these protocols shouldn’t just be for high-risk areas. Commercial spaces hold a responsibility to prepare for the unexpected, and showing they are prepared helps to breed trust within their communities.”



David Fuller-Watts
CEO at Mallcomm



#4

Top tips for Crisis Management

Nailing down incident management is the key to a swift and informed response. Here are our top tips for when crisis strikes:

01

Have clear protocols and procedures in place

Does everyone in your business know the policies and procedures for managing threats or disasters? Ensure procedures are updated and managers are notified in one centralized place so when information is needed, it's just a couple of clicks away.

02

Regular data checks

Ensure that data uploads, containing contact information, are updated in one singular platform. Disparate systems will not enable quick decision-making in an emergency, so data health has never been more important. When onboarding and offboarding staff, you need technology that has strict controls and access levels.

03

Enable transparency but stay in control

The online nature of the world today means that false narratives about an incident can quickly spiral out of control, especially if you are viewed as trying to hide what's happening. A refusal to share information can lead to misinformation. Only share what you know to be verified, without jumping to conclusions. This will help to control the communication flow to ensure the right details are being shared.

04

Get back to business-as-usual fast

Incident response is as much about the communication post-event as during. Effective post-incident communications allow a return to business-as-usual faster, helping to showcase the financial and reputational resilience of your center. Ensure you have an instant communication platform or App to help you get the right information out without delay.



Mitigating Measures from The Landsec Portfolio



Marc Myers

Retail Director Central London and Outlets,
Landsec

Extreme Weather

“At Landsec we identify and assess the transitional and physical risks and opportunities associated with climate change and consider these over the short, medium and long term for two science-based scenarios – below 2 degrees celsius and exceeding 4.

Through this analysis, we have assessed that our current portfolio is fortunately not highly exposed to aggregated physical risks (extreme cold, extreme heat, flooding, windstorms and wildfire). The most significant physical risk to our portfolio is from coastal flooding.

However, we still act to mitigate these risks through physical measures, insurance, and business continuity planning and in the past few years, we’ve learned from some extreme weather events which have included flooding, snow and high winds which have helped us evolve our adaptation plans.

Across our operational portfolio, assets in areas highly exposed to physical risks have developed plans to ensure they have adequate protection and mitigation, including business-continuity and emergency response plans. In order to protect our properties, we have invested in resilient infrastructure, ensuring our buildings can withstand extreme weather events. This includes reinforcing structures, improving drainage systems, and using materials that can endure harsh conditions.

To ensure we can proactively respond to extreme weather events minimising disruption and ensuring the safety of our Brands, Occupier in Office Space, Guest and our Teams each property has a comprehensive emergency response plan in place, which are regularly reviewed and tested.”



Building a Secure Future

“Through our development pipeline, we are designing and constructing high-quality buildings and spaces capable of achieving operational resilience over their lifetime, considering how the UK’s climate will change in the coming decades.

We manage the impact of physical risks, such as higher cooling costs and lower heating demand, by adapting building services design, reducing heating capacity and maintaining summer cooling capacity to cope with heatwaves. The performance of our façade and fabric materials is designed to address the expected higher temperatures by minimising energy demand, as well as to withstand extreme temperatures and increased wind speeds, to avoid maintenance issues or damage to buildings in future.

We target operational energy intensities in line with industry net zero carbon benchmarks, wherever available. Our drainage strategies are designed to mitigate foreseen rain levels and flood risks using physical and nature-based solutions.

As detailed in our nature strategy, *Let Nature In*, we consider nature-based solutions for reducing energy use and adapting to future climate scenarios such as façade and rooftop greening, sustainable urban drainage and permeable surfaces.

By addressing these key areas, Landsec demonstrates its commitment to maintaining safe and resilient commercial and retail spaces, and we report progress annually in our Task Force for Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) statement which can be found on pg. 36 of our Annual Report²⁰.”

#5

How Mallcomm Helps

Mallcomm can help you to secure your space in a way that reassures the staff on the ground and initiates an instant response. With one go-to hub for information and easy App communication through the security and incident module, real-time reporting and mass notification messaging is complete within seconds. With Mallcomm, confusion around who to alert and how to alert them will never again be an issue so ***“Who shall I contact?” becomes “Help is on the way”.***





Mall of America x Mallcomm

Enabling critical communications is crucial as part of a measured response to a crisis. At Mall of America, Mallcomm is integral to emergency communications within the center.

Mall of America needed a platform to update key contacts for their emergency communication system, eliminating the need to manually update lists. Managers are empowered to ensure the correct contacts align with individual stores, restaurants and attractions so they can receive emergency procedures and notifications in a matter of clicks.

[Read Full Case Study](#)



UNIBAIL-RODAMCO-WESTFIELD

Westfield x Mallcomm

Mallcomm is used to improve relationships with retailers and all stakeholders in the shopping center ecosystem, combining marketing, operations and security into one easy to use platform.

Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield were looking for a way to optimise their communication with their tenants and provide more information surrounding marketing, new store openings, security information and performance information to all their stakeholders.









[Read Full Case Study](#)

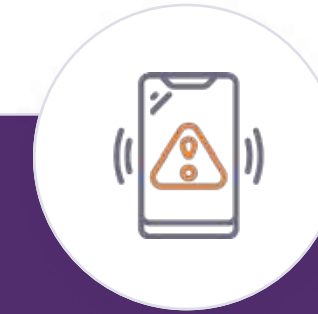




What Scenarios are you Covered For?

Mallcomm’s critical communications can be used in a number of scenarios, including:

-  **Terror threats**
-  **Incident planning**
-  **Post-incident communication**
-  **Lost child**
-  **Anti-social behaviour**
-  **Security threat**
-  **Active shooter**
-  **Flooding**
-  **Fire**



Acting Fast

In the event of an emergency situation, Mallcomm enables your team to **send live updates** to users, ensuring an informed response.

How?

Emergency messages can be triggered and sent instantly via **email, push notification, texts and calls**.

The Result

Real time messaging means all stakeholders have clear updates, helping people stay calm and in control.



Review and Improve

To help refine your security strategy, Mallcomm enables you to easily access data and analytics to check reaction times and engagement with your critical messages.

What then?

- Create **real-time reports** to see how quickly situations were resolved and be sure your team is acting without delay.
- Identify **trends over time** so your safety and security measures are as rigorous as possible.
- Keep **photos and eyewitness details** on file in case further action is needed.



CASE STUDY:

Hurricane Fiona & Urban Edge Properties

US-based Urban Edge Properties uses Mallcomm's app to address and manage emergency risks. The value of the solution was proved when Hurricane Fiona hit Puerto Rico in September 2022.

"Mallcomm gave us the ability to instantly send mass communications to tenants and receive responses on the same platform. Eliminating the need for individual calls or printing memos to deliver by hand made a fundamental difference to our response and recovery strategy."



Lineth Rosado

VP Puerto Rico Operations, Urban Edge Properties

The company's malls at The Outlets at Montehiedra and Las Catalinas Mall had previously been struck by Hurricane Maria in 2017. By 2022, the company had Mallcomm's system in place.

When the same properties were once again left without electricity or water as a result of Hurricane Fiona, the Mallcomm platform was used to inform the two centers' **185 tenants about safety and evacuation procedures, reduced hours of operations and the resources** they may need for their employees.

The improved communications **enabled the safety of staff and visitors and allowed both centers to reopen the following day.** In addition, it enabled the efficient coordination of a campaign to collect and donate baby items to families impacted by the natural disaster.

[Read The Full Case Study](#)





Find out more about how Mallcomm helps secure commercial spaces like **Mall of America, Meadowhall** and **Westfield**, helping them lower risk, reduce cost and increase NOI.

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