

APPENDIX 7

Check List: Protection Of Others (Clients / Witnesses / Survivors etc)

This check list is intended to act as a reminder of key points for HRDs when they are dealing with clients (witnesses, survivors of violence etc), who may be, or become, at risk because of their contact with you.

It does not aim to deal with their security outside of their contact with you, but you could give them this booklet and suggest they create their own security plans.

Begin your own check list by referring to the Risk Formula, and assess what are the risks, threats (if you know of any), vulnerabilities and capacities of these clients.

- Explain clearly to the client what your organisation does and what they can and cannot expect from you
- Explain to the client how much you can protect them (eg by withholding their name etc)
- Ask the client what they think are the risks in communicating with you, and respond telling them anything they might not have considered
- Communicating with clients: choose the safest possible means if you or they may be under surveillance:
 - Ideally meet face to face (see below) and arrange a simple code for communicating – eg “I’ll meet you on Tuesday at 11 am” could mean “I’ll meet you Monday (one day before) at 10 am” (1 hour before). Arrange the venue for the meeting at this face to face meeting.
 - Ask the client their preferred communication method (and advise them if this is not secure)
 - Phone: are you likely to be under surveillance? If so, do not say anything compromising. Skype to skype is probably a safe method, if feasible. Public phone to public phone can work for some communications if you choose phone booths that are not near your homes or offices.
 - Email: does the client have a safer email address, eg gmail or riseup.net? If not, avoid compromising language and making arrangements to meet using this method.
- Meeting clients when you may be under surveillance:
 - A busy fast food café where the tables are not pre-assigned is safest. Security may be compromised if meeting at your office, home or car or theirs. A public space such as a park could be safe but keep walking and be aware of others taking the same route, as microphones can be effective from 50 metres away.)
 - If you must meet in an office or home, avoid meeting rooms and offices. The laundry room (put on the washing machine) or corridors are less likely to be bugged.
- If you publish information based on the client’s story later, check again with them what their situation is. Someone who agreed to have their name used, or photo included, may change their mind if they receive threats or the situation changes in other ways.

Note: Some HRDs have encountered people pretending to be witnesses in order to frame them or lead them into a risky situation, so check your contacts carefully.