

How to protect a building against terror

In the wake of recent terrorist attacks around the world, LIN YANGCHEN looks at some guidelines to help building owners deter attacks and minimise casualties in the event of an attack.

STOPPING THREATS OUTSIDE THE BUILDING

- Natural or artificial barriers around buildings, such as water features, vegetation or bollards, to prevent ramming by explosive-laden vehicles.
- Sufficient open space around the building to facilitate early visual detection of suspicious persons or objects.

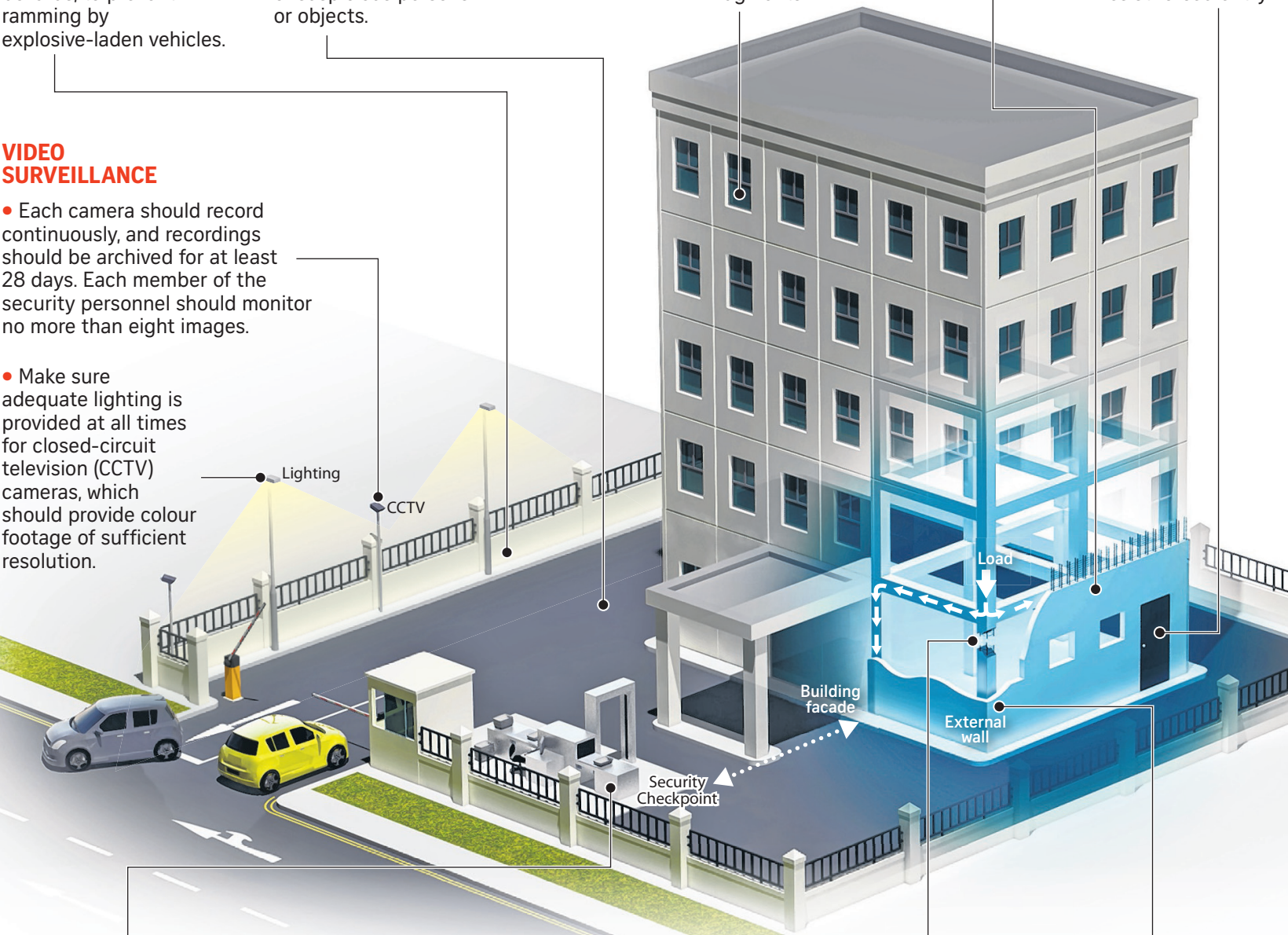
VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

- Each camera should record continuously, and recordings should be archived for at least 28 days. Each member of the security personnel should monitor no more than eight images.

- Make sure adequate lighting is provided at all times for closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, which should provide colour footage of sufficient resolution.

FORCE-RESISTANT BUILDING MATERIALS

- Bullet-proof glass or laminated glass that will not disintegrate into dangerous flying fragments.
- Reinforced concrete walls
- Doors designed with materials, frames and locking mechanisms that resist forced entry.



CHECKPOINT SCREENING

- Site checkpoints as far as possible from the building, and screen vehicles and people for weapons and explosives before they are allowed entry.

STRUCTURAL MEASURES

- Design the building to redistribute loads and withstand collapse should one of its key supports be destroyed. This can be done either through modifying building design as a whole or by strengthening individual supports.
- Main supporting columns should preferably be protected behind an external wall, and not exposed at the front of the facade.