

Close Protection and Road rage (Part one):

How does road rage affects the close protection?

Road rage is a growing negative issue, which can lead to deadly endings. On the [YouTube/LiveLeak](#) websites are enough examples about road rage. I'm sure that almost everyone is affected at least once by road rage, either in the car, motorbike, or just as cyclist or even as a pedestrian.

I live and work in the Hague, the Netherlands and I do protection work for one of the biggest company in the Hague.

On a private occasion my wife, my little son Lucas and I were cycling in the centre of the Hague. My wife was cycling in front of me and I had my son with me. A guy with a tractor run almost over my wife and she shouted "look out". The answer of the road worker was not nice even rude. My answer to him was that he shouldn't and or couldn't say that. An argument started, both parties were angry and it looked like that the road workers wanted to fight with me because I took it up for my wife.

Once I saw two drivers fight with each other because one of the guys did something what the other did not like. It is sad that we live in a world where we fight to get our point across.

But again how do these examples of road rage affect the close protection?

Most of the time it won't affect the governmental security details, because they have enough people and the power to deal with that.

The motorcade is surrounded by police bikes which (will) control the road. It will spell out most of the times road rage against the motorcade but there are still examples where police-officers died or were heavily wounded by road rage.

As private dose protection detail it is even more difficult, you don't have the police advantage. You're on your own, so road rage can come very close.

Because we follow special driving courses we should see road rage developing. That is our advantage, but we know how to drive in a special way without jeopardising other drivers or people.

Why? We don't want negative attention and especially not road rage because we did something wrong whilst driving. The more negative attention the more the VIP is expelled to harm or threats. We are trained to keep him out of any kind of danger.

Sometimes people do strange things, even on the road. Cutting of others, overtaking without looking, or without signalling. Most of the time people forget what they do because they are stressed, angry or fatigue or tired. As a close protection detail you have to deal with these people, so keep your eyes wide open and you'll benefit from it in any kind. (Not only for the road rage.)

If your driving is defensive and you keep enough distance to the other driver a lot of the road rage problems are eliminated. In the other cases use your common sense. For example even you're not wrong, saying sorry can eliminate most problems.

One time when I was protecting a VIP I deliberately stepped on somebody's feet to keep him away from my VIP. The person wasn't pleased but because I said "Sorry that I stepped on you feet!" and walked away. He was still a little angry but he accepted my excuses. By saying sorry, most of the people will accept your excuses.

But what if the VIP is almost run over whilst jogging, cycling, riding his motorbikes or walking and he shouts back to the driver? It can be a natural reaction, sometimes it is a habit, but in both cases it could be a start of road rage.

It is our duty to keep the VIP out of danger, we should tell him not to do so. But when he insists let him go, unless he is jeopardising his own security, talk with him what the best security is and keep him out of the harm and or threats.

If he is a notorious yeller on that what people do wrong, you must be prepared on moments of road rage. When it happens too much, the VIP must be warned that it can threaten his life. Try to persuade him to change his attitude because it could save his life! And it will keep him out constant negative news about him.

As close protection detail we want to be social chameleons so that people don't recognise us. It's already difficult to stay low profile. So keep your VIP as far away from road rage as possible and off course any other kind of threat!

Be and stay the professional as you already are, that's your job. Take care of yourself, the VIP and stay safe!

© 02-2008, Jerome Jacobs
Argus Security International
Country Director IACPO/ICPTA-NL