



Safe Communities Portugal

Situated In the Algarve
Portugal

Safe Communities Portugal

September 2022

OVERVIEW

Safe Communities Portugal (SCP) is an operating name of Associação SCP Safe Communities Portugal, the country's only registered national non-profit association providing a "one stop shop" of crime prevention, security and public safety information.

As a public service organisation our services and information are available free of charge to all members of the community. No membership is necessary to receive this.

The aim of SCP is by working together to promote safer communities, enhance security awareness and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime or natural disasters. It does this through a number of specific objectives covering police/public engagement; communication and awareness; as well as public support in the fight against crime and promoting civil protection awareness.

SCP promotes community policing by engaging the police and the community, as well as stimulating citizens' own responsibilities in cooperating with the police, in order to reduce overall crime and the fear of crime. This helps keep neighbourhoods safe and improves the quality of life for everyone.

For residents living in, or persons visiting certain regions in Portugal, SCP has created specific "safe communities", detailing the services it provides in those areas. To date these are: Safe Communities Algarve, Safe Communities Lisbon and Safe Communities Madeira.

SCP works closely with the Ministry of Internal Administration, GNR, PSP, Judicial Police, SEF, ANEPC, ASAE, ICNF, and Turismo de Portugal, the municipalities, various Embassies and many other authorities in helping to keep Portugal a safe place to live and visit.

Our Mission

The mission of Safe Communities Portugal is to promote safer communities, enhance public safety and security awareness and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of disasters or crime.

Specific Objectives

- Promote awareness in terms of risks, prevention and self-protection measures against rural fires; temperature extremes, floods and earthquakes and Tsunamis, as well as other risks;
- Cooperate with authorities such as ANEPC, Civil Protection agents, Turismo de Portugal and other authorities in the dissemination of information to the foreign community and tourists, as part of the global response effort in the event of a major accident or catastrophe;
- Communication: To participate in various events, exhibitions and fairs in order to promote civil protection; publish regular articles in our SCP newsletter on subjects that aim to achieve our aforementioned goals and promote awareness, protection and prevention measures through KissFm radio, media, social media, radio and newsletter;
- Participation in Civil Protection exercises at the invitation of ANEPC, to develop our own experience and knowledge;
- In times of major incidents, provide regular updates of information validated to the foreign community and tourists by SITREPS via Facebook and SCP website, via radio, maintaining liaison with competent authorities, GNR, PSP, ANEPC and other entities , including embassies and consulates with which SCP has contact;
- Handle requests for information during disasters by members of the public regarding travel information and loss of contact with family and friends, establishing the necessary liaison with ANEPC, GNR, Embassies and other authorities;
- Develop new tools on the SCP website that provide assistance to the public in the event of disasters;
- To discharge our responsibilities as a qualified Civil Protection Volunteers Organisation under Portuguese Law;

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- Meet our commitments as a member of the observatory to the European “FirEUrisk” fire risk program;
 - Assist government authorities, including the GNR and PSP by providing crime prevention advice and services to the public, through but not limited to such means as: electronic means (website), social forums, the media, conducting seminars and presentations, exhibitions, newsletters and any other means of communicating advice and services to the public;
 - Encourage the public to report crime and suspicious activities to the GNR, PSP and other appropriate authorities;
 - Promote the GNR Programa Residência Segura (Safe Residence Program) and
 - Meet regularly with government authorities, tourism entities, to discuss crime prevention and public safety and enlist their support in developing new initiatives to assist the community in respect of these issues.

HISTORY OF THE ORGANISATION

Safe Communities Algarve (SCA) was created by David Thomas, a former Assistant Commissioner of the Hong Kong Police and consultant to INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Since 2009 he has been actively involved in promoting crime prevention in the Algarve, giving presentations to organisations such as International Rotary, British Consulate Outreach events, AFPOP Eastern Section and the public together with the GNR, PSP and other government agencies. He has visited victims of crime, assisted the police and civil authorities in the Region and helped promote and develop the GNR SRP.

In October 2011 following discussions with the GNR Faro District Commander, David created SCA as an on-line platform providing comprehensive crime prevention information and services to the community. On 2nd November 2012 SCA was registered as a non-profit Association, named “Associação Safe Communities Algarve”. It is believed to be the first registered non-profit crime prevention association in Portugal.

SCA also initiated and worked closely with Turismo de Portugal and the Ministry of Internal Administration in Lisbon in producing Portugal’s first Gambling Information Leaflet in English. In July 2014 the registered name of the association was changed to Associação SCP Safe Communities Portugal to reflect its broadened responsibilities in other parts of the country.

Safe Communities Portugal was formally launched in January 2015 at a ceremony hosted by the British Ambassador Kirsty Hayes, in the presence of government officials and representatives of

other overseas missions based in Portugal. One of the highlights of 2015 was the holding of a local lodging seminar in Faro, attended by government officials including the Secretary of State for Tourism with speakers from five government departments, attended by over 300 people.

This website Safe Communities Portugal was launched in May 2015, and by December, this and our Safe Communities Algarve website had recorded over a half a million page visits. In the New Year Honours List for 2016 Her Majesty the Queen has awarded David Thomas, as President, Safe Communities Portugal, the British Empire Medal (BEM), in recognition of his “services to crime prevention and awareness within the British and international community in Portugal”. This was presented in July 2016 at the British Embassy in Lisbon.

In August 2018 the SCP website was expanded to incorporate a section for Lisbon, where residents and visitors can find out more about police and civil protection services in the District.

In the New Year’s Honours for 2021 Her Majesty the Queen awarded David Thomas the President of Safe Communities Portugal, a Member of the British Empire (MBE), in recognition of his services to public safety in Portugal and services to British nationals.

Our Facebook Reach

As a business we are aware that the last two years have been very hard for you all, especially those who rely so much on the tourism sector.

During the pandemic Safe Communities Portugal has spent the majority of our time providing the foreign population across Portugal with the latest information on the Covid 19 situation whilst also providing information on Safety and Security. The Facebook site has become the “goto” place for people to find accurate, concise and unbiased information about their country, region or even parish. At the same time we have kept all our other activities up to date in order to offer people the best that is out there.

You may like to know a few facts and figures to show how important we are to so many people.

From the beginning of March 2020 to November 2020, according to Facebook Insight, Safe Communities Portugal’s total reach was over 6 million (an average of 23,529 per day, the highest being 103,000 for a single post in November.)

Enquiries to the site totalled around 60,000 i.e. 235 a day of which we estimate 70% were answered by our volunteers, whilst receiving over 2000 messages and 1300 emails. In addition we have made some 30 broadcasts through KissFm radio and produced around 50 newsletters, so more than one each week.

Our Website Reach

Here are a few facts about the sort of traffic we generate on our website.

The daily average of visitors to the site for May, June and July 2022 was 3579, and average daily page visits was 10,809. Highest number of visitors were on 13th July, 6900 and 17,293 page visits. Since 12th March until 14th August a total of 474,632 people have visited our site and pages visited totalled 1,359,712.

Our reach is not just restricted to Portugal. We know we have many thousands of followers outside Portugal and have received thousands of enquiries from people worldwide. We translate the website into 7 different languages in addition to English. Whilst our time is free you will all be aware that a lot of what we do costs money for which we rely on donations from businesses like yours.

Our reach is expanding and we recently set up another dedicated Facebook page for the Northern Portugal area as we are seeing a big demand for up to date information on rural fires as well as other aspects of our remit.

HOW IS SAFE COMMUNITIES PORTUGAL RELEVANT TO YOUR BUSINESS?

The pandemic highlighted how travel has been affected and it is obvious that people are seeking more clear and precise information before venturing abroad. To help this we are actively reaching out to Tour Operators and Travel Organisers in the UK and other parts of Europe. We believe we can offer their clients an independently verified and up to date picture of what is happening on the ground in Portugal so their clientele can book their next holiday without any preconceived worries.

We provide our subscribers with a newsletter every two weeks and your logo and website would be part of the newsletter. We believe your organisation can benefit from our increased activities by connecting with thousands of people who are actively looking for a safe and secure holiday place in Portugal.

Safe Communities is not just about residents in Portugal feeling safe in their homes. Through our website, our Facebook site and our newsletters we are reaching many thousands of potential holiday makers across Europe and beyond. We reach out to Overseas Home Owners, and Independent holiday travellers coming to Portugal by land or sea as well as by air. To everyone we can provide detailed information to make sure their visit to Portugal is enjoyable and safe.

All of this activity will increase the number of people across the world who connect with us and the many hundreds of thousands who come to Portugal on Vacation each year, and at the same time offer you as one of our sponsors more people to get your message to as the year moves along.

For all these reasons we believe it is more important than ever to continue to provide these services and we are asking you to help us fund this activity through sponsorship of our organisation. For less than 1 euro a day your contribution to help Safe Communities Portugal keep the residents and tourists safe is vital if we are to continue to offer our services.

We sincerely hope you can help us by sponsoring our organisation for a minimum of 12 months at the cost of just 300 euros. If you wish to extend this we can offer a special rate of 550 euros for 2 years subscription. If you need to know more about our organisation please do not hesitate to reach out to us and we can provide any further details you may need.

We look forward to you being part of the Safe Communities Portugal organisation.

