Church arson and break-ins are on the rise in Australia with New South Wales and Victorian regional areas having been targeted in the last few months.

A recent arson attack on a Church in Carlton, Victoria has raised security concerns even further.

So what can you do to reduce the risk of break-ins and arson attacks at your Church building?

Arson poses a significant threat to Church property. It is the most common cause of large fire loss, and a major security challenge for Church communities.

Fires can be started deliberately, either by arsonists or opportunistic thieves in an attempt to conceal their crime, or accidentally by children. Churches are often viewed as a soft target.

By regular reviews and taking simple steps to improve the security, you can significantly reduce the risk of becoming a victim of arson at little or no cost.

Review your arson risk:

The following checklist will help you review the arson risk to your Church or Church hall, and guide you through some simple steps to help mitigate the risk.

CHECKLIST:

- Regularly review Church security arrangements. Are adequate measures in place to protect vulnerable areas against unauthorised access?
- Encourage your neighbours to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity immediately to the police.

continued overleaf...
Create the impression the building is visited regularly. Encourage parishioners and neighbours to visit as part of their daily routine. Use the Church as much as possible. If practical have a roster of Church sitters. Keep internal doors closed to prevent fire spreading.

Consider installing external security lighting and intruder alarms, or CCTV to help deter criminals. Fire and intruder alarms should have remote signalling to a receiving centre ensuring a 24 hour response to any activation, helping mitigate losses as far as possible.

Ensure fire extinguishers are maintained annually and Church officials have been trained in their use.

For further information please contact our Customer Risk Solutions Manager on 03 8630 3137.