

The pace of change

Spring saw the departure of Jonathan Levine, Managing Director of First Security since 1995. During his time in charge, the business evolved from a small independent to one of the top five players, attracting a blue-chip client base, a strong management team and the highest quality officers – contributing to the major force that it is today. A key period of change came last year when First Security, formerly part of MacLellan Group, and its sister company and fellow manned-guarding specialists MacLellan Attlaw Security were acquired by Interserve. Mike Crump, Managing Director of MacLellan Attlaw, has now also assumed responsibility for First Security.

He is excited about the challenges ahead, not least the opportunity for further growth, as *First Choice* found out.

Editor: Mike, you started your own business, Attlaw, from scratch in 1996. Was it plain sailing from the moment you launched?

Mike: Far from it! At one time, early on, everything I owned was on the line and there were times when I thought I'd managed to leave a comfortable and interesting job in the Metropolitan Police just to put my family out on the street, but we fought on and came through it.

Editor: What was the most important lesson that you took from that experience?

Mike: That's a difficult one, especially as there are some experiences that are best forgotten! There were two, I think, both to do with people. The first is that you quickly discover who your friends are and just as quickly come to recognise the value of a true friend. The second is that it is the quality and commitment of the people that you are working with that gets you through – that and hard work.



Editor: Attlaw is now a very successful business in its field, notably event management. Where do you see the synergies between Attlaw and First Security?

Mike: Firstly in the quality of our people. With these two companies we have some of the best people, the best teams in the industry who receive high praise from our clients for the challenging work that they do. Secondly in the quality of our clients. First and Attlaw focus on different segments of the business with surprisingly diverse needs but both companies serve blue chip organisations who, as clients, are understandably demanding and require us to meet the highest industry standards regardless of the nature of their business. Both companies have been at the leading edge of the professional aspects of the industry's service for many years. Attlaw was the first, for example, to attain the Football Stewards Qualification, since superseded by the Certificate in Event and Match Day Stewarding (CEMS), and was at the forefront of working with the police and other agencies in setting initial training standards, notably within the retail industry where again we have a strong presence. First Security's own proud achievements, at the forefront of the licensing debate and its dialogue with the SIA, are a matter of record.

Editor: There has been a lot of talk about a merger of the two companies but nothing much seems to have happened. Is this true and why would it be a good thing?

Mike: Yes, it's true and, yes, it would most certainly be a good thing. It was in January of this year that the idea of merging the two companies was first mooted, although nothing much moved for the first few months. As we emerged from the winter, it was clear that something had to be done if we were to avoid just drifting along. Attlaw was the smaller of the two companies, but I started to drive the process.

Editor: When you say that you started to drive the process, what do you mean? What did you do?

Mike: Let me first say that I am not so sure that our staff and clients thinking that 'nothing much seems to have happened' is such a bad thing. We didn't want anything to happen that would adversely affect the qualities that these two companies are noted for whilst we sorted out the corporate complexities that any merger entails. It was critical to keep 'business as usual' – a fundamental of our strategy is to retain and build on the respective and distinctive strengths that each company, each team, has in serving our clients. That's not to say that we don't want something to happen in the future. Of course we do, but the changes we seek have to be for the better, for our clients, for our staff, for our shareholders.

Editor: So what did you do?

Mike: Our priority was to develop a strategy that served the needs of the two security companies and,

continued on page 2



inthisissue ↙



CCTV Training page 3 ↙

First wins ACS status for CCTV training from the Security Industry Authority (SIA)



Hot property page 3 ↙

Steve Saunders of Savills goes on the record for *First Choice*



By Royal Appointment page 4 ↙

First has extended its services to protect the newly refurbished Royal Festival Hall

Team of the Year gets national recognition



The team of security officers responsible for the Elephant and Castle shopping centre has won national recognition from the police, Southwark Council and the Shopping Centre management team, for its work in making the Elephant and Castle a safer place to shop and visit.

At the presentation of the First Security Team of the Year award, which was accepted by Supervisors Emmanuel Orimolye and Seth Lartely, the Shopping Centre Manager, Mike Knell said:

“The work that the officers have put in over the last two years has been incredible. I wanted to clean up the shopping centre by getting rid of the beggars, pick pockets, vandals, and shop lifters as we had to do something to make the shopping centre a safer place for people to come to.

“We have received great praise from the local police, British transport police, Southwark council and other agencies, for the way in which the team has assisted in the safer neighbourhood scheme and they regularly assist the robbery squad and other units with CCTV coverage that has been crucial in obtaining convictions.

“The officers’ duties see them confronting, following and evicting known felons, thus ensuring that the hard work they have put in, does not go in vain. Along with all the skills they have for dealing with the unexpected and undesirables, they still make time to be a smiling, ‘friendly face’ of the shopping centre community. Due to their hard work, constant vigilance and dedication to their profession they are making the shopping centre a safer place to come to, and they have my sincere thanks and gratitude.”

The distinctly colourful shopping centre is one of three centres owned by St Modwen Properties and the team of 20 First Security offices has been working on the site for two years.

Graham Cornwell, Operations Director of First Security said: “Central to the improvement at the centre has been the work of the officers and this award is in recognition of their efforts and dedication.”

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importantly, our respective clients, and one that would fulfil the mission that Interserve had in mind for us. The Group’s chief executive, Adrian Ringrose, and First and Attlaw’s chairman, Bernard Spencer, encouraged us to be ambitious and, since it always helps to put a face, as it were, to a financial objective, we focused on matching the scale of Chubb’s manned guarding business within three years.

Editor: *Why Chubb?*

Mike: From the time I started, my objective has been to build a company that rivalled the scale of Chubb’s manned guarding business. I recognised that Interserve’s ambitions for its security business, and the opportunities presented by being part of such a large group of successful companies, could help take us there.

Editor: *What can you tell us about ‘Project Apollo’ and why the name?*

Mike: We’ve developed a strategy that I am on record as saying isn’t rocket science but it is challenging and it will open up new horizons for us. Doing it, and doing it well, is the hard bit but the strategy evaluation process that the board has just completed confirmed that the new team is up for it and I am confident that it is a deliverable. We have the people that can do it and that makes me feel good, and excited, about what we’re setting out to do.

We needed a name that would add some sizzle to the sausage, the sausage being what we saw as First Attlaw’s integration and transformation agenda. Whilst some of us are turned on by words like ‘integration’ and ‘transformation’, they can hardly be said to ‘sizzle’. We were looking for a name to ‘brand’ the project and Apollo did, as they say, hit the spot, even though the inspiration for it, the building that we were interested in at that time, has passed into history.

Editor: *There was talk of a new office. Is that history too?*

Mike: No, but it may take us somewhat longer than we had first thought and I had hoped. Neither company has the premises that meet our requirements and we want to find an alternative that does. We have been looking at

new accommodation that would enable us to bring Attlaw and First Security’s head office teams under one roof but not be too far from our existing offices. It would have all manner of advantages, not least in providing the platform on which to establish the most effective and efficient working practices for the combined central operations – but I have to accept that finding offices that meet our criteria will take time. We shall continue our search whilst looking at how we can best reconfigure our existing offices.

Editor: *You speak of ‘effective and efficient working practices’ which leads me to the big question which is in everyone’s mind: How will these changes will affect me and my job?*

Mike: I understand that. The nature and scale of the task means that it is inevitable that there will be organisational and procedural changes that will impact on the way we go about our daily routines particularly for headquarters’ staff. All I can say is what I have said to anyone that has asked me that question. We shall be drawing on the knowledge and skills of the people actually doing the job to determine what changes, if any, need to be made. Our hope and expectations are that the work needed to achieve the integration of the two businesses and drive our ambitious growth plans are such that Project Apollo will secure a bright future for the company and our people.

Editor: *What can you share with us about the strategy?*

Mike: It is not a big secret. We shall continue to strive to serve our clients to the best of our abilities. We shall continue to compete hard in our existing served markets. We shall nurture our brands and build on their respective strengths. These fundamentals will not change. In addition we shall extend what First Security does so well for its clients in central London to other major cities. We shall increase Attlaw’s events business. We shall strengthen our electronics capabilities to ensure that we continue to provide first class asset protection for our clients’ people and property. We shall develop the opportunities that being part of Interserve presents and help the many Interserve companies broaden their appeal to their clients. Not rocket science but the potential for serious lift-off.

Editor: *Mike, thank you. I look forward to our next chat.*

Mike Crump

Mike Crump is Managing Director of Attlaw and, from 1st July 2007 became Managing Director of First Security (Guards), charged by the Interserve board with the task of merging the two companies and realising his vision for the Group’s security business, a vision that is enthusiastically shared by both the Interserve group and security companies’ respective boards.

Mike founded Attlaw Security in 1996. With rapid growth and clients as famous as Wembley, Chelsea FC and Fulham, Mike and his company couldn’t help but be noticed by larger companies wishing to add manned guarding to their portfolio of services. Attlaw had hardly got used to being owned by Maclellan Group when the new owners were acquired in turn by Interserve, a multi-million pound group which has high ambitions for its security business and which sees Mike, and the team that he has put together, as the people who will deliver.



Finding in turn, stockbroking, then engineering (Mike is a qualified mechanical engineer), insufficiently action-oriented to keep his attention, Mike joined the Metropolitan

Police, an organisation in which he was proud to serve for 15 years. In what was for him a formative and satisfying period of his life, Mike was able to balance his enthusiasm for driving fast cars fast – legally, and with just cause – with the more forensic role as accident investigator. As divisional PT Instructor he attained a Black Belt in Judo, teaching the art for 15 years. Current interests include weight training, fishing (of the more physical kind) and boating. He holds the RYA Commercial Skipper Licence and is a RYA power instructor in his ‘leisure’ hours. Mike is married and lives with his wife and children in Essex, somewhat predictably perhaps, close to open water.

Hot Property **First Choice** Interview



Steve Saunders of Savills talks to Sean Feast of First Choice about the critical role the company plays in protecting his buildings and how the industry has evolved.

Steve Saunders started working in property management for Lloyds Bank more than 10 years ago, at the time of its merger with TSB. After a brief period with Property Trust, looking after a national portfolio of retail and commercial premises, he joined Savills where he is now a Director, and has specific responsibility for building assets within the West End and Central London. He 'inherited' First Security on a site he took over from a previous managing agent, and now works with them on 15 properties from the South Street in the West End to Capital and Paternoster House in the City. There are currently nearly 70 officers working on Savills' sites, equating to 3,500 hours of manned guarding services per week. First Choice caught up with Steve during a short gap in his busy schedule...

Editor: What responsibility do you have regarding security?

Steve: My role is largely one of liaising with the building managers in specific premises during the tender process. Savills has a standard tender procedure: we typically invite up to three companies to tender for each contract and I will review these with the individual building managers concerned. The cost of security forms part of the overall service charge, and often makes up a large part of the budget. It is imperative, therefore, that we get it right.

Editor: Is cost, therefore, your key concern?

Steve: Cost is not always the main driver; service is of course more important, so we must get what we pay for. You have to remember that I have a view as the surveyor; the

tenants have a view as the 'customer' as it is they who need to feel protected, and see the 'value' in their service charge. It is they who experience the service that First Security provides, so it has to be right. One of the most important aspects of the service is the relationship between the officers on duty and the tenants. The tenants like to be recognised – to be 'met and greeted' – and feel comfortable that the officers know who they are and know their building.

Editor: How have you seen the manned guarding service change?

Steve: I have seen vast improvements in the quality of the manned guarding industry over the last few years. I remember the first ever manned guarding outfit I came across had an officer on site who wasn't even supposed to be in the country! Now, with licensing and the Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS), that sort of thing has been stamped out. The ACS in particular has been a good thing for the industry. It gives me, as the client, the confidence and assurance that I am dealing with a reputable company, that conforms to all of the relevant health & safety legislation, that looks after its staff and provides appropriate training. This is all very important. It gives us a basis of quality before we start.

Editor: What is so positive about your relationship with First Security?

Steve: One of the things I like most about the service provided by First Security is that the whole team is involved. The sales team don't just come and 'sell' me a service and then disappear, to hand it over to the Ops people. I can still pick up the 'phone to Ed Holmes or Neil Ames and know that they will respond. This is a major advantage. Often we have to move very quickly when we are instructed on a new building and need security officers in place immediately. I know I can call First Security and it will be done, and the finer details can be sorted out soon after. There is two-way

trust: they know us, and how we work, and I know I can rely on them at very short notice.

Editor: How have you seen the service evolve?

Steve: It has evolved considerably in recent times. There is a trend, for example, towards not just being able to provide 'security' services but also a more 'front-of-house' style service, in charge of reception. This requires different skill-sets. I find that the supervisors tend to have a good handle on what goes on in each of our buildings, and this helps in their working relationship with the building manager. The quality of security officers overall has also improved. Partly this is to do with money: salaries definitely reflect the quality of personnel you receive: the industry must understand, recognise and accept that if you want the best service, you must be prepared to pay for it.

Editor: Are there any improvements you think First Security could make in its service?

Steve: Not really. Sometimes I think that the administrative side could be a little sharper but then given the fluidity of my job, when we can be moving buildings very quickly, it is not surprising that they sometimes need time to catch up. It would be harsh to criticise them too strongly. Overall the quality of reporting is excellent. First deals directly with the building manager so I don't have to be involved, other than when we come to review the service provided.

Editor: Away from work, what do you like to do?

Steve: I like to play golf whenever I can, but given that I now have a six-month old daughter, Minna, those opportunities are in danger of becoming few and far between!

First 'approved' in CCTV training

The company has achieved Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) status for CCTV from the Security Industry Authority (SIA) and its CCTV Training Centre has received Skills for Security and National Open College Network (NOCN) approval.

One of the few training centres in the country to be officially accredited, First Security's training centre at Caledonia House will offer four-day courses in CCTV system operation and monitoring, in line with new legislation on Public Space Surveillance CCTV licensing.

Steve Townson, Senior Training Manager at First Security, explains: "Since 20th March 2006, under the Private Security Act (2001) and the Approved Contractor Scheme, any security contractor's employees operating a CCTV surveillance system in a public space have been required to be licensed. In view of these new rules, I have been running CCTV training to ensure that 100% of our own

staff are licensed and, as a result we have now achieved the Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) status for CCTV.

"This legislation has led to an increased demand for CCTV training across the industry and the Skills for Security and NOCN approval of our training centre mean that we can provide the approved courses to any third party contracted to provide CCTV operations. We can also manage the whole SIA CCTV licensing process for individuals or groups. This is a fantastic new business opportunity for First Security."

To create an authentic practise environment for all trainees, one of the training rooms at Caledonia House has been fitted with a fully operational CCTV Control room, linked to the main First Security office in Myddelton Square, London. First Security is planning to market this offering to the industry in the latter part of 2007.

Approved CCTV training is just one of the external training packages offered by First Security. In addition, the training team is qualified to deliver licensed training on Basic Job Training, Manned and Retail Guarding, Conflict Management, MAYBO Conflict Management (CM), MAYBO



Physical Intervention (PI) and Holding skills and Door Supervision training, plus a plethora of non-licensed training ranging from Mail Room protocols to IED (Nuclear, Biological and Chemical) threat management, Threat Call handling, Vehicle and Personnel searching and bespoke Customer service training.

The training team also has the capability and expertise to conduct on-site operational assessments of all security processes, systems and people with a view to implementing an operational improvement plan including identification of desired training interventions.

By Royal Appointment!

First Security has significantly extended its duties and responsibilities in protecting the 27-acre Southbank Centre – including the newly re-furbished Royal Festival Hall – to include not just manned guarding but also a nominated fireperson role, and the installation and monitoring of sophisticated new Digital CCTV surveillance and recording technology.

First Security's 'traditional' role has been one of 'physical' security, staffing the stage doors, dealing with both visitors and performers, and patrolling all public (internal/external) and perimeter areas, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The multi-million pound refurbishment of



the Royal Festival Hall, however, provided an opportunity to tender for a new CCTV system, won by First Security's Specialists Services Division (SSD).

Colin Restall, Head of Security & Health & Safety at the Southbank Centre explains: "We were determined with the refurbishment to update our existing CCTV system, and First Security was successful in its tender. Where possible, existing cameras are being re-utilised, but new ones are also being installed, and that is an ongoing process.

"First Security also played a leading part in the design of our new dedicated security control room, especially in relation to our viewing system. Whereas before we would review events after they had happened, now we are taking a much more retail-led approach, being more pro-active

and interactive in monitoring the areas we have responsibility for. This work is also carried out by the officers from First Security, all of whom have the appropriate licences and training required."

First Security's remit has also been extended to include a 'nominated fireperson' role. "Part of the premises licence as a public venue requires having an on-site fire team, and so certain officers have received additional training in firefighting and fire prevention, the monitoring of fire systems, and the appropriate response in the event of a fire breaking out. They also conduct checks before each event to remove fire and/or potential health and safety hazards."

Footfall to the Royal Festival Hall has increased considerably over the last few years with the opening of the London Eye and the additional retail space added to the Royal Festival Hall and the new Southbank building. That has brought with it a number of additional challenges to Colin and his team, leading to further opportunities for First Security, as he continues:

"If you consider 10 or maybe even five years ago asking your security contractor whether he could take on the additional roles and responsibilities as we have done, then it might not have been possible. It is a tremendous compliment to First Security and the senior management team that they have been able to meet the challenge, whilst retaining the same high standards of performance throughout their operation."

The fashionable Southbank Centre, which also includes the Queen Elizabeth II Hall, the Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery, can accommodate up to 6,000 visitors at any one time. The main refurbishment of the Royal Festival Hall began in June 2005, and re-opened in June 2007.

Commenting on the contract, David Mundell, Director of First Security says: "We are clearly delighted to have extended our work on such a prestigious contract. The scope of the manned guarding industry has changed and continues to change rapidly."

New Senior Training Manager takes the stage

First Security has appointed Steve Townson to the role of Senior Training Manager. Since the appointment, his role has been to assess the training processes and practices in place at First, and to implement additional courses and his own bespoke training packages, in order to offer comprehensive training in all areas, both internally, to First Security customers and to external third party clients.

Steve is extremely well qualified for the role, having spent 18 years in training and development for the Armed Forces, and subsequently he has worked extensively in loss prevention and training for the security industry, latterly as Training and Control Centre Manager for Europe, the Middle East and East Africa, at Credit Suisse Corporate Management.

When First Security took over the manned guarding contract for Credit Suisse, they were keen to retain Steve, who was responsible for development of the entire team of 76 officers. Through Steve's efforts all 76 obtained the Professional Security Officer award; a further 26 of these officers achieved the level 3 Advanced Security officer with distinction. Steve was promoted into the HR department in a senior training and development role for First Security in September 2006.

Commenting on his appointment, Steve said: "I am delighted to be working in this head office position and, since my appointment, I have conducted a full analysis of all the training activities of First Security and made significant improvements to the training interventions offered both internally and externally, and completely redesigned the training provision across the company.

"Part of this process of improvement called for designing bespoke packages to fill the gaps in First Security training provision such as introducing Vehicle and Personnel Searching and Chemical and Biological Threat Management, and developing our external training products such as the customer service focused SMILE package. We have also now developed the site-specific Added Value packages and can now offer these to our clients. CCTV another milestone was in achieving the SIA accreditation, as one of the few approved training centres for Licensed CCTV training in the UK, at Caledonia House in London.

"A great deal of progress has been made already and there will soon be a new brochure encompassing all the training packages we offer. My aim over the next two to five years is for First Security to become a training school of excellence, not just internally but for the security sector at large, and we are certainly well on the way there."

As well as the above, Steve is heavily involved in the security industry training and qualifications activities such as the CCTV Consultation Group, Advanced Level 3 Qualification Expert Group, Sector Expert Group and the new Security Practitioner Qualification.

New manager for Mobile & Keyholding

A familiar site in the office, and now about town, is Robbie Hollingsworth, the newly appointed Mobile & Keyholding Business Development Manager. Robbie's role is to actively promote and sell Keyholding / Alarm Response, Mobile Patrols and Lock / Unlock Services to businesses of all sizes, from small offices to blue chip company headquarters.

Robbie is well qualified for the role with extensive experience in Sales in the Security Industry. He spent four years with one of First's key competitors, initially as a weekend Security Officer, before entering the Telesales Division and then working his way to become the first dedicated Field Sales person for Keyholding & Mobile Response Services. Within his first year in this role, Robbie was responsible for almost doubling the size of this business, which stands him in good stead for his new role.

Commenting on his recent appointment, Robbie said: "First Security has a great reputation and has long been a leader in the industry. I am delighted to have been invited to come on board and have many plans to develop the role and bring more to it as time goes on. This is an exciting time and I am very glad to be part of it".



Although new to the position, Robbie has already produced a dedicated brochure for Mobile & Keyholding services.

Recently married in Jamaica, Robbie has three grandchildren and loves travelling, music and home cinema.