



Kidnapping and Hijacking: An Evolving and Converging Threat

24/7 Security Services has noted an increase in kidnappings and missing persons. Available data and operational experience both point to the same reality: this category of crime is growing, and the risk is no longer isolated to specific groups of people. One of the most concerning developments is the rise of **express kidnapping**. These incidents are typically short in duration but highly controlled and traumatic. Victims are abducted and coerced - often under threat of violence - into unlocking mobile banking applications, transferring funds, or withdrawing cash. In many cases, perpetrators closely monitor victims throughout the process, ensuring compliance while rapidly moving funds, sometimes even across international accounts, making recovery extremely difficult.

▶ **What To Do If You Are a Victim**

If confronted with a hijacking or kidnapping, your **primary objective is survival**:

- Remain calm and composed: Avoid panic or emotional reactions
- Comply immediately: Do not delay or question instructions
- Be polite and non-confrontational: Acknowledge instructions calmly
- Avoid sudden movements that could be misinterpreted
- Do not resist or attempt deception
- Do not activate panic features unless absolutely safe
- Provide only what is demanded, nothing more

Your safety is always more important than any financial loss.

▶ **Immediately After the Incident**

Once you are safe, act without delay:

- Contact your bank to freeze accounts, cancel cards, and restrict digital access
- Notify your mobile provider to prevent SIM swap fraud
- Report the incident to your security company and law enforcement
- Document everything you remember—suspects, vehicles, locations, timelines

▶ **Prevention: Awareness Is Your First Line of Defence**

While no system can eliminate risk, awareness significantly reduces vulnerability:

- Stay alert, especially in driveways, at gates, and at intersections
- Keep doors locked and windows closed
- Avoid distractions—particularly mobile phone use in public or while driving
- Be cautious of staged distractions designed to lure you out of your vehicle
- Consider additional security such as tracking and remote immobilisation systems



The Hijacking–Kidnapping Connection

A critical shift in criminal tactics is the increasing link between hijackings and kidnappings. Modern cars are now equipped with advanced locking systems, keyless entry, and immobilisers, making them significantly harder to steal when parked. As a result, criminals have adapted.

Instead of targeting unattended vehicles, they now **target drivers directly**.

Hijackings often serve as the starting point:

- A driver is ambushed at a vulnerable moment (driveways, traffic lights, loading zones)
- The vehicle is taken while occupied
- The crime escalates into a kidnapping, with victims held while financial exploitation takes place

This evolution has made everyday routines - arriving home, stopping at intersections, or even short trips - potential risk points. Criminals are both opportunistic and strategic, targeting predictability and distraction. Kidnapping and hijacking are evolving, connected crimes, with express kidnappings reflecting a focus on speed, control, and profit.