

Towards 'A Strategy for Change' for the Security Sector

A Security Research Initiative Report

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Executive Summary

This document aims to provide a foundation for thinking about and ultimately developing a 'Strategy for Change' for the security sector. It seeks to provide a rationale for why private security is important and suggests ideas (for wider debate) about how its potential might be realised. It has no official status, it does not carry the obligations of Government, nor of the security sector – it invites thinking on these issues. It seeks to highlight the ways in which private security can help protect the public – in private and public space – and the ways in which this role may be enhanced. In so doing it calls upon various stakeholders, including the security sector itself, to consider how they might best capitalise on an under used and largely capable resource, not least in times of austerity.

Security encompasses a wide range of activities. The aim here is to discuss the influence of private security suppliers and the corporate security departments of businesses collectively referred to as the private security sector.

The Strategy outlined here consists of three main aims that are underpinned by a range of objectives. The aims reflect the fact that while there are many good initiatives within the security sector and with partners there is an absence of any strategic approach regarding the harnessing of private security for the public good; we are starting from a low base. The aims are:

1. The Government must be encouraged to develop a strategy for harnessing the enormous contribution of the private security sector to preventing crime.
2. The private security sector must commit to developing an ability to talk with a more united and coordinated voice.
3. The private security sector must commit to highlighting the enormous benefits it generates including for the public good, and commit to ways of enhancing these. Much of what it currently does is unheralded and under acknowledged.

The supporting objectives are:

1. To highlight the key role of private security in enabling business to be effective.
2. To talk-up the benefits of private security which includes:
 - Prevents crime in places where people work and also where the public congregate that extends beyond what the police do
 - Enables business to operate profitably so contributes to the economy
 - Provides first response to incidents in workplaces and manages incidents so police involvement is not necessary

- Is the primary way of protecting parts of the national infrastructure
 - The key component in tackling cyber crime and terrorism and many other offences
 - The key component in managing the night time economy and places that the police cannot undertake alone
 - Good practice in workplaces extends to the community
 - Developing and managing technologies to fight crime
 - Providing information and intelligence that is crucial to tackling crimes
3. To challenge the perception that the role of private security is marginal in protecting the public; this is often incorrect and misleading; private security plays a crucial and central role in public protection. This involves:
- Recognising that the aims of the public and private sector are much more similar than different when it comes to public protection
 - Understanding that good policing characterises private security
 - Being aware good police work will always involve a mix of the public and private
4. To highlight the special and sometimes unique capabilities of the private security sector as recognised by Government:
- The Government does feature private security in its strategic plans for tackling a range of offences, but references are typically to tactical possibilities without being clear how these can be achieved. This needs to be addressed
 - Harnessing the benefits that the Government wants to gain from private security (and many others it could) is undermined by the lack of a strategy for achieving them
5. To improve public perceptions of the private security sector, this includes the need to improve media perceptions of private security that are often negative:
- The security sector needs to initiate and support a PR campaign designed to inform the public and other stakeholders of the role it plays in protecting the UK
 - Other industries, for example, construction, may provide learning points
 - Any approach will need the broad support of the security sector
 - It will need to include a focus on the police service; many serving officers are unaware of the potential resource available in the private sector and much more on how to use it

6. To develop structures that enable the state sector to liaise more effectively with private security:
 - The security world is not easy to communicate with
 - Any real improvement in the lot of the private security sector is dependent on generating structures which enable it to speak with a single voice or at least a united one
 - RISC's access to Government with the Security Commonwealth's reach across the private security sector provide a starting point for discussions

7. To develop a strategy for working with the police:
 - The private security sector should not take for granted police support for its work or a commitment to partnerships
 - The police underestimate the contribution that the private security sector makes to policing and an awareness campaign is needed to rectify this
 - The police lament that private security is unaccountable when in fact there are a range of ways they can be held to account; these need further exploration
 - Information sharing possibilities are undermined by confusion that needs clarifying
 - There needs to be clarity about which police roles (if any) should remain the exclusive responsibility of the police
 - Private security needs to relate its work to police priorities

8. For the security sector to raise its game:
 - The private security sector needs to develop the ACS, differentiating security suppliers more effectively
 - There needs to be a specific plan for engaging buyers who play a crucial role in the type of security demanded
 - There needs to be collaboration in developing training/qualifications/guidelines in areas such as buying security, specifying security needs
 - Involving the police in training and the accreditation process will help build understanding and trust
 - Emphasis needs to be placed on raising the status of security professionals in business; not just as protectors of assets but as business people enabling the organization to operate effectively and generate profits and other benefits
 - There needs to be a change in thinking and philosophy: the public good is mostly consistent with private profit
 - In any event, protecting the public cannot be left to the state; it would be too resource intensive. It has to involve the private security sector

Section 1. Setting the Scene

- 1.1 Since the turn of the century the private security sector in the UK has striven to distance itself from its poor and much maligned reputation.¹ The process of statutory regulation has been a part of that alongside a range of initiatives that in various ways have led to increasing professionalization.² Yet, despite police resource constraints there appears to be limited police support to engaging private security suppliers, while corporate security departments within organisations (the other part of the security sector) have been viewed as second-class citizens.³ Public and media perceptions of private security seem muted.⁴
- 1.2 Yet there are more than 300,000 licensed (by Government) security operatives which is way more (about 50 per cent more) than the number of police officers⁵. In addition corporate security personnel are involved in protecting people and property in diverse settings: all policing roles have a parallel in the world of private security.⁶ Many of those involved are former police and military personnel. Yet despite this the private security sector is not engaged in a way that makes the most of its potential, indeed it is often marginalised.
- 1.3 This is a massive wasted opportunity, for Government in terms of protecting the public and vulnerable people, and safeguarding national security. Moreover, there is growing evidence that it is the result, at least in part, of out-dated stereotyping, misunderstandings about what the security sector does, and a lack of awareness, even ignorance, about the culture, aspirations, accountability and potential of the private security sector. The lack of commitment to harnessing the potential of the private sector is to the detriment of the public good; it needs to be addressed by the security sector working with the state sector generally and the police specifically.

¹ For an insight on the progress made, see: White A (2015) [The Impact of the Private Security Industry Act 2001](#). *Security Journal*, 28(4), 425-442; White A (2014) [Post-crisis Policing and Public-Private Partnerships: The Case of Lincolnshire Police and G4S](#). *British Journal of Criminology*, 54(6), 1002-1022.

² See, Wakefield, A. (2014) Where Next for the Professionalization of Security. In Gill, M (Ed.), *Handbook of Security*. Palgrave Macmillan

³ Gill, M. and Howell, C. (2014) Policing Organisations: The Role of the Corporate Security Function and the Implications for Suppliers. *International Journal of Police Science and Management*. 16, 1, pp. 65–75; Gill, M. (2013) Engaging the Corporate Sector in Policing: Realities and Opportunities. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*. Published online March 29, doi:10.1093/police/pat009. Volume 7 Issue 3 September, pp 273-279.

⁴ One interviewee noted that the best suppliers have worked with clients, often corporate security personnel, to match security to risk and to align security to corporate objectives but have largely failed to tackle the perception that security can be done on the cheap: 'we are working smarter, amazing stuff is going on, but no one really is recognizing it'.

⁵ Even if all police workers are included, so officers, police staff, community support workers, Specials, and so on, there were still just 207,140 police workers in the 43 police forces on 31 March 2015: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2015/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2015>

⁶ Button, M. (2008) *Doing Security: Critical Reflections and an Agenda for Change*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

- 1.4 This document aims to address this. In short it puts the case for private security. It is not an argument for replacing highly trained police officers with less trained private operatives, there is little call for that, nor does it intend to overlook the limitations of private security which are very real and well documented.⁷ Rather it is putting the case for a better harnessing of that which is already there and is performing in the interests of the public good,⁸ and suggests ways in which this can be further enhanced and coordinated.
- 1.5 A word of caution is necessary. Security encompasses a wide range of activities and many diverse groups, this is both a strength and a weakness. One interviewee in comparing security within Government with the much bigger defence portfolio noted that while it was smaller it was complicated by being disparate and uncoordinated, lacking a central buying capacity, and without a common language. Any strategy document runs the risk of being too widely focussed to be meaningful or too narrowly pitched to be considered relevant. And of course this is a research 'think piece' – borne of the Security Research Initiative⁹ - rather than an official document emphasising a specific position. This is how we pitch it, as a position paper designed to spark debate and encourage thinking about some (certainly not all) the potential possibilities and barriers to using private security suppliers, and corporate security departments to better advantage for the public good.
- 1.6 The strategy was put together using a range of approaches. It has taken account of official strategies that have been issued in other areas of tackling crime, it draws on previous research, it includes interviews with a range of security sector representatives and stakeholders, and a survey of 1,361 police officers¹⁰ in three forces and another of 59 security experts in this country and abroad. It is not designed to assert the potential of all areas of security, laudable and necessary though that is, rather it seeks to advance thinking on barriers to using a service that already plays a largely unheralded role in protecting people and has the potential to do so much more.

⁷ For good discussions, see: Button (2008) *ibid*; Loader, I. and Walker, N. (2007) *Civilizing Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Prenzler, T. and Sarre, R. (2008) *Developing a risk profile and model regulatory system for the security industry*, Security Journal, Vol. 21, Issue 4, pp. 264-277; White, A. (2015) *Impact of the Private Security Industry Act 2001* Security Journal, Vol. 28, Issue 4, pp. 425-442; Zedner, L. (2009) *Security*. London: Routledge.

⁸ For a discussion, see, Lofstrand, C., Loftus, B. and Loader, I. (2015) Doing 'dirty work': stigma and esteem in the private security industry. *European Journal of Criminology*. DOI: 10.1177/1477370815615624; White, A. (2010) *The Politics of Private Security: Regulation, Reform and Re-Legitimation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Older studies include: Shearing, C. and Stenning, P. (1987) *Private Policing*. London: Sage. South, N. (1988) *Policing for Profit*. London: Sage

⁹ See, <https://perpetuityresearch.com/security-research-initiative/>

¹⁰ Howell, C and Gill, M. (2017) *Police Views on Private Security: Findings from an On-line Survey*. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research.

Section 2. From Aims to Objectives

- 2.1 The security sector – incorporating private security suppliers and corporate security departments - seeks to be recognised for its role in protecting its clients as well as the public from harm, providing essential public protection services which should be more widely embraced by state agencies (as well as private ones) and should be developed as an accountable and able service for good.
- 2.2 The strategy is premised on three overarching aims. They are:
1. To call upon the Government to develop a strategy for harnessing the enormous contribution of the private sector to tackle a range of offences. So much good work is undertaken, but in pockets, it is often unconnected and largely uncoordinated; considerable potential is not systematically harnessed at all. This is to the detriment of the public good. The security sector needs to provide the impetus and information and use its influence to make such a strategy attractive. From this sector specific approaches – such as improved collaboration with the police – can be developed and given momentum.
 2. The private security sector must commit to developing an ability to talk with one voice, and at the very least a more united voice. Its ability to present the very important case of private security in a whole range of contexts and arenas is undermined by the fact that it is disparate and fragmented.
 3. The private security sector must commit to highlighting the enormous benefits it generates including for the public good, and to enhance these. Much of what it does goes unheralded and is under acknowledged and if those working in the area, and its biggest supporters are not highlighting the good that it does then no wonder others fail to understand its value.
- 2.3 These aims are informed by seven objectives. They straddle wide territory and cover at least two key elements. The first relates to improving the image of private security – that includes drawing attention to the many things it already does. The second relates to tackling specific barriers to the wider engagement of private security. The two overlap of course; one barrier to engaging security is its negative image. Indeed, many of the objectives overlap and they reinforce each other. What this strategy principally is keen to do is to map a path to harnessing the potential of private security and private business (and their security personnel). It is aimed at the strategic level, which has never been properly addressed. This is a prerequisite to tackling the many operational and tactical issues which raise their heads (and receive more coverage).

2.4 Without a strong lead from the top any improvements will be piecemeal. Professor Ron Clarke, whose name is so closely associated with developing practical ways of preventing crime, has noted that one of the key strategies for Government moving forward is to effectively harness the enormous potential in the private sector to help prevent crimes that impact on both business and the public.¹¹ After all, the evidence is building up that one of the best explanations for the general crime drop that most of the western world has experienced is good security, and much of it private security.¹² Each of the objectives is now discussed.

To highlight the key role of private security in enabling business to be effective.

2.5 The private security sector undersells itself. One study has sought to challenge the view that because security is an intangible its benefits cannot be articulated.¹³ Amongst the benefits discussed are:

- It helps prevent direct victimisation and reduce its consequences. At the extreme the victimisation of people from crime can cost lives and often causes misery. Workplaces play a key role in preventing crime.
- A business can fail because of crimes committed against it, it can go out of business and with that people can lose their jobs and a public service is forfeited.
- Security reduces loss and the risk of loss and therefore contributes to profits. Some argued the costs of security are outweighed by the benefits that are generated.¹⁴
- Security protects against damage to reputation that can come from being a victim (especially a careless one).
- Security creates competitive advantage; in one way good security can mean organisations can trade in areas that might otherwise be too risky, in another way building security into products (e.g. cars and mobile phones) can increase their attractiveness.
- Good security management is based on good risk management and this can facilitate more informed commercial decision-making.
- Security can and should enable a quicker response to an incident once it has occurred. Effective business continuity can be crucial to survival in some cases.

¹¹ Personal communication, 5th June 2016.

¹² van Dijk, J., Tseloni, A., and Farrell, G. (2012) (editors) *Closing the Doors: New Perspectives on the International Crime Falls*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

¹³ Gill, M., Howell, C. and Randall, A. (2015) *Beyond the Protection of Assets: the Broader Benefits of Security*. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research.

¹⁴ The costs of security failure can put some companies out of business and result in the loss of lives. For a recent report which highlights the costs of a cyber breach, see: CGI (2017) *The Cyber Value Connection: Revealing the Link between Cyber Vulnerability and Company Value*. The security sector itself has not promoted the extent to which good security is economically beneficial.
https://www.cgi-group.co.uk/sites/default/files/files_uk/pdf/cybervalueconnection_full_report_final_lr.pdf

- Security makes people safer, and this contributes to well being at work (just think how much feeling unsafe would contribute to workplace dissatisfaction).
- Security can help create a trusting environment, crucial for business success and undermining when absent.
- Good security contributes to effective Corporate Social Responsibility, which is a legal requirement.
- Good security in the workplace protects the employees, the customers of the client (all of which is in the public interest) and in addition helps protect the general public directly.

2.6 Much of the expertise for tackling key offences, not least cyber crime is in the private sector where in fact the role of the police has been seen to be comparatively minor.¹⁵ In fact, there is an overlap in business between good security and good business. For example, one survey¹⁶ has revealed that more than 8 in 10 (81%) of a survey of security specialists believed an alert workforce was the best defence against cyber crime; and nearly as many (79%) felt physical security was crucial to tackling cyber crime. Moreover, internal security expertise can be used to create security awareness for staff outside work.¹⁷

2.7 There are benefits of having good security that extend beyond its immediate environment referred to as a 'diffusion of benefits'.¹⁸ A locale (a business, a housing estate, a community) may develop a reputation for being good at security and offenders stay away from not just that locale but nearby places too because they cannot be sure how far the good security stretches. In a different way security measures often have other benefits, so CCTV can detect offenders it can also be part of a system to identify shopping habits and behaviour which are used for marketing purposes.

2.8 One well known writer and broadcaster on crime prevention has argued that: 'security is not a sticking plaster that hides a wound. It's a vaccination.'¹⁹ In other words it solves a problem by taking away a cause, namely opportunity; if people are not given the opportunity to commit crime they will not do so. Indeed, the whole area of reducing opportunities is a significant one and the principles are underpinned by a strong body of research evidence.²⁰

¹⁵ In our survey 65.5% agreed or strongly agreed that most expertise for fighting cyber crime rests in agencies outside the police. See also, Wall D. S. (2013) Policing Identity Crimes, *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 23.4, 437-46

¹⁶ Gill, M. and Howell, C. (2016) *Tackling Cyber Crime: the Role of Private Security*. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research.

¹⁷ That said, there is more that business could be doing to prevent cyber crime, see: IT Governance Ltd (2015) *Cyber Security: A Critical Business Issue* (www.itgovernance.co.uk).

¹⁸ For a discussion see: Johnson, S., Guerette, R., and Bowers, K., (2012) 'Crime Displacement and Diffusion of Benefits'. In Farrington, D. and Welsh, B. (Eds) (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Crime Prevention*. Oxford, p. 338.

¹⁹ Nick Ross, personal communication, 16 January 2017.

²⁰ One of the best discussions on this issue is still: Felson, M. and R.V. Clarke (1998) *Opportunity Makes the Thief. Police Research Series*, Paper 98. Policing and Reducing Crime Unit, Research, Development and Statistics Directorate. London: Home Office.

2.9 Participants in our survey of security specialists, as well as interviewees were asked their views on ways in which private security working in business generated broader public benefits and they raised a range of points:

- security surveys of premises used to determine the risk profile typically include an understanding of crime in the surrounding area. The responses then may and do sometimes involve collaborating with communities on shared crime prevention goals.
- private measures, such as CCTV or security officers help to identify, build up information on, and apprehend offenders who are wanted for other offences sometimes serious ones. Corporate security departments regularly contribute to the public good in this way.²¹
- where crime in the workplace is tackled effectively it sets an example, which individuals may replicate in other contexts. Staff acquire security skills and knowledge at work that has broader benefits outside work.
- security officers are sometimes trained to undertake specialist tasks at work, such as anti terror awareness, which can be available for the police to use, especially in emergencies. Some pointed to security officers being the ‘eyes and ears’ of the police.
- security teams don’t just protect business or workplaces for themselves, they also protect places which the public can and do use (e.g. shopping centres)
- private security suppliers generate new ideas and technologies that enhance all security, as one respondent noted: ‘Without security product developers, we security practitioners would be wielding clubs. The producers of great products and their technology as well as those that design comprehensive security systems and practices are critical to our current and future successes’. (16-2-17, 5.08)
- corporate security teams don’t just prevent crime they also investigate offences (e.g. fraud) and sometimes provide ready to prosecute cases requiring minimal police involvement.
- one survey respondent said his corporate security team provided free advice to charities and small businesses.
- corporate security teams help keep the organisation honest, providing: ‘reassurance of company integrity, especially in the area of accountability to stakeholders (may include the public)’. (19-2-17, 9.01).
- more often private security undertakes work that would not be provided by the police; it would be too resource intensive. It often does so at no or little direct cost to the public purse.

²¹ See for example, Hopkins, M. and Gill, M. (2017) Business, Crime and Crime Prevention: Emerging Debates and Future Challenges. In Tilley, N. and Sidebottom, A. (eds) *Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge. Also: Lippert, R. Walby, K. (2014) (eds) *Corporate Security in the 21st Century*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

- being a first responder to incidents (especially in private space but sometimes beyond and often when the public are present)²²
- managing incidents so that that a police response is not necessary²³
- managing incidents so that police involvement is optimised
- helping with crime scene protection
- helping when searches are required
- providing additional resources such as dogs, scanning detection, forensic services
- providing CCTV images
- providing guarding services (in one example at crime scenes to release officers for other duties)
- assisting with emergencies
- generating and sharing intelligence (that otherwise would not be available)
- co-ordinating intelligence and other types of information to show trends, to predict vulnerabilities
- providing real time information on offences
- reducing the risk of the company losing money and staff and others being victimised
- employing former police officers so that their expertise is not lost
- providing support to the police when needed (such as Operation Griffin in some areas where it operates)
- developing and sharing new technologies
- safeguarding of the vulnerable

2.10 The security sector needs to 'talk-up' its contribution, after all it is evidence based. In a whole range of areas, including in Government and in policing, the understanding of private security needs to be improved.²⁴ The principal needs to be focussed on seeking engagement as a matter of practice. There is an awareness raising process to be pursued for all parties.

²² Respondents to our survey appeared outraged by this idea principally because in the survey they interpreted this as rivalling their work. They seemed largely unaware that there are many situations where private security is the only response available such as in workplaces. Future surveys need to address this by a more focussed question but it leaves scope for suggesting that this is further evidence of the need to raise awareness amongst police of what the private security sector does.

²³ Interestingly, in the survey of police officers the view was expressed that security officers' work is 'administrative' rather than 'policing'. This suggests work is needed on how private security resolves issues including those that prevented a police call.

²⁴ As part of this research 6 interviewees from the insurance sector contributed ideas on the role of security and the potential for insurance – as a key stakeholder - to drive standards. Those who claim this has considerable potential appear to overstate their position. While a lot of good work goes on and there are a range of important initiatives (especially in the counter terrorism space), insurers, speaking generally, are more concerned about other threats, not least fire. Any expectations of a major role for the insurance sector in changing/influencing security will need to provide a convincing rationale and a road-map that recognises the current foci of each.

To challenge the perception that the role of private security is marginal in protecting the public; this is often incorrect and misleading

- 2.11 Just to be clear, this is not an argument that private security could replace the police on the frontline; it cannot and should not. While some police felt this was a danger, it was not one that private security personnel typically advocated.
- 2.12 One of the shifts in thinking that is taking place this century is the recognition at Government levels that the effective protection of the public from crime requires the active involvement of the private sector and of private security companies and their corporate security departments. One leading scholar has described this as an 'inescapable reality', noting that protecting people from harm is about much more than what the modern police do.²⁵
- 2.13 So while the public police are the key players in many spheres of public protection, they are never the only ones and sometimes may not be the most important (for example in tackling cyber crime and in being first responders to most offences when they occur in workplaces covered by security personnel).
- 2.14 It is common mistake, and a serious error, to suggest that the aims of private and public security are always different. More often than not they are the same and in so many ways.²⁶ Crime and disorder is bad for the public police and bad for business too; it interrupts trade; a secure transport system is arguably at least as important for transport providers as it is for the police; a lack of crime incidents in a shopping mall is as important for the managers/owners/security team of the shopping mall as it is for the police. Moreover, both the police and private security consist of people who, thankfully, normally have a shared interest in security. It is good for the business when people are protected, and that is good for the public interest too.
- 2.15 Often a jaundiced view is adopted towards private security. It is a nonsense to suggest that the police has a monopoly over good policing practice as it is to suggest that problems of incompetence, integrity are exclusive characteristics of the private sector. Both have a tradition of success and failures and inevitably will. These points have been made by Professor Philip Stenning who has summarised some of the key issues in this area as follows:

²⁵ Stenning, P. (2016) Policing markets in a globalized world: waiting for another voice. Presentation at the 'Markets in Policing: the Appetite for and organisational cultural and moral limits to markets in public policing' conference, University of Leeds, 11th July.

²⁶ For example, see, White, A. and Gill, M (2013) The Transformation of Policing: From Ratios to Rationalities. *British Journal of Criminology*. 53, 1, January, pp. 74-93.

- The effective protection of the public will always involve a mixture of good police work, private police work and voluntary effort.
- In some areas of protecting the public the role of the private sector and private police is greater than the state police.
- Most often the police and the private sector will share a commitment to public safety;²⁷ they will have identical aims. Too often the differences are accentuated rather than the similarities.
- While both the police and private security have been associated with poor performance and unethical conduct, more often they are both examples of effective policing at the levels they operate at and areas they deliver in.

To highlight the special and sometimes unique capabilities of the private security sector as recognised by Government.

2.16 There are plenty of references to the value of the security sector from Government documents but these are not co-ordinated and can often be difficult to find. Here, as an example, we review some Government strategies, this is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive; they largely indicate how reference to the work of the security sector is expressed in operational and tactical terms rather than strategic.

Counter Terror

2.17 The UK's strategy for countering terrorism, *Contest*, was published in 2011,²⁸ and based on the four principles, the four 'Ps' of Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare. The strategy includes a commitment to 'seek dialogue with the private sector' (11.3) in protecting the Critical National Infrastructure and recognizes the protection of crowded places will 'depend on close relationships with the private sector, who own much of the infrastructure and the systems that need to be protected'. (7.6)

2.18 The latest update report on progress, published in 2016,²⁹ noted the role of the private sector in tackling terrorist financing not least via the Joint Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce initiatives. (2.20) There was also a specific mention of private security albeit in quite a limited way: 'Where relevant, we continue to develop opportunities for the UK security industry to support future Olympic and Paralympic Games hosts in delivering a secure games.'³⁰ (2.78)

²⁷ From the survey it was clear that among officers – and especially those not in senior ranks - the public benefit ethos of private security was not apparent.

²⁸ The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism (2011) *Contest*, was published in 2011.²⁸ Cm 8123. Secretary of State for the Home Department. A new version is due to be published in 2017. Interviewees noted that this is likely to include a greater focus on engagement with the private sector.

²⁹ The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism CONTEST: Annual Report for 2015. Published July 2016.

³⁰ The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism CONTEST: Annual Report for 2014. Published March 2015. Cm9048

- 2.19 However, it was the previous report that outlined the potentially more far reaching opportunities for the private security sector, including ‘the creation of a UK ‘security brand’ (i.e. a hallmark of excellence in the UK security industry³¹ to provide reassurance to customers) and an online ‘exports portal’ to provide UK companies with readily accessible information on overseas markets’ (page 21).
- 2.20 The key roles for the private sector include:
- sharing intelligence
 - taking part in specific initiatives (such as money laundering outlined above)
 - helping to identify threats at an early stage and raising and acting on suspicions
 - using leverage with workforce to raise awareness of threats and potential mitigating factors; participating in the tackling ‘radicalisation’ agenda
 - ensuring workplaces are safe and secure and protect people’s civil liberties
 - recognising that it is the primary defender of the Critical National Infrastructure and crowded places
 - and being prepared and ensuring stakeholders are prepared should a crisis occur.

Serious and organised crime

- 2.21 The strategy was released alongside the then new National Crime Agency in 2013 using the same 4 Ps as guiding principles as outlined in the counter terror strategy. Unsurprisingly therefore the approach to this threat includes the need to engage in partnerships. Specific mention of the private sector is noted, for example in making a commitment to ‘explore how private sector forensic accountancy skills can be brought into the end-to-end asset recovery process so that the maximum profits are identified, pursued and recovered.’ (4.52).
- 2.22 And much more generally there is awareness of the potential of the UK security industry to influence overseas, ‘In common with counterterrorism, we intend to coordinate capacity building much more closely with our UK security industry which has developed many of the capabilities which third countries now require.’ (4.75). While it mentions a commitment to improving organised crime communications with the private sector it does not say anything about private security. The ways that private security can help tackle organised crime include:
- making known and available specific expertise that can help bring offenders to justice (such as forensic skills) perhaps in the form of Specials
 - providing robust anti corruption strategies

³¹ This laudable aim needs to be accompanied by a plan.

- having effective security in place to protect against a range of threats
- support relevant initiatives such as Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership (CISP)
- and sharing intelligence.

Crime Prevention

- 2.23 The National Police Chiefs Council has endorsed a National Policing Crime Prevention Strategy³² that outlines the aim of preventive policing as ‘Fewer victims, fewer offences, and less demand on policing achieved by addressing the causes of crime, utilising sophisticated partnership oriented problem solving.’ It recognizes the need for ‘targeted and effective crime prevention’ via work with ‘partners’ at different levels while supporting ‘innovation and the sharing of ideas’.
- 2.24 The strategy includes an aim to form a group to drive the preventive policing agenda, and to drive demands on the police via ‘the effective use of specialist prevention staff’. Again there is no explicit reference to the private security sector (nor any other potential partner), although there rests the possibility for the sector to make a claim to be a key partner in understanding problems and being a part of at least some solutions.
- 2.25 Key ways private business generally and private security can help in crime prevention include:
- providing effective and easy to use security measures
 - updating mitigation measures in the wake of new or changing threats
 - being committed to crime prevention and instilling crime prevention culture
 - understanding specific threats to organisations, even as they change and responding to them effectively
 - helping to create a crime free environment within local communities which is both good for business and people
 - instilling staff with responsibility to be alert to crime problems and arming them with information about how to get help and how to respond (including when outside work)
 - and support crime prevention groups/initiatives (such as restorative justice where the business is a victim³³); and the police as and when appropriate.

³² This is in addition to the Home Office Modern Crime Prevention Strategy launched in March 2016 which takes a rather different focus:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509831/6.1770_Modern_Crime_Prevention_Strategy_final_WEB_version.pdf

³³ For example, see: Gill, M. and Howell, C. (2017) *An evaluation of a restorative justice trial: where the victims are businesses and the offenders are insurance fraudsters*. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research and Consultancy International.

Tackling Fraud

- 2.26 There is more than one reference document for tackling fraud. A National Fraud Strategy was published in 2011,³⁴ although the organisation that published it has both changed its name and then been subsumed within the National Crime Agency (NCA). Meanwhile the City of London Police became the national police lead for economic crime.³⁵ In its annual report it outlined a range of initiatives which suggest working with at least corporate security/fraud departments in facilitating easier reporting and progress checking of frauds; sharing information of fraud trends (at least to some businesses) and using expertise from Specials.
- 2.27 In February 2016 the Joint Fraud Taskforce was launched, a partnership between the Home Office, City of London Police, Financial Conduct Authority, National Crime Agency, Bank of England, Cifas and some banks to build up intelligence and coordinate the response to fraud. This recognizes that much of the information needed to police effectively rests in private hands.
- 2.28 In fact the private sector funds state police initiatives that are crucial to tackling specific types of frauds, for example the payments industry fund The Dedicated Cheque and Plastic Crime Unit; and the insurers fund the Insurance Fraud Enforcement Department.
- 2.29 The ways in which the private sector supports anti fraud strategies includes:
- funding dedicated police units
 - supporting industry initiatives
 - sharing information and knowledge about fraud; working with the police to identify and arrest offenders
 - being good at identifying and responding to the ‘insider threat’
 - providing technologies and mitigation measures which are up-to-date and work effectively
 - keeping the workforce alert to professional and personal risks of fraud with insights on appropriate responses
 - and work effectively with initiatives designed to detect and prevent fraud.

National Security Strategy

- 2.30 The National Security Strategy sits alongside the Strategic Defence and Security Review³⁶ to assess and then respond to the national

³⁴ National Fraud Strategic Authority (2011) *The National Fraud Strategy: A new approach to combating fraud*. London: National Fraud Strategic Authority.

³⁵ City of London Police (2016) *National Police Lead for Economic Crime, Annual Review 2015-16*.

³⁶ *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015: A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom*. Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty. Cm 9161. November.

threats faced from other countries. While much of the strategy is marginal to the discussion here, what is important is that it reaffirms a commitment to tackling terrorism and extremism, as well as organised crime, and to 'remain a world leader in cyber security' (1.4), and the first of the three objectives is to 'protect our people, at home, in our Overseas Territories and abroad, and to protect our territory, economic security, infrastructure and way of life.' (1.10)

- 2.31 Moreover, the third objective is to 'promote our prosperity' recognising the link between economic prosperity and national security. One of the stated objectives here is, 'Work more closely with the private sector and allies to increase our innovation and strengthen its contribution to our national security.' (1.15)
- 2.32 Another factor merits attention here and that is the recognition of the role of technology in facilitating better (national) security, for example, 'new detection and screening technologies can better protect our borders, CNI and crowded places.' (3.28).
- 2.33 Moreover, 'Large parts of our infrastructure are in the private sector. The Government will work with infrastructure owners and operators to mitigate risks to our CNI from malicious attack and from natural hazards.' (4.136).
- 2.34 The National Crime Agency, the UK's hub for tackling serious and organised crime, in August 2015 published a document on partnership working.³⁷ This is mostly focused on law enforcement agencies although recognizing the need to liaise 'closely with public and private sector partners to reduce the vulnerabilities that criminals currently exploit, particularly around border security' (appendix D).
- 2.35 There are some key points that emerge from this very brief review. The first is that the role of private security is sometimes recognised but the ways in which its potential can be maximised is never fully articulated; the focus is on things it can do not much less how they can be harnessed. This overlaps the second point, there is no strategy from the state about how it can make the most of the expertise and the good will of the private security sector. Good practice exists, but there is no strategic direction to meaningful engagement even in areas that are of a national high priority. That said, the private security sector does not make that easy.

³⁷ National Crime Agency (2015) The NCA Commitment to Working in Partnership with UK Operational Partners. London: NCA.

To improve public perceptions of the private security sector, this includes the need to improve media perceptions of private security that are often negative.

- 2.36 One study has referred to security as a ‘tainted trade’.³⁸ Entering the search term ‘security officer’ in a search engine invariably returns images of serious looking men, folded arms, sunglasses, walkie-talkies and black ties. Scroll far enough and you will see a few smiles and a few women, but all set within the same boundaries. It is an old fashioned stereotype for a rapidly changing industry.³⁹
- 2.37 The interest in changing the public image is not new.⁴⁰ One writer promoting a security company across the Atlantic has seen the need to address image problem as a process of ‘safeguarding the industry’, noting, ‘*Cops and firefighters might have a revered place in pop culture, but the security guard is continually mocked, which leads to marginalization of the industry as a whole.*’⁴¹
- 2.38 There are specific examples in the UK too, where concerns about private security, not least when it involves managing CCTV images, creates anxiety. The point is that the media image can be adverse, one journalist, referring to a Channel 4 programme about CCTV operatives, concluded, ‘One of the CCTV workers got so carried away with his omniscience, he compared himself to God. These self-appointed moral guardians were having far too much fun for my liking.’⁴²

Changing the image

- 2.39 The UK construction industry has faced and still faces a range of image problems which bear a striking similarity to those faced in the security sector, they include: a ‘macho’ image; a reputation for short-term, low paid, unskilled work; undesirable working conditions; the existence of cowboy operators; skill shortages and a failure to attract young people; a lack of diversity not least the male domination and the under representation of women.⁴³ One writer has criticised the various

³⁸ Thumala A, Goold B and Loader I (2011) A tainted trade? Moral ambivalence and legitimation work in the private security industry. *British Journal of Sociology* 62: 283–303

³⁹ See, Rabena, R. (2015) (<http://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/86377-its-time-to-reconsider-security-officer-stereotypes>)

⁴⁰ Criscuoli E. J (1988) The Time Has Come to Acknowledge Security as a Profession. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. July, vol. 498 no. 1 98-107

⁴¹ Everson, K. (2014) Safeguarding the Industry. *Chief Learning Officer*. 6th October, (<http://www.clomedia.com/2014/10/06/safeguarding-the-security-industry/>)

⁴² Hogan, M. (2014) CCTV: Caught on Camera, Channel 4, review: ‘strangely compelling’. *The Telegraph*. 9th June. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/tv-and-radio-reviews/10887566/CCTV-Caught-on-Camera-Channel-4-review-strangely-compelling.html>

⁴³ For a discussion, see for example, Ginige, K N, Amaratunga, R D G and Haigh, R (2007) Improving construction industry image to enhance women representation in the industry workforce. In: Boyd, D (Ed) Procs 23rd Annual ARCOM Conference, 3-5 September 2007, Belfast, UK, Association of Researchers in Construction Management, 377-385; and Proverbs, D G, Holt, G D and Cheok, H Y (2000) Construction industry problems: the views of UK construction directors. In: Akintoye, A (Ed.),

schemes that have been run to help change the image because they fail to tackle the root cause of the image problem noting that the:

“image of construction” is a symptom of a more deep-rooted reputation issue. Bluntly, the industry’s reputation is not just the result of what it says and what others say about it, but – importantly – the result of what it does and how it behaves.... the ‘macho’ culture on many sites, anecdotes about racist, sexist, homophobic and just plain foul language... and the painfully slow progress in addressing diversity issues, is it any wonder that the industry currently known as construction has an image problem?⁴⁴

- 2.40 Wilkinson argues that construction needs to: identify changes across its many disciplines; run long-term and integrated pan sector campaigns; work collaboratively with trade associations as well as customers and end users, focussing on ‘fixing the reasons behind the image’.
- 2.41 A review of public relations campaigns have highlighted the need to focus on the good features of the industry and showcase it. This requires an approach that identifies benefits (as outlined in this strategy) and then facilitating the flow about these positives from the industry to society generally and the stakeholders of the security sector. A focus on ‘positive image campaigns’ using various modes of communication has much to commend it,⁴⁵ indeed, it is long overdue. To do this effectively though it will need a more unified security sector to generate and implement it.

To develop structures that enable the state sector to liaise more effectively with private security

- 2.42 The security world is not easy to communicate with given its fragmented structure, coupled with the fact that often it is not just a matter of state and private security collaborating, the private security sector’s clients are also stakeholders to agreements about any form of engagement. The need to communicate effectively has increased with the publication of the Government’s (draft) Industrial Strategy which does not feature security specifically but seeks to drive growth and extend excellence across business and many of those featured overlap or engage with security.⁴⁶

16th Annual ARCOM Conference, 6-8 September 2000, Glasgow Caledonian University. Association of Researchers in Construction Management, Vol. 1, 73- 81.

⁴⁴ Wilkinson, P. (2016) Chartered Institute of Public Relations. 52-53 Russell Square, London WC1B 4HP.

⁴⁵ One contributor to a group discussion posed the idea of working with script writers of a major television drama programme to write private security into the script fulfilling a positive role and then generating publicity and debate about it.

⁴⁶ Building Our Industrial Strategy, Green Paper, January 2017. London: HM Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611705/building-our-industrial-strategy-green-paper.pdf. This BSIA has submitted a response.

- 2.43 The primary coordinating body is the Security and Resilience Industry Suppliers Community (RISC) which is an alliance of security associations, formed in 2007 at the instigation of the Home Office. RISC was therefore the conduit the Home Office used for liaising with the security sector when it formed the Joint Security & Resilience Centre (JSaRC), an initiative to provide a point of access for the security sector into Government.
- 2.44 It's aim is 'to act as the front door for the security sector to access the complex security machinery of Government. It will be Government's primary means of coordinating industry support, refining requirements, understanding the industry offer, and sharing strategic priorities'.⁴⁷ It is too early in its development to judge its success, albeit that it offers potential to improve coordination and engagement.
- 2.45 In practice there are a range of bodies that act as a point of liaison and coordination fulfilling a range of different functions. Some of these are sector specific, for example, CIFAS in the financial sector, and the National Business Crime Solutions in retailing. They provide a coordination point for working with members and law enforcement and they have managed to sustain themselves. Crucially they each compile data that are then used to develop trends and assist with a variety of police operations.
- 2.46 The Police and Security Group (PaS) has acted as a liaison between security groups and the police in London and is planning to extend its remit to a national focus. The Security Commonwealth is an alliance of security groups, approaching fifty at the time of writing, that has as part of its remit a wish to represent the security sector to outside stakeholders. These, and others besides, serve important functions, but neither PaS nor the Security Commonwealth has funding nor its own public facing website.
- 2.47 While great strides have been made there is a need to better develop the mechanism for the security sector to present itself collectively. This will inevitably be a long term task. In our survey of security professionals, there was skepticism this was possible, with respondents pointing to opposing commercial interests; the vast number of different groups amounting to 'too many voices'; while another, reflecting the skeptical voice noted: 'this has been trialled in many guises and it always becomes self serving or non effective'. Those who thought this was possible noted that it will need to be seen as a long-term aim, and one added 'would need a new 'broad church' body'. There is certainly potential combining, as a starting point, RISC's access to Government with the Security Commonwealth's reach across the private security sector.

⁴⁷ Personal communication 16th May 2017.

To develop a strategy for working with the police

2.48 The police service presents a potentially special case and merits a discussion all of its own.

2.49 In our research with police officers it has become apparent that the private security sector should not take for granted the view that it is seen by officers as an important or a good partner in the fight against crime.⁴⁸ In our survey⁴⁹ 59% of police officers agreed with a statement suggesting private security plays a minor role in protecting the public. And over a half (55%) disagreed with the suggestion that given the current funding squeeze collaborative working with private security was essential, in fact about 3 in 10 felt private security was 'tolerated' by officers. Most thought that police officers (55%) and the public (53%) had a negative view of private security. Over three quarters (78%) did not believe private security enhanced the police brand, and most felt it could not be trusted (58%) generally, and specifically to be impartial (79%), and to charge a fair price for any work undertaken (67%). The following comment exemplifies the anxiety some felt:

What an absolute joke and waste of money private security firms are. INVEST in the Police! The amount of money wasted on these shady greedy, only interested in profit companies is astonishing!!!!!!

(Police Respondent)

2.50 That said, there were some positives. When asked whether there are individuals in the private sector that they respect for their excellent work more answered positively (43%) than negatively (17%). The police did value the use of CCTV images (79%), developing security measures (60%), providing information/intelligence (57%), and more than 7 in 10 valued their role in helping in policing festivals, major sporting events and the night time economy in part because they were viewed as profit making. But that was the point, where it ventured into the more public realm there was widespread skepticism. For example the vast majority declared against the idea of private security acting as first responders to incidents (80%), and very few thought its role was important in protecting crime scenes (8%) and some comments suggested severe resistance to each.

To clarify forms of accountability

2.51 Police officers believe private security is accountable to profit-seeking activities and that makes them suspicious (79% said so), and

⁴⁸ Back in 1992 Less Johnston wrote: "Despite the growth of links it is clear that relations between the sectors are as often as not based on mutual suspicion and avoidance." Johnston, L. *The Rebirth of Private Policing*. Routledge: London; p.194. It has long been noted that the police are sceptical about private security, see: McManus, M. (1995) *From Fate to Choice: Private Bobbies, Public Beats*. Avebury: Aldershot.

⁴⁹ Howell, C and Gill, M. (2017) *op cit*.

undermines their confidence (78%), not least when that commercial acumen can be used to the disadvantage of the police (52%). Thinking about ways in which private security can be held accountable then is important.

2.52 While there are many debates about how private security should be regulated, one recent paper has highlighted the benefits in what they call a ‘civilizing’ approach, in short focussing on aligning what private security does with the public interest.⁵⁰ Although this is presented in a theoretical paper, the authors are working on ways in which this can be practically expressed, and the output will in part focus on the ways in which the private security sector highlights the public benefit values it shares with the police.⁵¹

2.53 A big issue though is to develop mechanisms that hold private security to account. One managing director who provided security services to local authorities argued that in many ways his company acted as if it was a public service and was accountable in a number of ways:

- The staff (or some at least) are sanctioned by the state evidenced by being awarded CSAS powers
- Their work is accountable and transparent in that any complaints are made to their public service employer who treat them just like complaints made against its own staff
- They work with public money and deliver a service to the public based on a shared culture and understanding of responsibilities (where the police role is always primary)
- If they are not effective they can lose the contract; the services could be conducted by state employers or passed to another provider

2.54 There is certainly evidence of a commitment by private security suppliers to wanting to act in the public good⁵² while at the same time the public police have been drawing on business principles in the way operations have developed.⁵³ An important feature of ensuring accountability is to align the commitment to public good and use this as a key component of collaborative working; on this issue the two parties have much in common. Up until now the perception has been that private security cannot be accountable when this is patently not true.

⁵⁰ Loader, I. and White, A. (2015) How can we better align private security with the public interest? Towards a civilizing model of regulation, *Regulation and Governance*. 22 Dec 2015, DOI: 10.1111/rego.12109.

⁵¹ Personal communication with Dr Adam White, 4th May 2017.

⁵² For discussion, see: Hare, F.B. (2009) Private Sector Contributions to National Cyber Security: A Preliminary Analysis. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 6, 1, pp 1-20.; White, A. (2010), *The Politics of Private Security: Regulation, Reform and Re-Legitimation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; White, A. (2012), ‘The New Political Economy of Private Security’, *Theoretical Criminology* 16/1: 85-101.

⁵³ For example, see: Ayling, J., Grabowsky, P. and Shearing, C. (2009) *Lengthening the Arm of the Law: Enhancing Police Resources in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- 2.55 In the survey over a half (54%) of respondents believed that if the police were responsible for accrediting private security it would increase trust.

To facilitate better information sharing

- 2.56 From our research, one of the key issues to consider should be a clarification of the principles for information sharing, and guides to the best ways of maximizing effectiveness. In our survey 89% of police officers felt that businesses needed to be more committed to sharing information with the police, while less, but over a half (55%) felt the police should match this. This issue is a confusing one. We have been made aware of contexts where information is effectively exchanged. We have been pointed to examples where template agreements can be used. Yet despite this there are concerns on both sides (the security sector and the police). Put simply, from a private/corporate security perspective there can be concerns around issues of confidentiality not least when competitive advantage is at the forefront and police colleagues are not always seen to be on message, and frustration at the perceived lack of use or feedback on what is provided. One interviewee, a representative of business, felt that too often businesses pleaded for more information from law enforcement without at the same time offering reassurance about how it will be safeguarded and the uses to which it will be put. Moreover, that business has not justified why it should be trusted with more information than 'joe public'. And from the police side concerns include the condemnation that would follow if ever information 'got into the wrong hands'; this amounts to a concern about the integrity of some potential recipients.
- 2.57 The issue is also a complex one; it is more than generating templates to cover legal issues. In one focus group discussion with police and security personnel it was clear that templates existed but were undermined by police managers (in particular) being uncertain of the rules governing exchange and being cautious (at best) and disruptive (at worst). Some contributors admitted that exchange was often based on knowing the people concerned (worries were often eased when police were dealing with former officers), although this placed limits on what the recipient could do with what they received since it had not been passed on officially.
- 2.58 A key part of any Government strategy for harnessing the best from private security, will be better facilitating the effective exchange of information. This requires a consideration of the strategic, structural and practical problems that are omnipresent (despite examples of good practice), and engaging 'with people with authority to deliver' as one interviewee noted. A key issue will be to properly understand the understandable (and very real) concern that some information may leak with the potential benefits of sharing.

Other barriers

- 2.59 It has been noted that Police and Crime Commissioners elected in Labour areas or following a Labour party line are likely to be anti private security. This may be an over statement. One interviewee who has studied the role of PCCs suggested that a more prudent approach would be to distinguish between privatising front line policing, which is problematic (including for some non Labour PCCs), to engaging with the private security sector generally and private security specifically to help with policing. One recent report has praised the role of PCCs in being innovative and for their work on ‘collaboration’ and specifically mentions positive work with private security.⁵⁴
- 2.60 Another major barrier to working with private security is a lack of clarity about which (if any) law enforcement activities must be left to the police alone to carry out.⁵⁵ This inhibits a selling of the private security message and presents a barrier to a meaningful discussion of the ways in which private security can work with the police. Prior research has suggested⁵⁶ that contact with the public where there is a risk of violence would feature prominently but clearly this is an area where licensed security officers and door supervisors are trained in.⁵⁷ Clearly the training is limited; security do not fulfil the same role as the police, rather as initial responders sometimes enabling the incident to be managed without calling upon the more expert and costly public service.
- 2.61 The Minister of State for Policing, Fire and Criminal Justice, working with the Home Office, NPCC, and HMIC should seek to clarify which roles, if any, should remain the exclusive responsibility of the police. It would be opportune to consider the adoption of primary authority for a range of activities, such as data sharing, CSAS powers, so that approval in one police area does not need to be repeated in another.

The police view in perspective

- 2.62 There is clearly a need to set up a better structure for collaboration. Police officers tend to adopt a view, to summarise the general impression from across the findings, what private security does is ok, but it needs to stick to that and not get involved with real policing and, as one respondent said ‘erode the office of constable’. This, despite the

⁵⁴ Crowhurst, L. (2016) Reducing Crime Through Innovation: the Role of PCCs. Police Foundation/Barrow Cadbury Trust. <http://www.police-foundation.org.uk/publications/police-and-crime-commissioners-3/reducing-crime-through-innovation-the-role-of-pccs>.

⁵⁵ See, Home Office (1995) *Review of Police Core and Ancillary Tasks*, HMSO: London. Over half the sample of police officers (55%) did not think that the division of responsibilities between private security and police was clear.

⁵⁶ Gill, M. (2015) Senior Police Officers’ Perspectives on Private Security: Sceptics, Pragmatists and Embracers. *Policing and Society*. 25(3): 276-293. DOI:10.1080/10439463.2013.865736

⁵⁷ Some officers noted in the research that for them to have faith in security work levels of training would need to be improved.

fact that in business a wide range of policing responses take place, from responding to incidents, guarding crime scenes, investigating and take statements and so on (often by former police officers).

- 2.63 It is tempting to suggest that the police needs to quickly be encouraged to adopt a strategy for working with private security, but on the basis of these findings that might involve quite a limited range of engagements and it is doubtful it will be viewed as a priority. There is a NPCC lead for private security, but its incumbent has a high profile role and there needs to be a sense of realism about how much time and effort can be devoted to such an end.⁵⁸ Indeed, about 6 in 10 (59%) officers felt that was a lack of leadership in the police service on how best to work with private security. That said, the police need to be encouraged to engage to develop such a strategy and the best starting point would be for private security to focus on the areas that such a strategy might cover and to build up awareness of all the possibilities and the safeguards that would need to accompany them.
- 2.64 Some strategic issues are worth considering. If private security is to raise standards it will need to think about not just what training is necessary, but who does it. Over half (54%) of officers felt that police trust in private security would increase if the police were involved in training them (which could be undertaken at a profit), and a lack of training was a concern. Similarly, if the police felt that private security operated to a higher standard (and operated consistently highly across the country), if they were reassured about the public good benefits, then barriers to engagement would be reduced.
- 2.65 Overall negativity from the police is only partly due to a lack of awareness of private security, but rather because police are yet to be impressed by the skills and abilities and the regimes and ethos that underpins its work. This needs to be addressed. Finally, the security sector needs to understand police priorities and highlight how it can help meet them. This needs to be undertaken on a force by force and initiative by initiative basis.

For the security sector to raise its game

- 2.66 There is more to be done than for the security sector to shout louder about what it already does well crucial though that is; it needs to improve what it offers. It needs to provide a means by which buyers can more easily distinguish excellent from average or bad security, or to put it more succinctly, it needs to clarify to buyers and potential customers the different skill options.

⁵⁸ The more senior the officer the generally more positive; it is rank and file officers where more help and focus is needed.

- 2.67 The security sector can take responsibility for this by developing forms of accreditation that are easy to relate to. One interviewee noted:

*We need different levels of security officer, that way we can make it easier for people to see what they can buy.
(MD2)*

- 2.68 In our research, it was suggested that a gold, silver and bronze scheme of accreditation of individuals – or something similar - would be advantageous. This would mean those accredited at a bronze level would be able to undertake basic security tasks while those at more advanced levels could be accredited to undertake more sophisticated duties. In the area of manned guarding, and subject to the support and engagement of the police, and with sufficient controls, those accredited as gold for example might be provided with some powers, such as those currently available under Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. This way buyers would be able to differentiate, and potential customers and even the public would be reassured there was a match between skills needed and personnel deployed. This would need to be a national scheme to be credible. There has been a moribund lack of imagination in the way that training and accreditation of security personnel has been progressed, at least when applied at the national level and this needs to be addressed.

- 2.69 Much of the discussion about training focuses on lower level operatives, important though this is, providing life-long learning for security professionals, perhaps with the aim for those who are keen and good to join the Charter of Security Professionals, needs a more co-ordinated focus. There has been a welcome growth in degrees, at graduate and postgraduate levels, and an array of professional qualifications. Charting and promoting career paths remains a fairly local activity. The security sector coming together to address gaps and promote training serves the purpose of raising standards and attracting more people to security as a career and keeping them once they start.

- 2.70 There needs to be a greater differentiation between security suppliers too. There needs to be meaningful differentiation within the ACS. Some found the ACS limiting:

The problem with the ACS is that you may not get top marks simply because you don't do things that are not directly related to performance. (HOS 1)

- 2.71 The ACS is a voluntary scheme for determining security supplier competence. It ensures that suppliers operate to a minimum level of competence, the negative is that it means there are a lot of suppliers who are approved, and there is no easy way of differentiating between

them and especially from those operating to a higher standard. Buyers have expressed an interest in this.⁵⁹

2.72 At the time of writing the SIA is reviewing the ACS and considering a number of proposals including differentiating between companies in terms of both levels of competence but also areas of specialism. One idea is that those working in certain areas or sectors could take modules to show a specific skill set for buyers in those areas of activity. There is also interest in aligning the principles of the ACS with those of Government in terms of countering terrorism, reducing violence and safeguarding the vulnerable.⁶⁰ There is an opportunity to link those who achieve highest level of accreditation with for example the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme essentially making them more skilled and more able to deploy those skills for a public benefit.

2.73 Security companies are taking responsibility for this in a different way, by associating themselves with high standards. One security supplier vows not to take on any contract or work with any customer not committed to paying the National Living Wage:

*Our company strategy is to attract the right calibre of customer ... We will not accept any contract where the buyer will not pay the national living wage. We will walk away. We will see us losing some contracts, but we will be more profitable and we are doing the right thing.
(MD2)*

2.74 Caution is needed here, procurers are sometimes criticised for favouring price over quality but this is too simplistic an analysis:

There is nothing wrong with charging a low price. We have a policy of making sure we win the business and then we develop it ... another part of the business may make a profit on its bit and so the company makes a profit overall. We may make a decision that the client is prestigious for some reason or that it is a stepping stone onto bigger things (HOS 1).

2.75 Price then is sometimes not a definitive indicator of quality. That said the easier it is to differentiate suppliers on things other than price, and the more expertise the buyers have in those differences, the greater the opportunity to match security needs to what is purchased. These each merit a comment.

2.76 There needs to be a plan of engaging buyers. Procurement tool-kits exist, but security is not a common purchase in that it may typically

⁵⁹ Gill, M., and Howell, C. (2012) *The Security Sector in Perspective*. Leicester: Perpetuity Research and Consultancy International.

⁶⁰ Personal communication, 5th May 2017.

take place every few years. An industry supported approach, focussed on making it easier for buyers to distinguish between providers and developed with stakeholders is a long overdue requirement. This might also include a focus on the costs of security failure, of getting the wrong security (which can be calamitous) compared to the benefits of getting the right security.

- 2.77 There are at least two other important points that need to be made here. The first is to underline just how important buyers are; they are extremely powerful. After all, they decide what security will be provided and the quality of it.
- 2.78 We explored the possibility of introducing a requirement for purchasers to be held responsible for the type of security they buy. After all, when a company gets security wrong it is not just it that suffers, individuals can be injured and organizations can go out of business. In our survey of security specialists some respondents noted that buyers can be negligent. Although buying price at the expense of quality was a common lament others pointed to buyers being unclear of their needs as well as lacking the ability to evaluate options. However, some noted that there was a problem for buyers summed up by one respondent who noted: 'many systems are oversold, under delivered'.
- 2.79 Buying the best security requires buyers and sellers to be informed about client needs and the best way of responding. Survey responses from security personnel highlighted the potential benefits for security suppliers in working with buyers to develop training/ qualifications/ guidelines in areas such as buying security, specifying security needs. This sort of initiative has much more to commend it than assuming that one side or the other can solve this issue on its own.
- 2.80 The second point is to recognise that within organisational hierarchies security is sometimes accorded a lower status than other professionals.⁶¹ This is for a variety of reasons including the power of procurement professionals (to act independently of security on decisions), and the perception that security professionals are not business people in the same way others are.⁶² There is therefore a collective need of the security sector, amongst buyers and suppliers, of all security managers in all parts of security to work towards establishing the distinct skill sets and role of security in not just keeping assets safe but enabling and facilitating the diverse benefits outlined above.⁶³ These appear more attractive than a buyer's offence.

⁶¹ Gill, M. (2014) Exploring Some Contradictions of Modern Day Security. In M. Gill (ed) *The Handbook of Security*, Second Edition. London: Palgrave.

⁶² Gill, M. *ibid.*

⁶³ Gill, M., Howell, C. and Randall, A. (2015) *Beyond the Protection of Assets: The Broader Benefits of Security*. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research and Consultancy International.

- 2.81 There has been longstanding awareness that security needs to be a Board issue in order to be taken seriously. One issue that was considered was whether the role of security would be enhanced and its importance highlighted if company boards were required to report losses, or the costs of crime in their annual reports (as required in some regulated sectors). Some survey respondents thought this was impractical pointing to the difficulty of identifying crime (under-reporting to the police being sighted a reference point); would penalise companies with good reporting systems; that it was too sensitive and commercially counter productive to make offending visible; and this led to some arguing that ensuring compliance would be very tricky. Others felt that this should be a goal, after all it would provide visibility to stakeholders (including staff and shareholders) of a key risk that could undermine companies and cost lives. In this context there seem much to commend starting on a path which promotes the need and best ways of recording (security) risks effectively to accrue the benefits highlighted above. Similarly, current proposals for making Boards criminally liable if they fail to stop their staff from committing fraud,⁶⁴ merits debate and the engagement of security experts.
- 2.82 The importance of regulation was emphasised in this research. A general point was that where an industry was regulated (such as the nuclear sector) the role of security was typically more defined and respected because it was officially defined as important. Others pointed to the importance of Health and Safety regulation in providing a safe place to work and in having a duty of care in highlighting the important role of health and safety in the workplace. Often security responsibilities incorporate or overlap health and safety and it has been noted that this does provide a form of regulation. There are other examples, relating to bribery and corruption, money laundering, and the need to keep data protected that has promoted the importance of the security sector. One progressive step would be to outline the ways in which security duties overlap and enhance legal and regulatory responsibilities, as this is clearly a driver of highlighting the importance of the security function.
- 2.83 The role of the regulator, the SIA, has an important part to play, albeit its current role is restricted. The work of the SIA was reviewed in 2016 but at the time of writing the report has not been published. It is hoped that comment will be made on some of these issues as well as the value of business licensing, and the merits of including of other sectors within the regulatory reach (such as private investigators, in house staff, security managers⁶⁵). That said, some interviewees for this study made the point that there was a danger that concerns about regulation

⁶⁴ See, The Times, 13 January 2017, p.2.

⁶⁵ Button, M. (2011) *The Private Security Industry Act 2001 and the Security Management gap in the United Kingdom*. Security Journal Vol. 26, Issue 2, pp. 118-132

(and especially the focus on business licensing) were obscuring much bigger priorities for the security sector.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ A point that has emerged from other research, see: Mawby, R. and Gill, M. (forthcoming) Critiquing the Regulation of Private Security in the UK: Views from Inside the Sector. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*.

Section 3. Discussion

- 3.1 The private security sector, this is security suppliers and corporate security departments, plays a crucial and unheralded role in public protection and provides an input that is not systematically harnessed. It needs to develop a strategy that requires three key elements. It needs the State to do the same and must play a part in facilitating this. Crucially by developing structures that will enable it to act with a single voice. Promoting all its good work, making itself attractive to workers including offering career choices, enabling it to coordinate and disseminate good practices are amongst those benefits that are a consequence and essentially a requirement of working as a more unified unit. And the security sector needs to talk up, proactively promote the good work it does and the public benefits that derive from that.
- 3.2 There is a big overlap between commercial interests and public interests; both want an environment which is free from crime and other risks that good security protects against. The national infrastructure is largely in private hands, the locales it protects are sometimes ones the public use and nearly always ones people use. An effective security sector reduces demands on the police. Moreover, ensuring business and the services provided continue to be available is vital. In this way security is a vital component of business and national competitiveness. Moreover, the prevention of the victimisation of people is important in private space just as it is in public space and the roles of those who enable that, who police that, are no less important because they are not state employees.
- 3.3 In any event protecting people, the public, cannot be left to the state; it is practically impossible, it would be too resource intensive. It has to involve the private security sector and accordingly we need to recognise the role that it plays here. We need to harness it to the best possible effect. As noted, there are pockets of excellent activity, but there is no strong steering lead from the Government which stresses how the private sector helps and outlines how it can best be harnessed. There is no strategic approach highlighting the barriers and then seeking to tackle them by leading from the top. That is to the detriment of all and has allowed a rather jaundiced view to pervade that if it is important the state must do it. In fact when it comes to some of the most important protection issues of our time, tackling cyber crime and protecting the infrastructure against terrorism, so much of what needs to be undertaken is a private sector function; that is private security suppliers and corporate security departments (often titled in many other ways) of companies.

- 3.4 This strategy has taken one area of activity and examined that in more detail; the relationship of private security with the police. We have seen that the police view of private security is more negative the closer they come to having to work with its personnel. This is a generalisation, there are clearly some positive relationships and examples of good work. But to-date neither the private security sector, nor the state, and for that matter the police too, have sought to highlight and engage private security in any strategic way.
- 3.5 The reason for this rests more with the private security sector. It has not made a very good case for itself. It has not spoken with a united voice highlighting the key benefits it generates and the reasons why it is an important and engaging partner. The structures are not in place to do so. So while some good work has taken place this has tended to relate to specific initiatives rather than being informed and driven by a strategic commitment carrying the support of all those who need to be engaged and could benefit. If you don't tell people that you have changed for the better and why and how then don't be surprised if old and negative stereotypes pervade.
- 3.6 Private security primarily looks after its clients (which of course is sometimes the state). In interviews some representatives noted that this was what they were paid to do and they did not want to be drawn into undertaking a range of activities for the public without charge. The point though, as has been outlined, is that protecting organisations and the people who work for them is crucial. It is a public benefit and a national one. And the resource generates other benefits too, including the fact that many organisations are happy to help the public. One interviewee was asked why his company was keen to engage with Operation Griffin, on paper it looks like a cost, but he drew attention to the fact that officers were better trained, there were benefits in being part of an information sharing network, as well as a commercial benefit in being seen to support public causes. Too often private gain has been seen to be at the expense of public good, or in conflict with it, and that can sometimes be a misconception and plainly wrong. The private security sector is not looking to replace the police, there was little appetite for that. It has the potential to offer so much more and provide more public benefits, but to be truly harnessed this requires different thinking.
- 3.7 There is no golden bullet here. When security specialists were asked for suggestions on how the security sector could increase public trust in its work there were a wide variety of answers focussing for example on: better training; more regulation; better pay, better recruitment of staff; focussing on quality as well as price; generating better publicity and so on. In short all the old chestnuts, all worthy, but none will singularly bring about a step change, indeed they are all being tried (to a lesser or greater extent). The problem is these initiatives are all operating without any overarching structure or aim, without then any driving force for change that can become embedded in everyday activities.

- 3.8 The various strategies for public protection would benefit from setting out an approach to engaging with private security and the private sector, not just the various things it can do but the ways in which all the benefits - existing and potential - can be realised. There needs to be a specific ministerial responsibility for harnessing the potential and for driving change to benefit the public.
- 3.9 Meanwhile, the security sector needs to put in place structures that enable it to be working towards generating a more united approach. RISC is a good start, the Security Commonwealth offers potential too and others besides. The commitment is needed to put in place a plan that enables the many bona fide associations and groups to work towards the approaches identified in this document.
- 3.10 There needs to be a change in thinking. It is not just that private business is consistent with public good, in many cases at least, but also in emphasising that public good is not at the expense of private profit.

Appendix 1 – RISC advert

Advert placed autumn 2016

MESSAGE FROM RISC TO SEARCH FOR MANNED GUARDING SUPPLIERS

ADS, as Secretariat to the UK's Security and Resilience Industry Suppliers Community (RISC), is working with the Joint Security and Resilience Centre (JSaRC) in support of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) review of how best to optimise the delivery of policing tactics which deter and detect criminal and terrorist activity, as well as provide reassurance to the general public.

Project SERVATOR is a policing approach already implemented by a number of other forces, including British Transport Police and the City of London Police. SERVATOR deployments are unannounced, unpredictable and highly visible. They are designed to deter, detect and disrupt a range of criminal activity, from pickpocketing and theft to terrorism. They involve uniformed and plain clothed officers together with other specially-trained officers. They are supported by other resources, such as police dogs and a network of CCTV cameras. Patrols are unpredictable, instigated at any time and varying in duration and resource intensity.

MPS are keen to develop their understanding of suppliers' capability in two specific areas in order to consider the development of their strategic approach to Project SERVATOR.

Please note that any technologies identified must be readily available as Common Off The Shelf (COTS) offerings.

Call 1 - Search Capability

MPS are keen to identify suppliers who could provide protective security capabilities in event/venue or close protection search, particularly in the following areas:

- Search Training
- Search Manpower
- Additional resources, such as dogs, scanning/detection etc.

Call 2 - Manned Guarding

MPS are keen to identify suppliers who already have a significant footprint delivering the following capabilities within the MPS operational geography.

- CCTV operators
- Fixed 24 guarding presence
- Patrolling - by foot and/or by vehicle

In addition, the MPS wish to identify which of these companies have a surge capability which, with the appropriate agreements in place, could be drawn upon during times of national emergency.

About Perpetuity Research

Perpetuity Research is a leading research company with wide expertise in both quantitative and qualitative approaches. We have been extensively involved in evaluating 'what works' (and what does not). Our work has involved helping our clients to understand people's behaviours, perceptions and levels of awareness and in identifying important trends. Our mission statement is 'committed to making a difference', and much of our work has a practical application in terms of informing decision making and policy formulation.

We work closely with our clients. This includes businesses, national and local governments, associations and international organisations as well as charities and foundations. Our aim is to exceed their expectations and it speaks volumes that so many have chosen to work with us repeatedly over many years. We are passionate about our work and we would welcome the opportunity to work with you.

About the SRI

The Security Research Initiative (SRI) started a decade ago. It involves a rolling program of research; each year a separate study is conducted on the security sector to generate new insights, help develop the response and role of security and act as a guide to improving practice. The SRI is supported by the British Security Industry Association, The Security Institute, and ASIS International (UK Chapter), and includes membership from leading security suppliers and corporate security departments who share the commitment to the development of new knowledge.

Previous studies have focussed on the relative benefits and drawbacks of buying security as a single service or as part of a bundle; an industry wide survey; a study of the value of security. We have developed two toolkits, including one on developing a security strategy. The findings from the research are made available free of charge to all. More information on the SRI is available at: www.perpetuityresearch.com/security-research-initiative/

About the Authors

Professor Martin Gill

Professor Martin Gill is a criminologist and Director of Perpetuity Research which started life as a spin out company from the University of Leicester. He holds honorary/visiting Chairs at the Universities of Leicester and London. Martin has been actively involved in a range of studies relating to different aspects of business crime including, the causes of false burglar alarms, why fraudsters steal, the effectiveness of CCTV, the victims of identity fraud, how companies protect their brand image, the generators of illicit markets and stolen goods, to name but a few. Martin has been extensively involved with evaluation research and with the offender's perspective looking at how they target certain people and premises and aim to circumvent security measures. He has published 14 books including the second edition of the 'Handbook of Security' which was published in July 2014. Martin is a Fellow of The Security Institute, a member of the Company of Security Professionals (and a Freeman of the City of London), he is a member of the both ASIS International Research Council and the Academic and Training Programs Committee and a Trustee of the ASIS Foundation. In 2002 the ASIS Security Foundation made a 'citation for distinguished service' in 'recognition of his significant contribution to the security profession'. In 2009 he was one of the country's top 5 most quoted criminologists. In 2010 he was recognised by the BSIA with a special award for 'outstanding service to the security sector'. In 2015 and 2016 he was nominated and shortlisted for the Imbert Prize at the Association of Security Consultants and in the latter he won. In 2016 ASIS International awarded him a Presidential Order of Merit for distinguished service. In 2016 IFSEC placed him the fourth most influential fire and security expert in the world and in the same year he was entered onto the Register of Chartered Security Professionals. Martin is the Founder of the Outstanding Security Performance Awards (the OSPAs: www.theospas.com).

Charlotte Howell

Charlotte Howell joined Perpetuity in January 2009 and currently works as Research Manager, managing and delivering research contracts. Charlotte has experience in a variety of research skills. Her quantitative skills include analysis of datasets such as survey responses, client data and performance data. Her qualitative research skills include undertaking literature reviews and undertaking consultation through interviews, focus groups and street surveys. Charlotte has consulted with a range of individuals, including stakeholders (such as individuals from the police, local authorities, teachers and service commissioners and staff), offenders (both in prison and in the community), and clients accessing services (including children and their families) such as weight management services, drug and alcohol treatment services, domestic abuse services and support services for sex workers.

Prior to working for Perpetuity, Charlotte graduated from the University of the West of England with a first class LLB (Hons) in Law in 2003. Following this

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