

Staying on top of the Game

by Jonathan Levine

It has been another full and exciting year for First Security, one of significant development for our business and indeed the manned guarding industry as a whole.

Certainly, we have continued to expand, taking on more projects and people and increasing our turnover to around £44 million. We have also continued to lead, being at the forefront of industry thinking, working together with the appropriate bodies for a better environment and better conditions in which to work.

But we have also begun to face new challenges, with issues such as licensing, the Working Time Directive and the Congestion Charge placing further pressure on future cost and competitiveness.



30 St. Mary Axe

Landmark victory

The year has ended, however, very much as it began, with a spectacular new business win of a landmark London site. The award of the contract to protect Swiss Re's new headquarters – the mightily impressive 30 St. Mary Axe – is further confirmation of First Security's status as the leading manned guarding company in the City. It is probably 'the' most prestigious contract to be awarded this year, and it is a tremendous reflection on the hard work, dedication and commitment of all those involved in securing it.

30 St. Mary Axe might be considered a 'typical' First Security contract. In time, the building will no doubt achieve 'historic' status, in the same way that One Great George Street, our first significant victory of the year, has already done so. One Great George Street is home to the Institute of Civil Engineers, and often plays host to distinguished visitors – including royalty – making security paramount.

The number of new contracts secured throughout the last 12 months is too long to list, but highlights would include Clifford Chance, Tabernacle Court (part of the Financial Times), and regaining the Shepherd's Building. When these are added to City University, The Law Society, the Pavilions Shopping Centre, The Atrium Building and Help the Aged, we demonstrate the diverse nature of our portfolio, and the duties we are asked to perform.

Another particularly noteworthy contract is the work we are doing for Westminster City Council, with our officers patrolling Leicester Square in the heart of London's West End. A recent live trial saw our officers perform exceptionally well, and prompted broad praise from local councillors and the police alike.

People and technology

Of course, none of this success would be possible without having the right quality of staff, and we continue to recruit to ensure that we offer a premium service to our customers. Recently we have further strengthened our sales and operations teams with five new management appointments, and I am delighted to welcome them on board.

Supporting the new teams is new technology, and this year saw the installation and implementation of TimeGate – a new rostering system that promises to transform the way that we manage our operations and control room.



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The Law Society



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First plays host to the inaugural licensing seminar



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First officers pass Westminster test

First wins Atrium Contract

by Digby Oldridge

The impressive Atrium Building, part of FPD Savills' property portfolio, is one of the latest commercial properties to benefit from the First Security touch.

A £325,000 contract has been secured to protect the multitenanted building situated on the outskirts of Uxbridge town centre. Among the tenants is BP, for whom First Security recently provided security for the company's AGM which Steve Partridge, BP's UK Regional Security Advisor described as "the most challenging operation we would entrust to any security business."

At the Atrium, a team of 11 from First Security comprising a security manager, receptionist, three supervisors and six security officers provide more than 600 hours protection around the clock.

Included in the services being provided are reception duties, 'meet and greet', control-room operations, car park security and mobile patrols. First Security won the business on competitive tender, and has an existing relationship with FPD Savills that stretches back several years.

Operations Manager is Mark Holmes who has worked with FPD Savills' Area Property Manager Ciaran Foley on previous contracts.

The Tolworth Ten

Tolworth Tower celebrates a decade of being in the safe hands of First Security. The building, now within the Fletcher King property portfolio, has been looked after during all that time by Sandra Burlinson. Two First Security personnel, Site Manager Martin Coney (left) and David Whetstone, have also been present since the contract started.



As well as bringing in new people with fresh ideas and new experience, 2003 was a year in which we saw the official opening of our new Training Facility at Caledonia House. Officiating on that day was Molly Meacher, Chairman of the new Security Industry Authority (SIA). I have written about the SIA before at length, and its importance is well known. Suffice to say that we maintain a healthy dialogue with the Association, and are pleased that our views are being heard. I was particularly pleased that they recently endorsed our licensing seminar with the presence of John Saunders, SIA Chief Executive. Along with our strong relationship with the Guild of Security Professionals, our policy of thought leadership and positive engagement with our peers moves onward.

Challenges for 2004

So what of the challenges for 2004? The constant security threat posed by terrorism remains our greatest challenge, but there are also issues affecting our industry alone.

Licensing, liability insurance, Congestion Charging and the Working Time Directive all add up to a significantly increased cost burden for our business. The subject was covered in detail in the last issue of First Choice. Somebody is going to have to pay, and the harsh reality is that the customer is going to have to share some of cost. It goes back to the old cliché: if you want good service, you are going to have to pay for it. Needless to say we will keep you informed of any

developments as they happen, and the implications for our business going forward.

As we head towards Christmas and the inevitability of another New Year, it is also inevitable that business will get harder. This means we will have to be at the very top of our game – from the senior management through to the ground floor – reassuring our clients at every stage that we are the difference that makes a difference to their security needs.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your support and wish you a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.



Institute of Civil Engineers

First Security **secures** the Law

The prestigious headquarters of the Law Society, at Chancery Lane are being given additional 24-hour security by First Security.

After a competitive tender process, involving site visits and a series of interviews, First Security was awarded the contract. The original tender was for extra security to secure the premises during the night and on weekends. However, since First's appointment the contract has

The Law Society is the representative and regulatory body for solicitors practicing in England and Wales and today has over 85,000 solicitors on its Roll. As the Society's headquarters, Chancery Lane serves as a focal point for the legal profession and this is where all the major policy decisions are made. Many high profile meetings and events are held at Chancery Lane, attracting VIP visitors like members of the Royal family and senior members of the legal profession. Security is therefore paramount.



Richard Spencer, Head of Security for the Law Society said: "A number of colleagues actually recommended First to me based on its reputation for training and career structure, and this was a key deciding factor for us. As Head of Security my responsibility is to develop and maintain an effective security team and it was reassuring to see that at First Security, training is proactive and career development is valued.

"In my experience very few companies actually manage to fulfil their sales 'patter' but First Security has not failed to deliver and the officers work well with the security team we already had at Chancery Lane."

grown, with additional officers now securing the premises during the day, Monday to Friday.

The First Security team works alongside the Society's own in-house team and increases the uniformed security presence on the premises. Their main duties include fire, health and safety, access control, meeting and greeting visitors and a presence at reception. In addition to this, officers carry out mobile patrols to a number of covert satellite sites in the London area.

Commenting on First's success at the Law Society, Jonathan Levine said: "We are very proud to be making a difference at the Law Society's headquarters. Even in their first few weeks on site our officers managed to prevent property damage.

"We are very pleased to be working with the Law Society. The contract has grown in a very short period of time and it looks set to continue to grow, so we look forward to taking on more responsibilities."

First Security wins contract for landmark building

by Sean Feast

It's without doubt one of the most distinctive buildings to be constructed in London, in the UK, and in the world over the last decade. It's already one of the country's most talked-about structures and already a familiar feature on the London skyline. The security contract for the building was also one of the most sought-after and prestigious to be awarded this year.

The building in question? 30 St. Mary Axe – the UK head office of the Swiss Re reinsurance Company. And the company tasked with ensuring its safekeeping? First Security.

By spring 2004, 30 St. Mary Axe will be the headquarters of all Swiss Re's UK operations, with a total capacity for approximately 4,000 occupants. Standing nearly 180 metres high, and providing some 46,500, square metres of office and retail space, the 40-storey building has already become a national landmark.

Designed by Foster and Partners, Norman Foster describes the building as the capital's first environmentally progressive tall building. It is certainly radical: technically, architecturally, socially and spatially. As well as the office space it also incorporates, at plaza level, retail units, and at the top, under a glass dome, private dining rooms, a restaurant and bar.

Responsible for managing the building is the property and facilities management company, Coflex – part of Coflex's remit was the appointment of the security service provider. As property manager Sandra Constable explained: "We went through a thorough and detailed

procurement process leading to the appointment of all of our service providers."

She went on to say: "Following market research, prequalification involved presentations, site visits and client interviews. Four companies were invited to tender for the work, the process involving workshops with the supplier operations managers as well as the submission of proposals."

Coflex were keen to distinguish between 'sales people' and those who would be working with them on site: "At every stage of the tender we evaluated each company very carefully and First Security came through successfully. What was particularly important to us was not just First Security's operational expertise, but also its experience in mobilising services following completion of the construction phase in 'new build' projects."

A team of 30 will work on site, providing security on a 24/7 basis. Responsibilities will include conventional security duties, such as manned guarding, staffing the building control centre and CCTV monitoring together with services. Services such as manning the main reception out of hours, providing additional security in the traffic manager's office and the Bury Street facilities where the property management team will be based.

Says Sandra: "We want to create a single team approach to providing services to tenants and occupiers."

Commenting on the appointment, Jonathan Levine, Managing Director of First Security said: "Our business

has built an enviable reputation for the work we do in protecting some of London's most prestigious buildings and addresses. We believe this is one of the most significant contracts of its kind to be awarded this year, and are looking forward to a good working relationship with the client."

Coflex was established in 1998 as a strategic property and facilities management company and has grown substantially to a turnover in excess of £33m. Clients include Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Lloyd's, Equitas, BHP Billiton and United Business Media.

First leads the way on licensing

First Security recently played host to the first Ever licensing seminar at the Institute of Directors in Pall Mall – providing attendees with an opportunity to outline and discuss key issues affecting the manned guarding industry and those most closely involved in it.

After a brief formal introduction to the morning by First Security's Managing Director, Jonathan Levine, John Saunders, Chief Executive of the SIA delivered an address on 'Licensing and its effect upon the business community'. He was followed by Steve Head from the City of London Police's Specialist Crime Department providing an update on the terrorist threat. Both then took questions from the floor.

Jonathan Levine commented: "We hope that by bringing together key speakers with senior managers of major businesses, we can continue to have a dynamic debate and work together to find workable solutions."

The seminar attracted some 50 delegates.



Hunt is on for Officer of the year

The wait is almost over to discover who will follow John Southan as First Security's Security Officer of the Year for 2003.

Last year John, a professional security officer for more than a decade, was quick to establish his star quality. It was for his response to a particularly dramatic incident at the Canary Wharf offices of one of First Security's major clients, where he is a supervisor, that John was nominated for this prestigious award.

Following the disappearance of a senior member of staff, John tracked him down to a washroom where he found the man barely conscious and obviously seriously ill. John took immediate action, not only telephoning for an ambulance and keeping them informed of any changes to the patient's condition, but also calling the sick man's wife to find out about any possible medication or allergies.

Thanks to John's prompt and thorough action, the ambulance reached the man in time and he was rushed to hospital. He was found to have a serious viral infection but is now fully recovered.

Adam Williams, Operations Manager for First Security, nominated John for the award in recognition of his professional approach to the emergency and the application of his first aid training, above and beyond the call of duty.

Jonathan Levine, Managing Director of First Security, also paid tribute to the award winner: "At First Security, we train our officers to the highest standards but often our people demonstrate that they can go far beyond even our own expectations.

"It is people like John who set First Security apart from the rest and he will be a hard act to follow."

Officers pass Westminster test with flying colours

by Digby Oldridge

Westminster is not only the tourism shop window of the UK; it's the cinema and entertainment heart of London. Keeping it safe is down to a combination of technology and manpower.

The West End CCTV system started in July 2002 with cameras covering the west End, from Regents street, Soho, Covent Garden, Leicester Square and

Piccadilly Circus. Some 58 cameras are monitored 24-365, including Oxford Street and other parts of Westminster.

On the ground, First Security has the contract to patrol Leicester Square, providing 10 'wardens' working in shifts of two or four, 24-7. They cover the square and surrounding streets, and report a marked reduction in a crime as a result. Officers liaise with local businesses, police and the Highways agency.

Recently they passed an interesting live trial that saw an actress adopt the role of a beggar, with others playing a variety of different parts and acting out various scenarios – without the wardens being aware – to see how the officers would respond. All of their actions were closely monitored, again without them knowing, by the local police and via camera to the local monitoring centre and we're delighted to report that the wardens passed the test with flying colours



Swing when you're winning (Part II)

by Sean Feast

A sunny day treated a sunnier band of golfers to an enjoyable round at Stockley Park, in First Security's Annual Golf Challenge.

First prize in the Stableford competition went to a delighted Steve Harding from Cooper Martin, whilst the



Stableford winner: Steve Harding

'played the most golf' trophy was lifted by Phil Ackers of the Institute of Civil Engineers. Once again the day was split into two, with a morning Texas Scramble followed by a Team Stableford and Individual Stableford in the afternoon.



Played the most golf: Phil Ackers

Neil Ames ensured that virtually everyone had won a prize of some sorts by the end of the day, with the longest drive and nearest the pin going to Keith Silver (Rentokil Initial) and Colin Restall (South Bank Centre) respectively.

Strangely, in the Yellow Ball competition, virtually every one of the teams managed to make it home in one piece, with the prize going to Neil Ames and his cohorts including First's Graham Cornwell, Colin Restall (again!) and Andrew Gibson from Collier & Madge.

Guestcolumn ↩

Guarding Code proposed

Employer and employee organisations of the European private security industry have agreed on a Code of Conduct for all security operatives working within the EC, writes *Security Management Today* Editor Brian Sims.

A Code of Conduct aimed at raising professional standards and guaranteeing a "high level of ethics" in private security firms across the European Union (EU) – including the ten new Member States from eastern and southern Europe who'll join up next May – has been agreed between employer organisations and officials at the European Commission.

The agreement has been struck between the Confederation of European Security Services and Uni-Europa, which represents 10,000 security companies and around 600,000 officers/supervisors working within the EU. The Code covers everything from the selection and recruitment of officers through to vocational training and Health and Safety in the workplace.

Importantly, the Code includes a firm commitment on avoiding discrimination in both work practices and relations with clients, the police and competitor security companies.

At present, national regulations and practices vary widely between Member States, and are sometimes inadequate and even – on occasion – nonexistent. That inevitably means there are huge variations in the quality of service provided, such that the private sector is prevented from taking full advantage of European integration. As a result, national employer and Trade Union organisations must now "promote the Code and its application as widely and fully as possible".

Looking more closely at the details of the Code of Conduct, it also commits those in the private security industry to following open and 'transparent' procedures within their own organisations, a commitment that also extends to any separate agreements struck with either employees or contractors. In terms of recruitment, the Code states that companies should "take into consideration the moral values of a candidate", and ensure that they have the "minimum standard of ability" that will be necessary for them to assume a professional role in due course.

On salaries, the Code stresses the need for them to be "healthy enough" to guarantee a "high level in quality of service".

In tandem with SIA licensing, the (possible) enforcement of the Working Time Regulations (re: the opt-out clause) and predicted manpower shortages, this Code could well have a profound effect on the UK guarding sector.

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