

# Optimising Joint Working between the Police and Private Security

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*Security Research Initiative (SRI)*

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*July 2024*

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## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank everyone who has assisted us with our research. This work has been possible because of the ongoing support of our members and because the security sector has engaged with us. The members of the Security Research Initiative who sponsor the research deserve a very special mention. They are: Paul Evans (Carlisle Support Services), Neill Catton (CIS Security), Mike White (G4S), Mick Tabori and Joachim Ritter (Interr), Clint Reid (M&S), Barrie Millett and Jason Towse (Mitie), Steven Gardner (OCS), Ryan Shaw and Richard Stanley (PwC), Paul Bean (Royal Mail), Nadine Matthews (Securitas), Imogen Hayat and Tony Holyland (SIA), Simon Pears and Jane Farrell (Sodexo). Clearly, they are not responsible for any of the views expressed in this report which are exclusively our own.

Our key supporters were once again invaluable in promoting the work. ADS (especially Jon Gray), ASIS (especially Rich Stevens), the BSIA (especially Mike Reddington and Andrew Cooper); IFPO UK & Ireland (especially Mike Hurst); IPSA (especially Simon Pears and Jane Farrell); the Security Institute (especially Simon Hepburn and James Dawson); and The SASIG (especially Martin Smith and Danny King); they are valuable advocates of the Security Research Initiative. So too our longstanding enthusiasts from security media: Roy Cooper and Mark Rowe (Professional Security Magazine), Byron Logue (Infologue) and James Thorpe (Security Journal UK).

In establishing an understanding of the key issues we conducted a range of exploratory interviews and we are grateful for all those who took part. They by necessity must remain nameless but their role has been crucial and we are grateful.

We would also like to thank all of those who took an interest in the topic and promoted the survey among their individual networks.

We owe a special thanks to all those (anonymous) contributors who gave their time completing our survey and who contributed insights and took part in interviews. They too, by necessity and agreement must remain nameless, but we acknowledge their important contribution here.

Finally, thanks to our colleagues Josephine Ramm for proofreading the report and Claire Tankard for administrative assistance.

## SRI Members



Royal Mail



# Executive Summary

We have sought to explore the forms of joint working that take place between the security sector and police, and the barriers that can prevent this work from developing. The intention was to better understand the security sector perspective. The findings are based on a survey and interviews with stakeholders from in-house security, security suppliers, other security experts and some individuals working for, or recently retired from, the police.

The research establishes that there are six key opportunities for improving engagement and overcoming barriers.

## 1. Understand what the private security sector does now

Our survey findings revealed that two-thirds of respondents thought that if the police were more informed about the work of the private security sector it would facilitate greater collaboration. The security sector (mostly) effectively protects 'private space' – in which the public work, live and spend leisure time - (largely) with minimum police input and assumes significant responsibility for protecting critical national infrastructure. There is a need to change the narrative around the flawed assumption that public protection is possible without the private security sector.

## 2. Stress the similarities

Much has been made of the different philosophies of private security and the police (e.g. the pursuit of profit versus the public interest). Yet, the similarities are striking too and need to be brought to the fore. Put simply, both are committed to reducing crime, gathering intelligence and being visible. A number of the objectives stated in *Police Vision 2030* reflect issues that are also important to the private security sector. Protecting people and places is complex, it is a skilled task which both mostly do well. Both have come under fire at times for poor performance.

## 3. Be clear how private security benefits

Our survey revealed a high appetite for collaboration, 91% of respondents believe it has huge potential and results in better protection of the public (93%), and of customers/organisations (91%), and an increased capacity to respond to crime (90%). The profit motive is always a prime consideration, in good organisations it's a driver of good practice and a key to winning business. There is a need to develop a narrative on the many ways the sector can benefit, for example: clients view engagement positively; are reassured by police professionalism; it can be beneficial in tender negotiations. Collaboration increases the knowledge and skills of private security and improves morale; and a good rapport with the police can lead to more activity (audits, training, presentations, patrols) on site which is desired in some contexts.

#### 4. Be clear how the police (and public) benefits

The private security sector offers resources, expertise, and data/intelligence; it protects people, places, and infrastructure; and it mostly operates in domains the police cannot realistically cover without extensive additional support. All private security work helps policing. There is an opportunity to better tap into this work to enhance efforts to protect the public. All parties benefit from effective collaborative working.

#### 5. Joint working does not have to be onerous

There are different ways of working in partnership – from the informal to the more structured. More formal collaborations can be important but are not always necessary; there is enormous opportunity at the informal levels. Private security acts not only as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the police but as a voice too in sharing key messages about safety and security. Often joint working is not about the police transferring responsibility or granting police powers for security staff.

#### 6. There is a need for strong leadership (on both sides)

Three quarters of respondents to our survey thought there was a need for strong leadership on joint working, on both sides. Each is difficult to deal with; private security has no identifiable single voice while each police force acts autonomously. The statutory regulation of the security sector does not include police input, and police argue that *it is difficult to know who we are dealing with*. Concerns can only be solved or ameliorated with good leadership, which is also needed to solve a variety of other very solvable barriers such as: identifying appropriate partners operating at the right level; understanding mutual risks and rewards; providing continuity and consistency; avoiding unnecessary data sharing complications and leading on new ideas and ways of working.

#### Concluding comment

There is no shortcut to the security sector committing to making itself more attractive as a ‘partner’. There was a general view that the perception of private security continues to impact on the potential to work together and that the sector needs to do more to demonstrate the possibilities. The results of this study show that the current approach is fractured and confused, agencies do sometimes work together but it is too often left to individual initiative; there is no meaningful strategy, and it is not logical; certainly, the view is that there is considerable potential and that opportunities are being missed. The logic of all those responsible for protection to work together is compelling. Indeed, the drawbacks in not collaborating are considerable for both sides and ultimately it is the public that loses out, and the offender that gains.

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## **Section 1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Despite the often-noted lack of police resource available to meet demand, there is a lack of commitment and certainly no strategy to harness the skills, resources and services available in the corporate and private security sectors. Yet the number of security officers dwarfs the police, and security suppliers operate across the country working in different aspects of protection all in addition to corporate services. There is a big and largely untapped resource available.
- 1.2 Part of the problem – and highlighted by a Deputy Chief Constable at a meeting of security professionals that included some police stakeholders, a ‘Skills Summit’ on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – is that there is a lack of awareness of what services are available. Broader discussions, as well as previous research, have highlighted some of the other impediments to joint working:
  - A genuine lack of awareness about both the range of services available and the benefits they generate for policing;
  - Concerns about sharing information for falling foul of the data protection laws;
  - Traditional perceptions that private security cannot be trusted have not gone away; the security sector has an image problem;
  - Related to this there are doubts about the reliability and competence of the private sector;
  - The belief that private security is focussed on making a profit, and the need for this is seen to conflict with an impartial service to help the public which characterises the police approach;
  - A lack of awareness about how the benefits of collaboration can be harnessed and the limitations managed;
  - A lack of awareness about which private security activities share similar aims and objectives to the police and how to achieve alignment and ‘win/win’ opportunities;
  - The private security sector is fragmented, and this complicates any police initiative to work together.
- 1.3 While there are pockets of good practice, and potentially a growing number, meaningful engagement is sub-optimal. For engagement work to be more successful and more widely adopted we need to explore what partnership working should look like and to recognise issues such as shared risk and shared agendas. There exists a range of services and specialist expertise (some generated from a career in police work) that are currently not available to the police. But could they be?
- 1.4 The purpose of this study was therefore:

- To improve the evidence base available and provide a reference point for engagement between the police and private security;
- To clarify the benefits for both the police and private security;
- To review the present barriers;
- To understand the potential for future work and how joint working could be developed further.

## Section 2. Joint working in context

### Background

- 2.1 In May 2024, police chiefs in the UK were advised by their representative association, the NPCC, to avoid making arrests that were non-essential, *'to ease the pressure within the criminal justice system'*.<sup>1</sup> Individuals and businesses are being encouraged to report more crime, and yet it is clear there are insufficient resources within policing to respond. Retail crime is a case in point, where to manage the demands, police have agreed to work with the private sector on a special initiative, 'Pegasus',<sup>2</sup> to tackle the link between organised crime and retail offending, especially theft and the associated violence.
- 2.2 There are many examples,<sup>3</sup> but at its core is the recognition that tackling crime in commercial settings is dependent on the private sector being involved. Moreover, in these 'commercial settings' people gather, as employees, customers or contractors, and as 'patients', 'pupils', 'commuters' etc., and their protection is not exclusively or in some cases mostly in the hands of the police.
- 2.3 It is easy to pass these words as if they were a statement of the obvious, but that is far from true. The police service has long been sceptical about the private security sector, including at senior ranks.<sup>4</sup> In a 2017 survey of police officers in three forces, conducted as part of the Security Research Initiative,<sup>5</sup> we found that, *'more than half disagreed with the suggestion that collaborative working between the police and private security is essential given the current limitations of police funding'*. And only 4% considered private security 'essential partners'. Indeed, the findings were damning:
- Close to 6 in 10 believed private security plays a minor role in protecting the public;
  - Close to 8 in 10 were against security officers working on behalf of the police as first responders to incidents;
  - Close to 7 in 10 believed security officers do not act as the eyes and ears of the police, although more than 4 in 10 thought they should;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cv2274gdk10o>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/news/pegasus-combining-law-enforcement-with-industry-knowledge-to-tackle-serious-organised-retail-crime/>

<sup>3</sup> For example, see: Merts, C. (2019) *Private Justice Inside Companies – Modalities, Legality, Policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave; Whelan, C. and Molnar, A. (2019) *Securing Mega-Events*. Basingstoke: Palgrave; Ceccato, V. and Armitage, R. (Eds) (2018) *Retail Crime: Aim, Scope, Definitions and Theoretical Principles*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Howell, C. and Gill, M. (2017) *Police Views on Private Security*. SRI Initiative. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research.

- The police generally favoured private security supporting private events, although for some this was because they saw the role as administrative (e.g. checking tickets on entry) rather than policing;
- Corporate security departments were seen as important in helping the police in their work by 62%, security officers much less so, at 36%;
- A majority of respondents believed that both the police and the public had a generally negative view of private security.<sup>6</sup>

2.4 The report made grim reading for exponents of the benefits of collaborative working.<sup>7</sup> Essentially, police concerns related to the poor image of the private security sector, the low levels of training, and its focus on the commercial imperative, impacting on the sector's ability to act impartially and in the public interest. Corporate security departments fared better, but underlying the negative views expressed was the understanding that many officers' experiences of private security was limited and often dated.

2.5 In response, in the same year, and also as part of the Security Research Initiative, we published 'A Strategy for Change'<sup>8</sup> aimed at addressing the negative perceptions and the barriers to collaboration they imposed. It carried no official status but was presented as a stimulant for debate and focussed on three key elements:

- I. The Government must be encouraged to develop a strategy for harnessing the enormous contribution of the private security sector to preventing crime.
- II. The private security sector must commit to developing an ability to talk with a more united and coordinated voice.
- III. 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 underacknowledged.

2.6 Progress on all three has been limited. The Government approach has been piecemeal, there are pockets, Pegasus (mentioned above) being one, and tackling fraud through the creation of Joint Money Laundering

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<sup>6</sup> This finding replicates that of some other studies, for example, see: Aitken, A. *Community perceptions of private security at a mega-event*. *Security Journal* **35**, 987–1005 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-021-00309-y>.

<sup>7</sup> Studies from other countries have produced similar findings, to give two examples. In Serbia it was found that private security perceptions of the police were much higher than the other way around, see: Janković, B., Cvetković, V.M., Milojević, S. et al. *Relations between police and private security officers: a case study of Serbia*. *Security Journal*, **35**, 531–548 (2022) <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-021-00289-z>; and similarly in Brazil, da Silva Lopes, C. *Plural policing and public opinion in Brazil*. *Security Journal* **31**, 451–469 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-017-0110-5>.

<sup>8</sup> Gill, M and Howell, C. (2017) *Towards 'A Strategy for Change' for the Security Sector*. SRI Initiative. Tunbridge Wells: Perpetuity Research.

Intelligence Task Force (JMLIT)<sup>9</sup> another, but there has been no strategic approach in the way we hoped. Nor has the private security sector made much progress on being able to speak with one voice. And the third aim is at best work in progress.

2.7 One recent study of private security work during Covid found that although most private security officers were designated as ‘critical workers’ and undertook, ‘*functions essential to national infrastructure and law and order*’, public acknowledgement has been slight.<sup>10</sup> Yet, as this work will show, there are different forms of engagement with policing that should serve as a great advertisement for private security. To set the scene, our previous research<sup>11</sup> has highlighted some of the key benefits private security generates for different stakeholders, including the public. Private security:

- 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;
- Is the key component in tackling cybercrime and terrorism and many other offences;
- Is the key component in managing the night-time economy and places that the police cannot undertake alone;
- Provides good practice in workplaces which extends to the community;
- Develops and manages technologies to fight crime;
- Provides information and intelligence that is crucial to tackling crimes.

2.8 And for the avoidance of doubt, there is a range of examples where collaborative working has been praised and encouraged, for example, in tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG)<sup>12</sup>; in harnessing

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<sup>9</sup> Part of the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC), the Joint Money Laundering Taskforce (JMLIT) is a partnership between law enforcement and the financial sector to exchange and analyse information relating to money laundering and wider economic threats.

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/national-economic-crime-centre>

<sup>10</sup> White, A. Critical workers? *Private security, public perceptions and the Covid-19 pandemic*. *Security Journal*, 36, 317–332 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-022-00339-0>.

<sup>11</sup> See for example: Gill, M., Howell, C. & Randall, R. (2015) *Beyond the Protection of Assets: The Broader Benefits of Security*, Perpetuity Research, Tunbridge Wells.

<sup>12</sup> Ariel, B. (2023). The substitutability and complementarity of private security with public police: The case of violence against women and girls in the rail network of the United Kingdom. In *Handbook on Public and Private Security* (pp. 193-221). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

technology<sup>13</sup>; and during Covid<sup>14</sup>, to name a few<sup>15</sup>. However, these have remained under the radar, the opportunities to replicate good practice are being missed, and this has consequences for different stakeholders, not least the public.

- 2.9 In the absence of a strategy or any overarching national lead – either by government, the police or the private security sector - initiatives to enable the public sector to harness the work undertaken by the broad range of services that comprise private security have largely been driven locally. What exists, and why they exist, what the benefits are, and what the key features are to facilitate replication remain elusive. The key point is though, that much of the good work that private security does is via some sort of engagement with others, and recognising these has important implications. It is surprising this has not happened until now.
- 2.10 There is one other point we would like to make in setting the scene. Much of the work that has been undertaken on police and private sector collaboration has tended to emphasise the different philosophies of the two groups, which, as already mentioned, has tended to poison perceptions of the police about private security. Yet, the similarities are striking too. Both groups have an interest in and a commitment to reducing crime and maintaining public order,<sup>16</sup> and both see a key component of that as gathering intelligence (which both have) and generating as much resource as is available, such as labour (which both have).

## Defining different forms of engagement

- 2.11 Engagement can take many forms and operate at different levels, ranging from loose informal relationships to more formal collaboration.<sup>17</sup> In this report, we have looked at examples of all levels of engagement as detailed in Figure 1. Starting with awareness and engagement at the base level, the progression moves to cooperation, then collaboration, and finally reaches partnership. Each step signifies a deeper level of stakeholder engagement, culminating in a fully developed partnership. As the progression moves from cooperation onward, the arrangements become more formal, ultimately leading to a structured partnership.

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<sup>13</sup> Lee, J. (2020). *Working toward a common goal: Marrying public/private partnerships with technology to reduce crime*. Police1.com online <https://www.police1.com/police-products/investigation/video-surveillance/articles/working-toward-a-common-goal-marrying-publicprivate-partnerships-with-technology-to-reduce-crime-LRuMOF7AEIbYuBr3/>.

<sup>14</sup> White, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> For a review of some key texts and issues, see, Nalla, M. and Wakefield, A. (2022) *The Security Officer: Overextended and Underappreciated*. In Gill, M. (editor) *The Handbook of Security*, third edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

<sup>16</sup> White, A. and Gill, M (2013) *The Transformation of Policing: From Ratios to Rationalities*. *British Journal of Criminology*. 53, 1, January, pp. 74-93.

<sup>17</sup> See, Bryett, K. (1996) *Privatisation - Variation on a Theme*. *Policing and Society*, 6(1), 23-35; and Chaiken, M. and Chaiken, J. (1987) *Public Policing – Privately Provided*. Washington DC: National Institute of Justice.

Figure 1: Different levels of partnership engagement



- 2.12 Engagement often evolves from awareness to cooperation, collaboration, and potentially into full partnership. For instance, in tackling a societal issue, awareness may firstly be initiated through a campaign, with subsequent collaboration with other entities to devise solutions, and finally establish partnerships to implement those solutions on a larger scale. The depth of engagement varies based on specific goals, resources, and circumstances. Each stage of engagement is pivotal in achieving distinct outcomes and nurturing meaningful relationships among individuals and organisations.

## Mapping joint working in other contexts

- 2.13 Importantly, our research team has recently conducted a separate piece of work (which is not part of the SRI) on tackling economic crime, assessing different forms of engagement between the private sector (generally rather than the security sector specifically) and the not-for-profit sector on the one hand, and the police on the other.<sup>18</sup> A number of points from that work are notable here.
- 2.14 The first is that while there is a patchwork of different services provided, and different forms of engagement in evidence, very little focus has been placed on meaningfully coordinating efforts for the public good. We will make the same point here. A second point, and partly a reflection of the first, is that there has been remarkably little attempt to provide a reference point of what is available to the police or fraud practitioners. We found the same with our focus on private security. To address this, we mapped different areas where engagement to tackle economic crime exists, what we refer to as, ‘functional typologies’. The typologies are not mutually exclusive but are based on the primary objective of each initiative and are designed to provide a descriptive framework to reflect the range of areas where some form of meaningful engagement exists.

<sup>18</sup> Goldstraw-White, J., Gill, M and Button, M. (2024) *Enhancing police resources in the fight against economic crime cost effectively: harnessing the potential of the private and not-for-profit sectors*. Report for the Dawes Trust. Perpetuity Research and Centre for Cybercrime and Economic Crime, University of Portsmouth.

For economic crime, they are: Detection and Investigation; Disruption and Intervention; Awareness Raising and Campaigning; Education and Training; Professional Development and Networking; Sharing Data and Intelligence; Victim Support; Volunteering Opportunities; Asset Recovery.

- 2.15 Meanwhile, the typologies identified for private security are explored in the next section.

## **Section 3. Different forms of police and private security engagement**

- 3.1 This section sets out the main forms of engagement that were identified through the research and is based on our analysis of the existing literature, survey responses and interviews conducted to explore the types of engagement that exist.
- 3.2 Here, as noted, our focus is on private security, including 'contracted' security and 'in-house' security. In this section, we outline the key areas where engagement takes place. In so doing, we wish to make some caveats:
- it is not intended to be exhaustive of all initiatives rather an identification of the range of possibilities;
  - there is likely to be considerable variation in practice (meaning that our descriptions may not represent all possible activities within a given form of joint working);
  - our typologies are 'distinct'; in practice examples may fall across a number of the forms described.
- 3.3 It is also acknowledged that while some of the activities described are only possible via engagement with the police, many are also conducted by private security by themselves and/or with other stakeholders (i.e. without interaction with the police). Where they do so, that often generates benefits for the public and/or policing. The focus here is on the ways that the two work together and how that enhances the outcomes and benefits that are achieved when working separately.

### **Crime reduction**

- 3.4 A key aspect of collaborative working is the coming together of private security, police and in some instances other stakeholders to focus on ways to reduce and prevent crime. This brings together sector specific knowledge, policing and security expertise, and local intelligence. This type of collaboration takes many different forms, and at a minimum typically focuses on sharing information on trends, issues and good practice that each agency can take away and apply as appropriate. It may also involve joint initiatives/campaigns to tackle specific issues.
- 3.5 Sometimes this type of collaboration is ad hoc and other times more regular. For some organisations it is via a recognised channel such as a police liaison officer. There are also a variety of forums in existence that facilitate this type of collaboration through (regular) meetings. Some appear to be led by the police (such as some neighbourhood teams) bringing together local relevant organisations (where the security lead or one of their team, be it in-house or contracted is likely to represent an organisation) to focus on the issues affecting that location. Others

appear to be led by private security bringing together fellow professionals on the basis of their location and/or their sector (such as education or retail), often inviting the police to participate.

- 3.6 There are also some examples that take the form of intelligence platforms which provide flash reports and updates. While some security suppliers have had this capability for some time and use it to keep their customers updated of issues relevant to their sector and location, it seems a more recent development is to implement this approach for a particular location. The 'City Security Council' (a partnership initiative of security providers that operates in the City of London<sup>19</sup>) has developed a privately funded city intelligence platform which started with collaboration among its members, but now has police support.
- 3.7 There are some particularly well-known initiatives that focus specifically on city centres and towns (but may also be used in other locations) and in some instances organisations pay a subscription to fund activities. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are one such example which have a wider remit, but often encompass crime, and are therefore a conduit for collaboration between private security, police and other stakeholders. In some cases, BIDs employ private security directly to provide additional services such as patrols and surveillance.
- 3.8 Likewise, Business Crime Reduction Partnerships (BCRPs) are also collaborative initiatives designed to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour that affect businesses, bring together stakeholders (such as the police and local authority and often includes private security) to tackle and reduce crime and disorder affecting businesses and the wider community. BCRPs coordinate work to prevent repeat offenders from targeting businesses and make cities, towns and communities safer by:
- Collating intelligence on known troublemakers.
  - Excluding individuals from private premises (on a "one" or "all" basis).
  - Working with local police to enforce exclusions and prevent further offences.
  - Assisting with the rehabilitation of offenders.
  - Delivering local crime reduction initiatives.<sup>20</sup>
- 3.9 There are also examples of similar strategic groups and programmes focusing on specific issues (such as the night-time economy or counter terrorism) that are formed to bring stakeholders together, share

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<sup>19</sup> This is expanding to other cities where it is adapting to the needs of that locality, so while it shares the same overall aims of encouraging cooperation it will involve different agencies and adapt its focus as it evolves.

<sup>20</sup> <https://nbcc.police.uk/partnerships/business-crime-reduction-partnerships-bcrp/what-is-a-bcrp-brc-content>

information, generate new thinking and innovation, and in some instances plan specific actions and campaigns.

## **CCTV surveillance/co-operation**

- 3.10 The collaboration between private security and police forces in sharing CCTV footage is crucial for public safety, crime prevention and the investigation of offences. Such collaboration effectively combines the extensive surveillance networks managed by private security with the investigative and enforcement capabilities of the police. To facilitate the sharing of CCTV footage, formal data-sharing agreements are established, outlining protocols for requesting, sharing, and using CCTV footage, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory standards such as the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 3.11 In some cities/locations, surveillance systems are integrated, with CCTV cameras operated by private security connected to centralised monitoring hubs accessible to both police and security personnel. This integration allows for seamless sharing of footage in real-time or upon request, enabling rapid and coordinated responses to incidents.
- 3.12 The collection of CCTV images can be used to help the police identify witnesses/offenders (including those who commit offences elsewhere but pass through 'private space'); manage live responses to incidents by making them aware of the circumstances before and on arrival at the scene; and better manage high-traffic areas and public events to name but a few. In addition, advanced CCTV systems equipped with analytics and AI can detect unusual activities and send automated alerts to both private security control rooms and police dispatch centres, this is yet another area where opportunities are evolving.

## **Crime investigation and reporting**

- 3.13 While the *raison d'être* of private security provision is to manage crime in private space and, where appropriate, report incidents to the police, aligning the management of the response to police practices is evolving. There are examples (such as via a university police liaison officer) where the police have provided training on relevant topics such as scene preservation and evidence standards to enable private security to more effectively assist them.
- 3.14 Efforts are also being made to make better use of the vast amount of intelligence collected by private security. Some organisations are developing 'security operations centre' capabilities and compiling significant amounts of intelligence that relate to specific crime types and offender types then presenting these in forms tailored to the needs of their stakeholders.

- 3.15 A notable example, launched in October 2023, and currently under development is 'Pegasus'.<sup>21</sup> This first of its kind national initiative has been set up between retailers, a private security company and the police to tackle organised retail crime. Over a dozen of the large retailers have funded dedicated analysts which will enable the team to build a comprehensive intelligence picture of the organised crime gangs across the country, to help to target and dismantle them. Although in its infancy, this is considered to be a significant development in the way in which private organisations and security collaborate with the police to target offending.

## **Education and awareness raising**

- 3.16 Private security also plays a role in collaborating with the police on dedicated crime awareness campaigns.
- 3.17 Such campaigns are often crucial initiatives that play a key role in helping to keep people safe. They can take several forms, including awareness-raising programmes, workshops, and the distribution of materials.
- 3.18 Joint-working between private security and the police for public safety and crime prevention campaigns has several benefits:
- It enables the police to reach relevant audiences and provides an effective way of engaging with communities;
  - It enhances community trust;
  - Resource optimisation allowing for more comprehensive and sustained campaigns, reaching many more people over an extended period of time;
  - Expertise sharing through combining the practical experience of private security with the enforcement capabilities of police;
  - Improved reporting and responsiveness by improving the public's knowledge of how to report crimes and suspicious activities, leading to quicker and more effective responses from both sectors.
- 3.19 There are many examples. This might include the police attending an organisation to deliver crime prevention advice (sometimes alongside private security). This may be a regular arrangement (like an annual university 'freshers' event) or an ad hoc/one off (for example, at an office building to highlight a current/emerging local issue). Examples of content include messages on personal safety, home security, bike security (and registration), property marking, and training such as SCan (See, Check and Notify).

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/news/pegasus-combining-law-enforcement-with-industry-knowledge-to-tackle-serious-organised-retail-crime/>

- 3.20 In some instances, messages are targeted to a particular type of individual/professional; for example private security may facilitate access to a suitable venue (by engaging with their clients) and use their own networks/forums to invite relevant security professionals (and other relevant stakeholders) to attend a police briefing. This may be in relation to a particular event and/or a particular issue (such as counter terrorism). Private security takes on the organisation of the event and aid access to relevant professionals, which enables the police to share their message widely and efficiently. More generally this type of activity also facilitates networking which in turn can enable further collaborative working to develop.
- 3.21 There are also examples of shared training, table-top exercises and joint scenario testing, primarily relating to emergency response and terrorism. By coming together, the police and private security can better prepare for possible incidents, and particularly for private security, having an understanding of the way the police work in such scenarios was considered of huge benefit to be able to plan procedures that will be effective in assisting the police.

### **Facilitating access to a site for police training exercises**

- 3.22 An important way that private security supports the police, but rarer than some of the other forms described, is by facilitating free access to sites (such as shopping centres and high-rise buildings) for police training exercises. This enables the police to test their readiness in 'live' environments and the organisation benefits by having a police presence on site, gaining a better understanding of the work of the police, and strengthening their relationship and opportunity for a more coordinated and informed response should it be needed. Some examples include enabling the police to practise 'at height' rescue scenarios, active shooter scenarios, and police detection dog training.

### **Joint patrolling**

- 3.23 Joint patrolling takes place within some of the crime initiatives described above, however, it is worthy of specific attention not least because in the past many police would have looked askance at the prospect, but they are emerging in different forms and arguably have much potential. Sometimes they are arranged through formalised agreements or Memorandums of Understanding that clearly define the responsibilities, communication protocols, and operational procedures for both parties. Other times this can be more informal, for example, at one London landmark local police visit the site from time to time and may accompany security personnel to keep updated on local issues, build up a rapport and show presence.

- 3.24 To give more examples, joint patrols are a key element of Safer Business Action (SaBA) Days – an initiative which brings together a number of the partnership elements described above and has a national reach and a steering group comprised of the National Business Crime Centre, private security companies, national retailers and BCRPs and BIDs. Joint patrols have also been conducted as part of ‘Project Servator’ (in key locations such as transport hubs/airports) to disrupt criminal activity, including terrorism, and as part of operations relating to ‘Safer Streets’ such as ‘Operation Reframe’ in the City of London to promote safety in the night-time economy including addressing VAWG. Joint patrols also take place in a range of other locations, such as city centre/retail areas and at events, private security working alongside the police to patrol areas, address issues, and respond to low-level crimes.
- 3.25 When done well, joint patrolling offers several significant benefits. In the best examples joint patrolling involves communicating on dedicated channels, such as shared radio frequencies and mobile apps, facilitating real-time information sharing to help coordinate patrol strategies, and joint working may involve each playing to its strengths, for example, private security personnel handling tasks like monitoring and reporting suspicious activities, while police focus on law enforcement duties, such as making arrests and conducting investigations. The integration of technology, including CCTV and crime mapping tools, further enhances the effectiveness of joint patrols.
- 3.26 In any event patrolling together provides a ‘force multiplier’; facilitates trust building with each other and with other stakeholders; let alone all that comes with shared intelligence. Yet, and as noted earlier, scepticism amongst the police to this type of working remains; it is still a practice that needs to evolve further.

### **Private security adopting specific policing powers**

- 3.27 Accredited schemes enable the police to allocate specific and limited powers to private security personnel for dedicated tasks such as issuing fixed penalty notices for minor offences.
- 3.28 In theory, they have much to commend them, at their best they afford the potential for the police to engage a better trained resource with the ability to help in more diverse ways. While for private security, the enhanced authority they have is attractive to clients (and therefore good for business) and enables them to offer a more complete service. The ultimate beneficiaries may be the public, not least if this improves crime control and/or releases police officers to tackle more serious issues.

### ***Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS)***

- 3.29 One such example of this type of scheme is the CSAS. The overall goal of this is to support the police in addressing low-level crime and

community disorder effectively.<sup>22</sup> Under the CSAS, employees from accredited organisations<sup>23</sup> such as private security suppliers and local councils can be granted specific authorities by the Chief Constable of a police force. These powers can include:

- issuing fixed penalty notices for minor offenses like littering, dog fouling or cycling on a pavement;
- demanding name and address of individuals engaging in anti-social behaviour;
- confiscating alcohol from underage drinkers or in designated public areas;
- enforcing certain by-laws.

3.30 To ensure these accredited personnel are properly equipped for their roles, the CSAS mandates comprehensive training in conflict management, the use of their specific powers, and the legal boundaries of their authority. The scheme also emphasises accountability, requiring accredited organisations to maintain close collaboration with the police and implement mechanisms for handling complaints and overseeing the use of powers.

3.31 CSAS is forward thinking, yet it is up to individual police forces to determine whether to adopt the CSAS, and not all do, the extent to which they do varies greatly. The lack of a coordinated response is evidenced by some forces not accepting the vetting requirements of another force, thereby undermining the scheme's potential. It also fuels the arguments of those that contend that police commitment to collaborating with private security is low.

### ***Railway Safety Accreditation Scheme (RSAS)***

3.32 A further example is the RSAS, a similar initiative to the CSAS which is designed to enhance safety and security on the railway network by empowering accredited personnel to perform certain policing functions. Accreditation under RSAS allows railway staff, including those from train operating companies (TOCs) and Network Rail, to exercise limited powers typically reserved for police officers. This includes powers such as issuing penalty notices for fare evasion, addressing anti-social behaviour, and responding to incidents within their designated areas of responsibility. The scheme aims to complement the work of the British Transport Police (BTP) and local police forces, ensuring a coordinated approach to railway safety. By empowering accredited individuals with specific powers, RSAS aims to create a safer environment for both passengers and staff across the UK rail network.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/community-policing/citizen-focused-policing/community-safety-accredit-scheme/>

<sup>23</sup> Home Office (2006) *Community Safety Accreditation Schemes: Good Practice Guidance*, London: Home Office (p19)

- 3.33 Here again though there is more support in some than others, and this scheme is not used to its full potential, in part, as one police interviewee commented, because not all train companies are equally committed. For some, there is a reluctance to pay for something that they feel the police should provide anyway. For others, there is scepticism about whether policing should be entrusted to private security personnel.

***Employer supported policing (ESP) - Special Constables***

- 3.34 Employer supported policing is another way that organisations fund policing time, however, this is distinct in that it is an employee of an organisation (not necessarily 'security') that is trained as a Special Constable, and the employer allows them to use some of their paid 'work' time to carry out policing duties. Special Constables, which date back to an Act of 1673, are police volunteers, who are recruited and trained by the police and are deployed for a limited number of hours per month and while on duty are vested with police powers. Who is eligible, and how they are deployed, varies by police force.
- 3.35 The benefits are considerable – the individual is trained to police standards, can use police powers while acting in that capacity, and there is closer collaboration between the organisation and the police in the location the individual delivers their police time. The police benefit from the employer meeting the training costs and the wages for the individual's time spent as a police officer, and of course from an additional policing resource/capacity.
- 3.36 In respect of private security, some interviewees noted this approach has been used already and others noted there is potential to do so. In some instances, the employee delivers their policing time on their employer's site (for example at a shopping centre) thereby increasing the police presence on site and having the ability to use their police powers during that time - for example to arrest offenders.
- 3.37 However, it should be noted that some types of private security (particularly contract security) are typically excluded from becoming a Special Constable by eligibility rules. For example, the Metropolitan Police state that, '*security personnel, guards and doormen*' are excluded but that '*security officers who are employed directly by the company that operates the premises they protect may be eligible to apply, but only under the [Employer Supported Policing scheme]*'.<sup>24</sup>
- 3.38 The exclusion exists on the basis that the role of private security is considered to be a conflict of interests. There are concerns that the system could be abused and that there may be confusion about under whose authority and interests the individual is acting. Nonetheless, the idea merits further consideration.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/c/careers/police-volunteer-roles/special-constable/apply-now/precluded-occupations/>

## **Funding policing time**

- 3.39 Direct funding agreements between the police and private sector involve businesses providing financial support to fund specific police services or initiatives. Some police view this as the 'gold standard' of partnership arrangements. They are subject to formal agreements outlining the specific responsibilities of each partner. Although it is the organisation (and not 'private security') that fund this, private security professionals/teams may advocate for this type of relationship to best meet the needs of the organisation and are often involved in the day-to-day engagement that is facilitated by this resource.
- 3.40 Such funding may support additional police patrols in specific areas or during high-risk times, such as heightened political, religious or social tensions. Organisations may also fund – in full, or in part – dedicated police officers who focus on the funded area, providing a consistent and familiar police presence to address recurring problems. One university that does just this underlined the value their dedicated police officer delivered in terms of obtaining a specific focus on their domain; streamlining information sharing; increased reassurance; a greater deterrence; and providing a link with other police services. For the police it is a way to offset the costs associated with meeting a specific need. It also provides the opportunity to engage with and improve relationships with specific communities (such as students) that might otherwise be harder to reach.
- 3.41 However, there are challenges with this kind of funding. Prime amongst them are the concerns that this approach benefits the more affluent areas or organisations and, as a consequence, disadvantages poorer communities. Often they are justified on the basis of meeting a need that would not otherwise be met.

## **Emergency response**

- 3.42 In the UK, the collaboration between the police and private security in emergency response situations is a critical component of public safety. This partnership is governed by structured frameworks and protocols designed to maximise efficiency and resource utilisation. One key mechanism facilitating this cooperation is the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidelines, which outline best practices for public-private sector collaboration. Their role includes monitoring situations, providing initial incident assessments, and relaying critical information to police forces. This integrated approach ensures a swift and coordinated response, leveraging the extensive coverage and presence of private security personnel.
- 3.43 Moreover, joint training initiatives and information-sharing platforms (described above) enhance this partnership. Police forces and private security professionals may engage in joint exercises to prepare for

various emergency scenarios, ensuring that both entities are familiar with each other's protocols and capabilities. Information sharing, facilitated through networks like the Information Sharing Network (ISN) and the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) forums, enables real-time communication about potential threats or ongoing incidents. By aligning their operational strategies, the police and private security can effectively manage public safety incidents, with private security often providing the crucial support needed until law enforcement can fully mobilise. This collaboration not only improves the immediate response to emergencies but also contributes to long-term crime prevention and community safety.

- 3.44 The original aim of the City Security Council (referenced above) was to enhance the collective response to major incidents and crises in the City of London by working with the City of London Police (and other relevant stakeholders) and by developing a standardised Charter that ensures consistent, effective actions from security companies. With a focus on detection, prevention, deterrence, and response, CSC pools resources and intelligence from over 1,000 security officers, extending its collaborative efforts nationwide for broader security benefits.<sup>25</sup>

## **Public events**

- 3.45 The police and private security firms often collaborate to ensure security and crowd control at large national and international events such as sports matches, music concerts and royal ceremonies. As the enquiry into the Manchester arena bombing showed,<sup>26</sup> this is not always done well, and in that case the consequences were devastating. When done well, such collaboration includes joint planning meetings where potential risks are assessed, intelligence is shared, and focussed security strategies are developed. Responsibilities are clearly delineated, there is effective communication (sometimes facilitated through dedicated radio frequencies and command centres), security patrols are targeted and prepared, and each party plays to its strengths, for example, private security may handle the entry and exit points, screening for prohibited items and managing crowd flow, while police deal with any criminal activities.
- 3.46 While often operating under the radar, there are in fact many examples where collaboration has worked effectively, some that have been referred to by interviewees include: the Queens funeral, the Kings Coronation; the hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest; the annual Wimbledon Tennis Championships; along with more frequent events such as football matches.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://citysecuritycouncil.co.uk/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/manchester-arena-inquiry-reports>

## Assisting vulnerable individuals/victims of crime

- 3.47 Private security has increasingly been shifting towards a 'customer service' mindset<sup>27</sup> and consequently it often plays a complementary role in assisting the police with vulnerable people and victims of crime. Private security personnel are frequently deployed in various settings such as hospitals, shopping centres, transport hubs, and residential areas where they are the first person to interact with vulnerable individuals. Their presence provides an additional layer of safety and reassurance, and some are trained to handle incidents involving vulnerable populations, including the elderly, victims of domestic abuse, and those with mental health issues, including those that are suicidal. By ensuring these individuals are safe and by providing immediate assistance, they can be a crucial stop gap until police arrive and, in some instances, can negate the need for a police response.
- 3.48 Moreover, private security companies often work closely with the police through established protocols and communication channels. They report suspicious activities, assist in crime prevention initiatives, and support community policing efforts. For example, private security personnel might be involved in safeguarding crime scenes until police arrive, or in conducting initial assessments of incidents involving vulnerable people. Their detailed observations and reports can be invaluable to police investigations. It can enhance the overall effectiveness of public safety measures, ensuring a more comprehensive response to the needs of vulnerable individuals and crime victims.
- 3.49 Related to this form of engagement is the adoption of different initiatives designed to tackle specific issues, and one example is the Safer Spaces Scheme, designed to provide safe environments for vulnerable individuals who may be at risk, particularly those who are experiencing harassment, domestic abuse, or other forms of violence and distress. Participating locations, such as shops, cafes, libraries, and community centres, are identified by a specific logo or signage indicating that they are a safe place for individuals in need. Staff at these locations are trained to offer immediate support and assistance. A similar scheme, also supported by an associated app is Safe Havens, a community safety initiative designed to provide immediate assistance and a place of refuge for individuals who feel threatened, unsafe, or in distress while out in public. It can be security professionals that facilitate the adoption of such initiatives within organisations and similarly it can often be security personnel that are interacting with the individuals that make use of such schemes.
- 3.50 This is an important and much underplayed area the private security sector contributes to in support of the police and the public generally, namely the very work it undertakes day to day, involving as it does

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<sup>27</sup> See for example: Gill, M., Howell, C. & Randall, R. (2015) *Beyond the Protection of Assets: The Broader Benefits of Security*, Perpetuity Research, Tunbridge Wells.

dealing with incidents and thereby preventing the need for a police presence, and/or providing intelligence and support for police when they do attend.

## Critical infrastructure

- 3.51 Every country has a critical infrastructure which consists of essential systems, facilities, and services that are vital for the functioning of that country, maintaining national security, economic stability, and ensuring public safety. In the UK, there are 13 national infrastructure sectors,<sup>28</sup> with some sectors further sub-divided. The UK government defines critical national infrastructure (CNI) as:

*'Those critical elements of infrastructure (namely assets, facilities, systems, networks or processes and the essential workers that operate and facilitate them), the loss or compromise of which could result in:*

- a) Major detrimental impact on the availability, integrity or delivery of essential services - including those services whose integrity, if compromised, could result in significant loss of life or casualties - taking into account significant economic or social impacts; and/or*
- b) Significant impact on national security, national defence, or the functioning of the state.'*

- 3.52 The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) works with partners to identify risks and vulnerabilities to the UK's national infrastructure, and to offer advice to reduce them.<sup>29</sup> As part of the UK Intelligence Agency, they work with partners such as government departments, the police and security specialists and advisors. We have drawn together key examples and presented them in the table below, illustrating the depth and breadth of collaboration on crucial tasks.

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<sup>28</sup> Chemicals, Civil Nuclear, Communications, Defence, Emergency Services, Energy, Finance, Food, Government, Health, Space, Transport and Water.

<sup>29</sup> See <https://www.npsa.gov.uk/>

CNI Sector	How private security works with the police
Chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility security - guarding chemical plants and storage facilities. Coordinating with the police to prevent theft and sabotage.</li> <li>• Transport Security – ensure safe transportation of hazardous materials with police escorts when necessary.</li> <li>• Incident Response - joint plans for handling incidents such as chemical spills or attacks.</li> </ul>
Civil Nuclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Security - private security provide on-site security personnel to guard nuclear power plants and other nuclear facilities working the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC), a specialised armed police force. Personnel are responsible for monitoring access points, conducting patrols, and managing security systems. The CNC handles armed response and advanced tactical operations.</li> <li>• Access Control – private security manages access systems to ensure that only authorised personnel enter sensitive areas. This includes background checks, security clearances, and the use of biometric systems. The CNC assists in verifying identities and conducting additional checks for individuals requiring access to high-security areas.</li> <li>• Threat Intelligence – there is a continuous exchange of threat intelligence between private security, the CNC to help identify and mitigate potential threats. Joint security briefings are held to update all parties on the latest threat landscape and VIP visits and necessary security measures.</li> <li>• Incident Response – private security and the CNC have coordinated incident response plans to handle security breaches, terrorist attacks, or other emergencies, including evacuation procedures, containment strategies, and communication protocols. They undertake joint training and drills regularly to ensure they are well-prepared to respond effectively.</li> </ul>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure Protection - private security usually guard critical telecommunications infrastructure (data centres and network hubs), with police assisting in threat assessment and incident response.</li> <li>• Emergency Plans – both private security and the police develop and implement emergency response plans together for potential telecom outages or physical attacks, ensuring rapid restoration of services.</li> <li>• Cybersecurity Coordination – joint efforts to mitigate cyber-attacks on telecom networks, with private cybersecurity experts and police cyber units working together.</li> </ul>
Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility Security – private security alongside the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) provide physical security to many military bases, defence contractor facilities, and other sensitive locations, with the MDP handling the more complex security tasks and any necessary armed response.</li> <li>• Screening Procedures – both parties manage access to defence facilities, implementing screening processes to prevent unauthorized entry. These may include enhanced vetting and other background checks and security clearances for individuals accessing high-security areas.</li> <li>• Protecting Defence Supply Chains - private security help secure the supply chains for military equipment and materials, working with the MDP to prevent theft, sabotage, and espionage. They also collaborate on securing the transportation of sensitive defence materials, including escorting shipments and monitoring logistics networks.</li> </ul>
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Protection – private security protects critical emergency service infrastructure (such as communication centres and headquarters), working closely with police.</li> <li>• Joint Training – both parties undertake regular joint training exercises to ensure coordinated response capabilities during emergencies.</li> <li>• Crisis Management – both the police and private security are part of integrated crisis management teams for handling major incidents affecting emergency services infrastructure.</li> </ul>

CNI Sector	How private security works with the police
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patrols and Access Control – private security manage access to energy facilities, while police conduct joint patrols during heightened threats.</li> <li>• Cybersecurity Collaboration – private security handle cyber defence for critical systems, coordinating with police cyber units to address any threats.</li> <li>• Threat Intelligence Sharing - private security and the police exchange information on potential threats to power stations, refineries, and pipelines.</li> </ul>
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banking Security – private security protects bank branches and data centres, coordinating with police to prevent and respond to robberies or cyber-attacks. They also work closely together to prevent ATM-related crimes.</li> <li>• Cyber Resilience - private cybersecurity firms work with police cyber security to protect financial networks and systems from cyber threats.</li> </ul>
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply Chain Security – private security monitor and secure food supply chains, with police assistance in investigating and mitigating disruptions or contamination threats.</li> <li>• Emergency Response – private security and the police have joint plans for responding to any biosecurity threats or major disruptions in food supply, ensuring continued access to essential resources.</li> </ul>
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Security – while private security generally manage security at government buildings and critical public service sites, they work closely with the police to handle any threats and ensure the safety of staff and visitors. Likewise for event security involving government personnel.</li> <li>• Information Protection – the police cyber units and private security collaborate on securing sensitive government data and communication systems against potential cyber threats.</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital Security – private security often provides personnel for hospitals and other healthcare settings; they work closely with the police to handle threats such as violent incidents or terrorism. Police may be posted in A&amp;E departments.</li> <li>• Police cyber units work closely with those charged with safeguarding hospital IT systems.</li> <li>• Pharmaceutical Security – private security protects pharmaceutical manufacturing and distribution sites, with joint strategies with the police to prevent theft or sabotage.</li> </ul>
Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satellite and Ground Station Security - private security protect these critical assets, with police providing threat assessment and response support.</li> <li>• Cybersecurity - collaboration on protecting space-related IT systems from cyber threats.</li> <li>• Emergency Coordination - joint efforts to manage any incidents affecting space infrastructure and ensuring there is continuity of services.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Railways – private security provide patrols and surveillance at many railway stations and along tracks, working with British Transport Police to handle any threats or incidents.</li> <li>• Airports – private security and airport police work together to screen passengers, manage access to restricted areas, and respond to security breaches.</li> <li>• Ports – private security monitor and control access to docks and cargo areas, coordinating with maritime police units to prevent smuggling and terrorism.</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access Control – private security manage access to water treatment plants and reservoirs, ensuring only authorised personnel can enter. Police provide backup during heightened security alerts.</li> <li>• Incident Response – police and private security jointly respond to incidents such as contamination threats, which includes coordination of evacuation and any required decontamination.</li> <li>• Surveillance – private security provides live feeds accessible to police for real-time monitoring.</li> </ul>

## Putting the forms of engagement in context

3.53 The ways of working together described above demonstrate the possibilities and how outcomes may be enhanced above what is possible when working separately. However, there is also a greater context that is worth considering. The *Policing Vision 2030* describes key priority themes for focus and delivery.<sup>30</sup> A number of the activities described above appear to tally with police aims and objectives, namely:

- *'Identify and safeguard more of the most vulnerable people and locations'* (Pillar 1, Objective 1)
- *'Reduce serious violence, including violence against women and girls'* (Pillar 1, Objective 2)
- *'Collaborate more across policing and with local authorities, businesses and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to prevent crime and exploitation'* (Pillar 2, Objective 1)
- *'Improve the use of multi-agency data, predictive analytics and future crime statistics to inform prevention activity'* (Pillar 2, Objective 3)
- *'Ensure a commitment to Neighbourhood Policing to increase visibility and reassure communities'* (Pillar 2, Objective 4)
- *'Deliver a more efficient and productive police service, delivering value for money and balancing opportunity and risk'* (Pillar 5, Objective 5)

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<sup>30</sup> Strategic Policing Partnership Board (2023) *Policing Vision 2030*, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, College of Policing, National Police Chiefs' Council.

## Section 4. What security professionals think about joint working: a survey

### The sample

- 4.1 Based on the observation that there is a need for a better reference point for ways of working together, and that a prior survey of police showed that they are generally sceptical of the merit of collaboration, we sought to draw on the knowledge of security professionals to identify what forms of collaboration exist, how well they are utilised and what actions may further develop joint working. We therefore carried out a survey of security professionals covering the following key themes:
- The current status of joint working
  - Barriers to working together
  - Key success factors
  - Benefits to working together
  - Issues to focus on in future by joint working
- 4.2 The findings are based on 221 responses.<sup>31</sup> In the introduction to the survey we defined partnership working as, *'the different ways in which the private security sector engages with the police, from informal working arrangements to more formal ones. Specifically, we are referring to ways of working where there is no cost to the police at the point of use (i.e. the police service is not paying private security to carry out an activity on its behalf).'*
- 4.3 The majority of questions were multiple choice, some of which posed statements which respondents were invited to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with. A small number of questions invited open text responses.
- 4.4 In addition to the frequency responses to questions, analysis was undertaken to assess whether views differed by specific characteristics/sub-groups of respondents. Only those issues that were statistically significant are included in the discussion, evidencing a relationship between the variables (i.e. not occurring by chance). Key points are considered following the main analysis and include perspectives by:
- Role
  - Length of time working in security
  - Views on how partnership working tends to begin

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<sup>31</sup> The number of responses to each question varies as some respondents dropped out part way through and some chose not to answer certain questions.

- 4.5 The majority of respondents had been working in the security sector long-term – 74% (n=163) for more than 10 years. The sectors most commonly worked in (respondents could tick all that apply) were Property (41%, n=90), Public Admin, Other Services and Government (33%, n=74), Education (28%, n=61) and Retail (26%, n=57). Over three quarters of respondents worked for organisations based in the UK (78%, n=152). Full breakdowns for length of time working in security, sector and country are provided in Appendix 2 (Table 2, 3 and 4 respectively).
- 4.6 Just over half of the respondents (53%, n=117) worked for a supplier; while a third (33%, n=73) indicated they worked for a buyer/customer (in-house).
- 4.7 The remaining respondents were other security experts (e.g. academic, regulator, security association etc) at 13% (n=29) of respondents, or another interested party linked to security at 1% (n=2). Table 1 displays these roles.

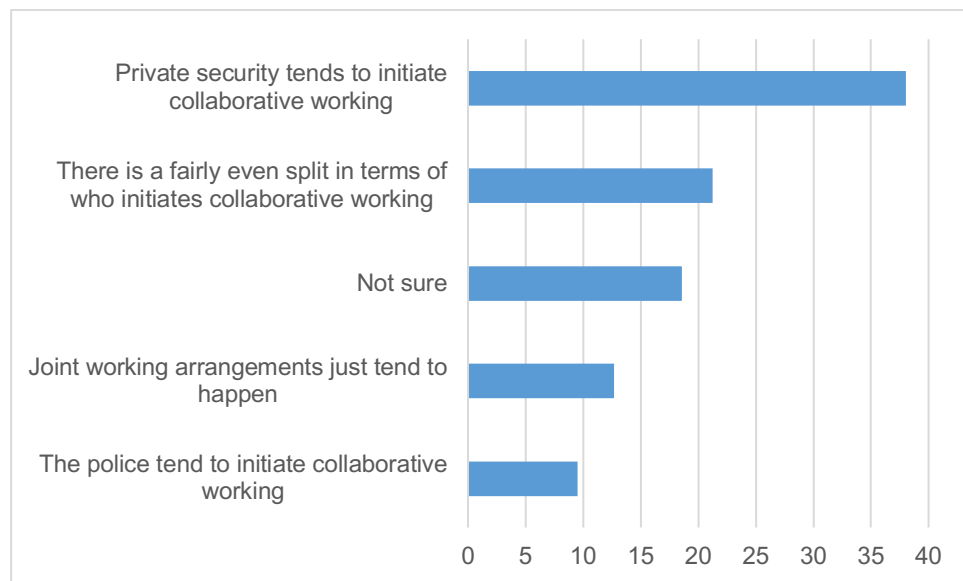
Table 1: Breakdown of respondents by role % (n=221)

Role	Type	% , N	Total
Supplier	Director, Manager, Consultant	24%, n=53	53%, n=117
	Contracted operative	29%, n=64	
Buyer/ Customer	Security Lead/Manager	14%, n=30	33%, n=73
	Intermediary	1%, n=3	
	In-house operative	18%, n=40	
Other	Other security expert	13%, n=29	14%, n=31
	Other interested party	1%, n=2	

### Current status of joint working

- 4.8 When asked how joint working arrangements between the police and private security tend to begin, more than a third (38%, n=84) indicated that *private security tend to initiate collaborative working* whereas only 1 in 10 (10%, n=21) indicated that the *police* tend to initiate collaborative working.
- 4.9 However, a fifth (21%, n=47) thought there is a *fairly even split* in terms of who initiates, and a further eighth (13%, n=28) thought that partnership working *just tends to happen*. Close to a fifth (19%, n=41) indicated they were unsure.

Figure 2: How joint working arrangements tend to begin % (n=221)



4.10 A number of statements regarding attitudes to partnership working were presented to participants, and respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with these.

4.11 Agreement was particularly high with the statement, *'there is huge potential for police and private security to work together'* with 91% agreeing or strongly agreeing (indeed, 71% strongly agreed). However, almost two-thirds also indicated that, *'the private security sector needs to do more to demonstrate how it can support the police'* (65% agreed or strongly agreed).

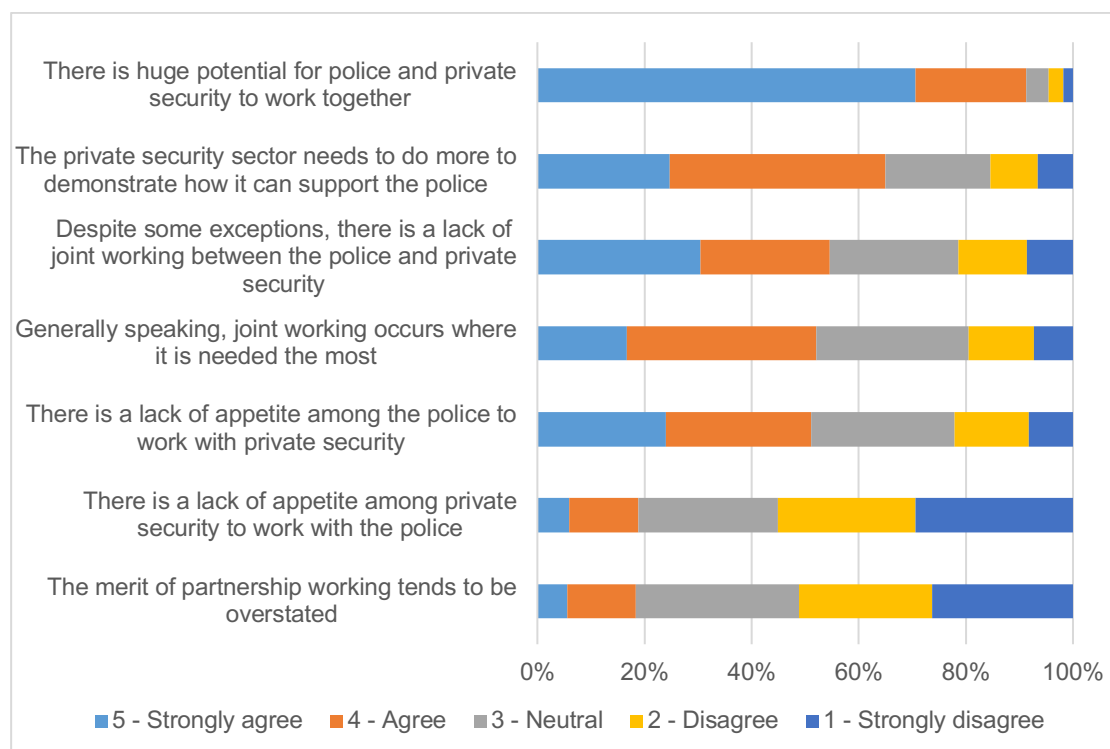
4.12 Just over half of respondents agreed with the following:

- *'Despite some exceptions, there is a lack of joint working between the police and private security'* (55% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed')
- *'Generally speaking, joint working occurs where it is needed the most'* (52% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed')
- *'There is a lack of appetite among the police to work with private security'* (51% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed')

4.13 Notably, respondents tended to disagree with the statement, *'there is a lack of appetite among private security to work with the police'* (55% disagreed or strongly disagreed); and that, *'the merit of partnership working tends to be overstated'* (51% disagreed or strongly disagreed).

4.14 Figure 3 displays the results.

Figure 3: Perceptions of partnership working % (n=214-221)



## Structure of interaction

4.15 To explore the types of interaction/ways of working together, respondents were asked how often (on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'rarely', 3 means 'sometimes' and 5 means 'often') the following types of interaction take place:

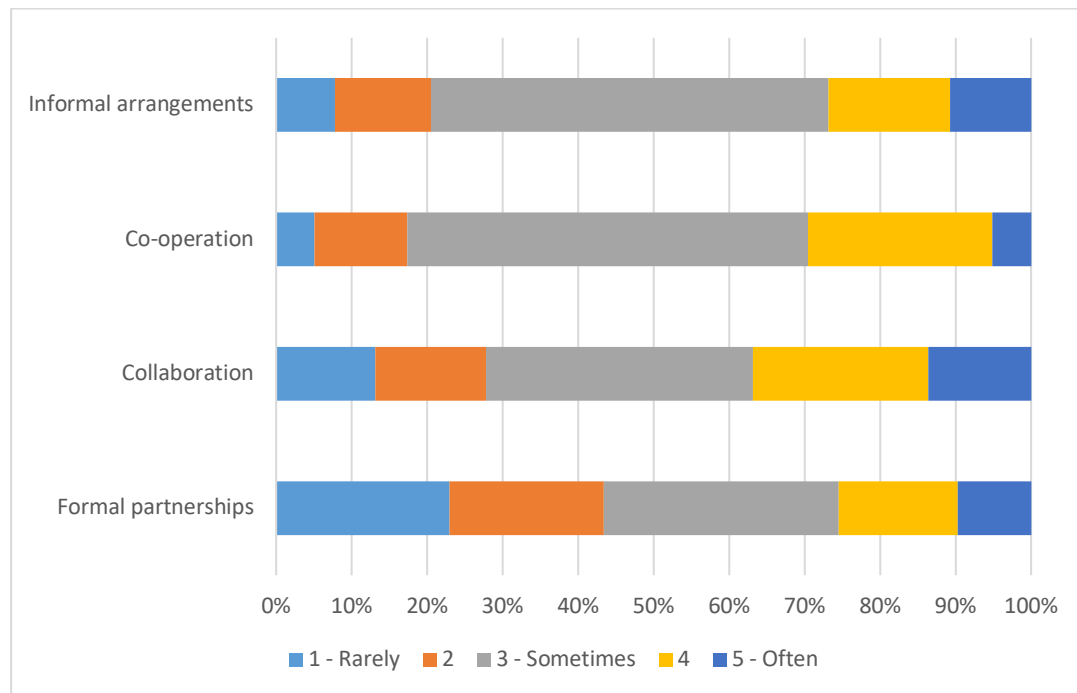
- Informal arrangements (not structured and with minimal communication)
- Cooperation (greater interaction than for informal arrangements, but not an intense form of collaborative working)
- Collaboration (working together with others to achieve a specific common goal exchanging ideas, skills and resources)
- Formal partnerships (involving more formal and long-term arrangements, such as seen in strategic alliances, joint ventures, co-development projects, or even mergers)

4.16 The most prevalent individual answer option for each of these types of interaction was '3 - sometimes' – just over half of respondents thought *informal arrangements* (53%) and *co-operation* (53%) happen sometimes; and around a third of respondents thought that *collaboration* (35%) and *formal partnerships* (31%) happen sometimes.

4.17 *Formal partnerships* were the type of interaction thought to occur the least (43% indicated 1 or 2), meanwhile *collaboration* was the type of interaction thought to occur the most (37% indicated 4 or 5).

4.18 The findings are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: How common types of interaction are % (n=196-205)



## Potential barriers

4.19 A number of potential barriers to partnership working were explored. Generally speaking, there were not high levels of agreement with the challenges presented and in most instances between a quarter and a third of respondents gave a neutral answer (i.e., that they neither agreed nor disagreed).

4.20 That said, agreement was strongest with the statement that, *'fears about breaching data protection requirements impede joint working'* (56% agreed or strongly agreed).

4.21 More than two-fifths of respondents agreed with the following statements:

- *'The quality of private security is too variable to facilitate working effectively with the police'* (47% agreed or strongly agreed)
- *'In general, the police believe that the private security sector cannot be trusted'* (42% agreed or strongly agreed)

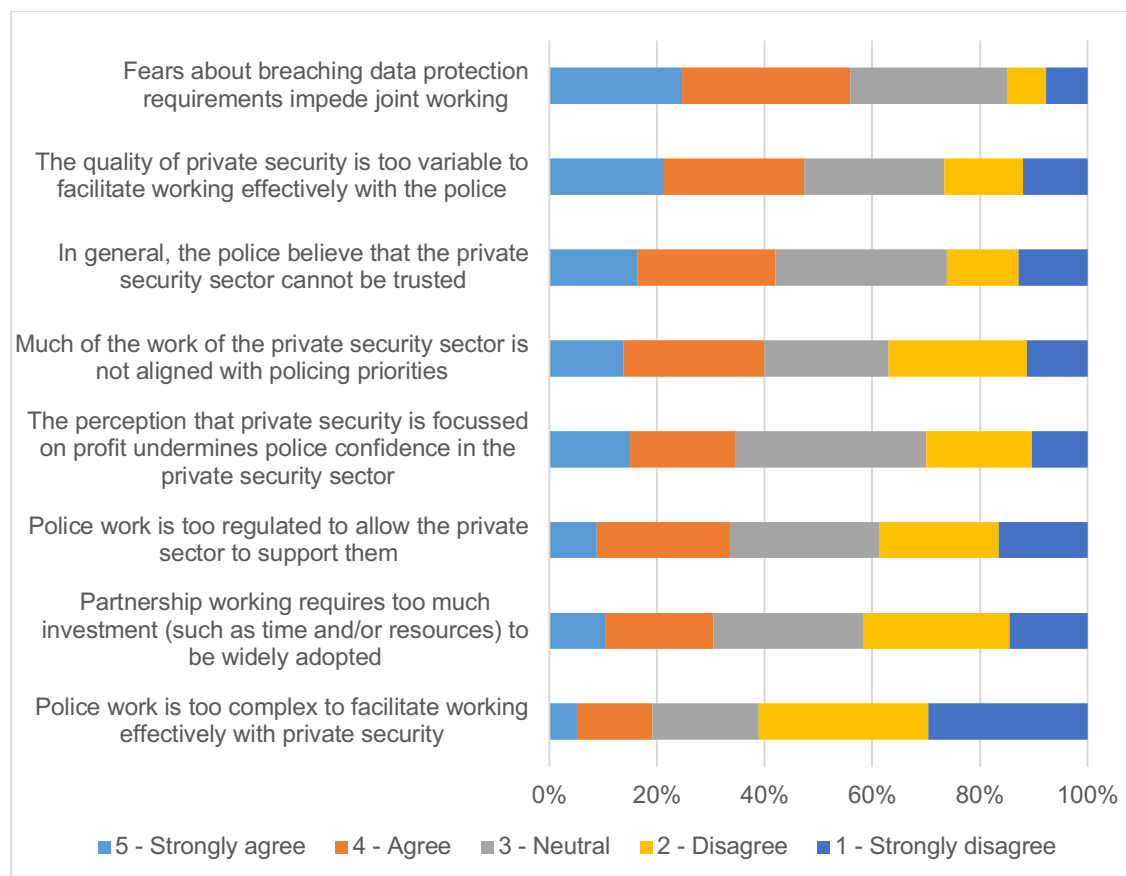
4.22 Agreement/disagreement was fairly evenly split for the following statements:

- *'Much of the work of the private security sector is not aligned with policing priorities'* (40% agreed or strongly agreed, whereas 37% disagreed or strongly disagreed)
- *'The perception that private security is focussed on profit undermines police confidence in the private security sector'* (35% agreed or strongly agreed, whereas 30% disagreed or strongly disagreed)
- *'Police work is too regulated to allow the private sector to support them'* (34% agreed or strongly agreed, whereas 39% disagreed or strongly disagreed).

4.23 Disagreement was highest with the suggestion that, *'police work is too complex to facilitate working effectively with private security'* (61% disagreed or strongly disagreed) and that, *'partnership working requires too much investment (such as time and/or resources) to be widely adopted'* (42% disagreed or strongly disagreed).

4.24 This is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Potential barriers % (n=192-195)



4.25 Respondents were asked whether there were any other notable barriers not covered by those presented in the survey. Three main themes were apparent:

- That the turnover of personnel in the police and in security companies can be an issue as this makes it difficult to maintain relationships and momentum;
- That the quality of security officers and the perception of security officers, and their relative lack of 'powers' and compliance with police standards/requirements can be a barrier to the police having faith in private security as a partner;
- That it is difficult for the police to afford time on collaboration given their already limited resources.

4.26 Some specific suggestions for overcoming these barriers included adopting a more coordinated approach:

*'A dedicated police business liaison group is needed to establish a viable working relationship. At present there is a silo approach due to differing police [forces/areas].'*

*(Survey respondent)*

4.27 And improving the training, equipment and powers held by security officers:

*'.. granting some reasonable powers/authority to a Security Officer employed by the respective security company.'*

*(Survey respondent)*

*'Training, body cams, stab vests, handcuffs etc. We need a national uniform so the public can recognise us straightaway but also distinguish us from police officers and PCSOs etc.'*

*(Survey respondent)*

4.28 Joint training between the police and private security was also proposed:

*'More training should be organised between the police and private security in order to facilitate excellent knowledge and understanding.'*

*(Survey respondent)*

## **Harnessing the potential benefits of working together**

4.29 The survey explored whether specific actions may be needed to develop partnership working between the police and private security.

4.30 Agreement was strongest with the notion that there is a need for strong leadership to pursue collaborative working *in the police service* (77% agreed or strongly agreed) and *in the private security sector* (76% agreed or strongly agreed).

4.31 More than two-thirds of respondents (69% agreed or strongly agreed) thought that, *'if the police service was more informed about the work of the private security sector it would facilitate greater collaboration'*.

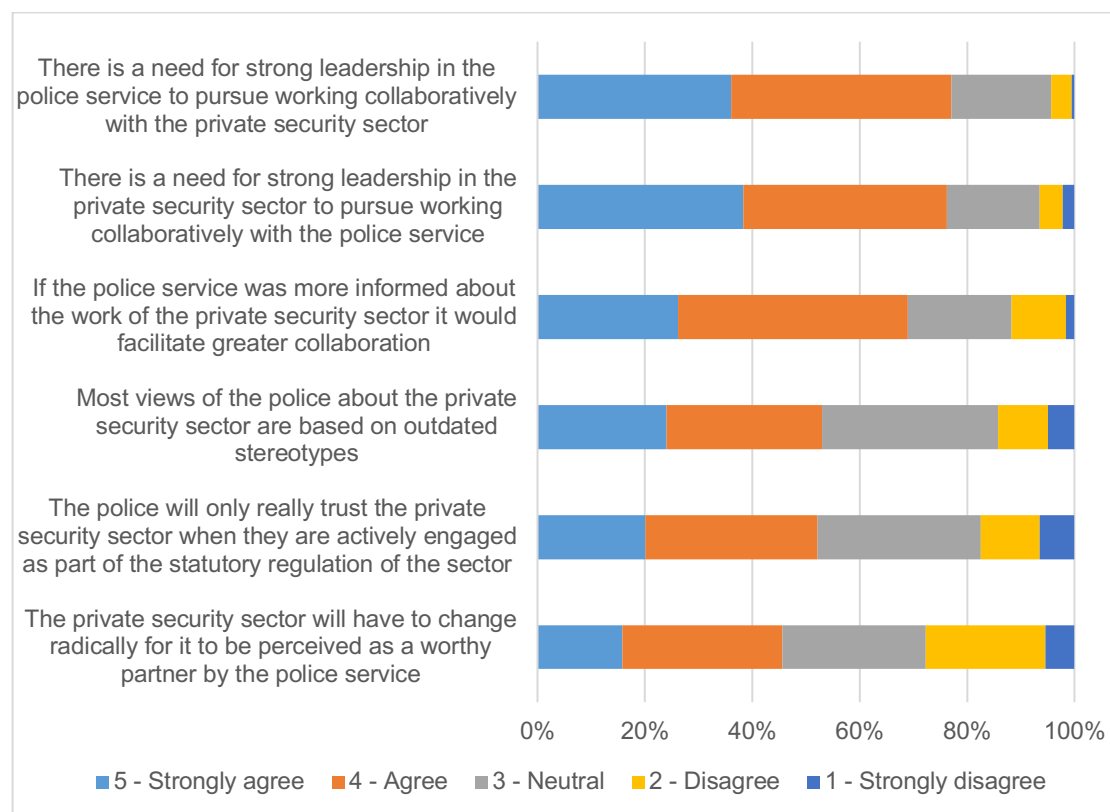
4.32 Around half of respondents agreed with the statements:

- *'Most views of the police about the private security sector are based on outdated stereotypes'* (53% agreed or strongly agreed)
- *'The police will only really trust the private security sector when they are actively engaged as part of the statutory regulation of the sector'* (52% agreed or strongly agreed)

4.33 Less than half (46% agreed or strongly agreed) indicated that, *'the private security sector will have to change radically for it to be perceived as a worthy partner by the police service'*; indeed more than a quarter of respondents disagreed with this statement (28% disagreed or strongly disagreed).

4.34 The full breakdown is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Action needed to develop partnership working % (n=183-187)



## Key success factors for partnership working

4.35 Respondents were asked how often a number of factors that may aid success are typically present when the police and private security work together (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means 'often', 3 means 'sometimes' and 1 means 'rare'). The most prevalent individual answer option for each of the factors explored was '3 - sometimes' with around a third of respondents selecting this option for each factor.

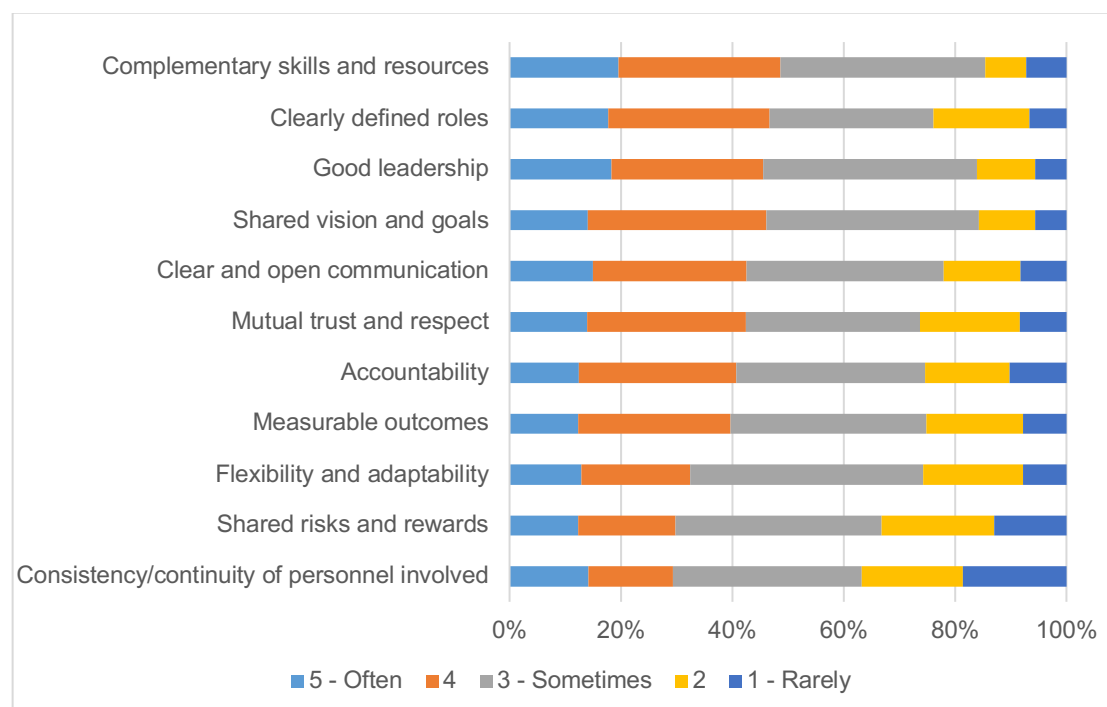
4.36 *'Complementary skills and resources'* was the factor considered most common (49% indicated 4 or 5). However, a number of other factors were scored quite closely to this:

- *'Clearly defined roles'* (47% indicated 4 or 5)
- *'Good leadership'* (46% indicated 4 or 5)
- *'Shared vision and goals'* (46% indicated 4 or 5)

4.37 Meanwhile, *'consistency/continuity of personnel involved'* was the factor considered most rare by respondents (37% indicated 1 or 2), followed by *'shared risks and rewards'* (33% indicated 1 or 2).

4.38 The full breakdown is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: How often features that support success are typically present within partnership working % (n=177-181)



## The potential benefits of partnership working

4.39 In order to explore the potential benefits of partnership working, the survey asked respondents to indicate how important a number of outcomes are when joint working takes place.

4.40 A majority of respondents (67% or more) rated each of the outcomes explored as important or very important.

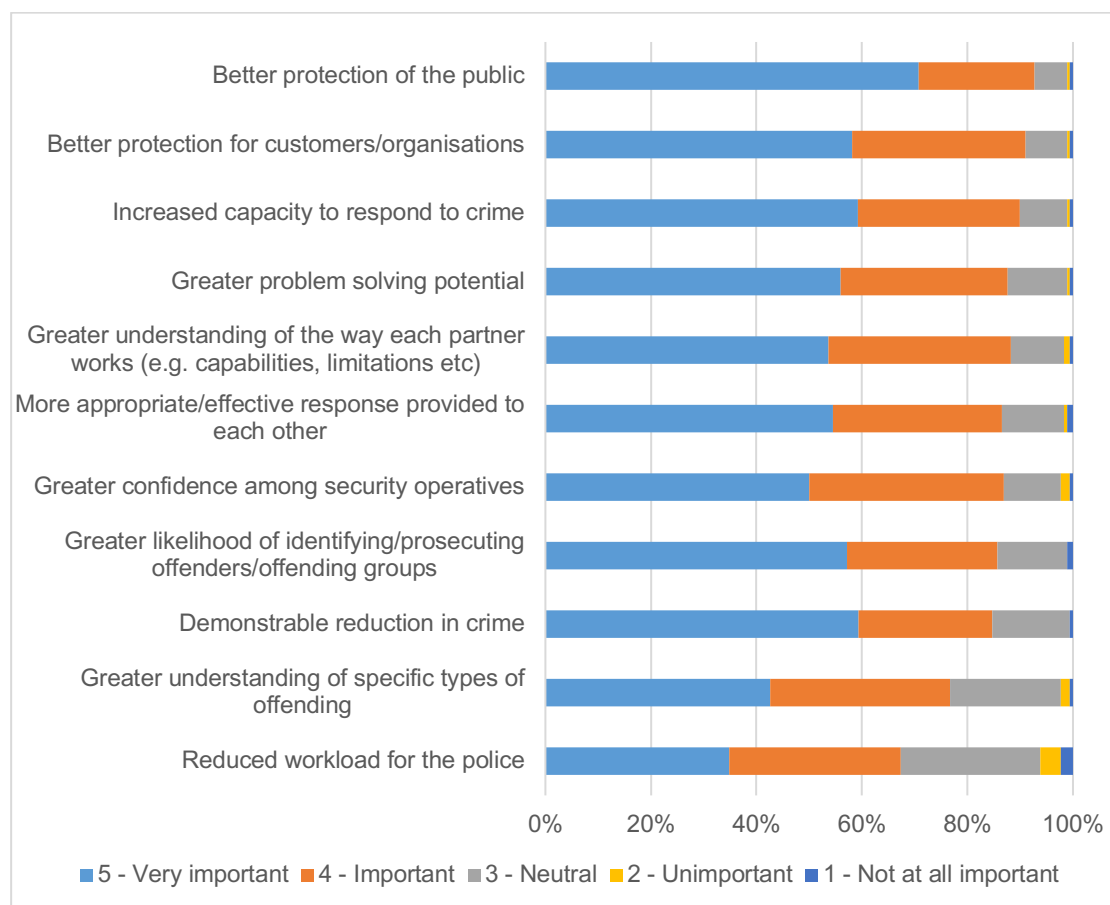
4.41 Notably, *'better protection of the public'* was the outcome most commonly considered to be important by respondents (93% indicated this to be important or very important). This was higher even than (albeit

very close to), *'better protection for customers/organisations'* (91% indicated this to be important or very important).

- 4.42 *'Increased capacity to respond to crime'* was also rated highly (90% indicated this to be important or very important), however, the issue of capacity did not extend so emphatically to a reduced workload for the police; 67% of respondents indicated a *'reduced workload for the police'* to be important or very important making this the least important outcome of those explored (nonetheless still viewed as important overall).

4.43 Figure 8 displays these findings.

Figure 8: The importance of specific outcomes relating to joint working % (n=175-179)

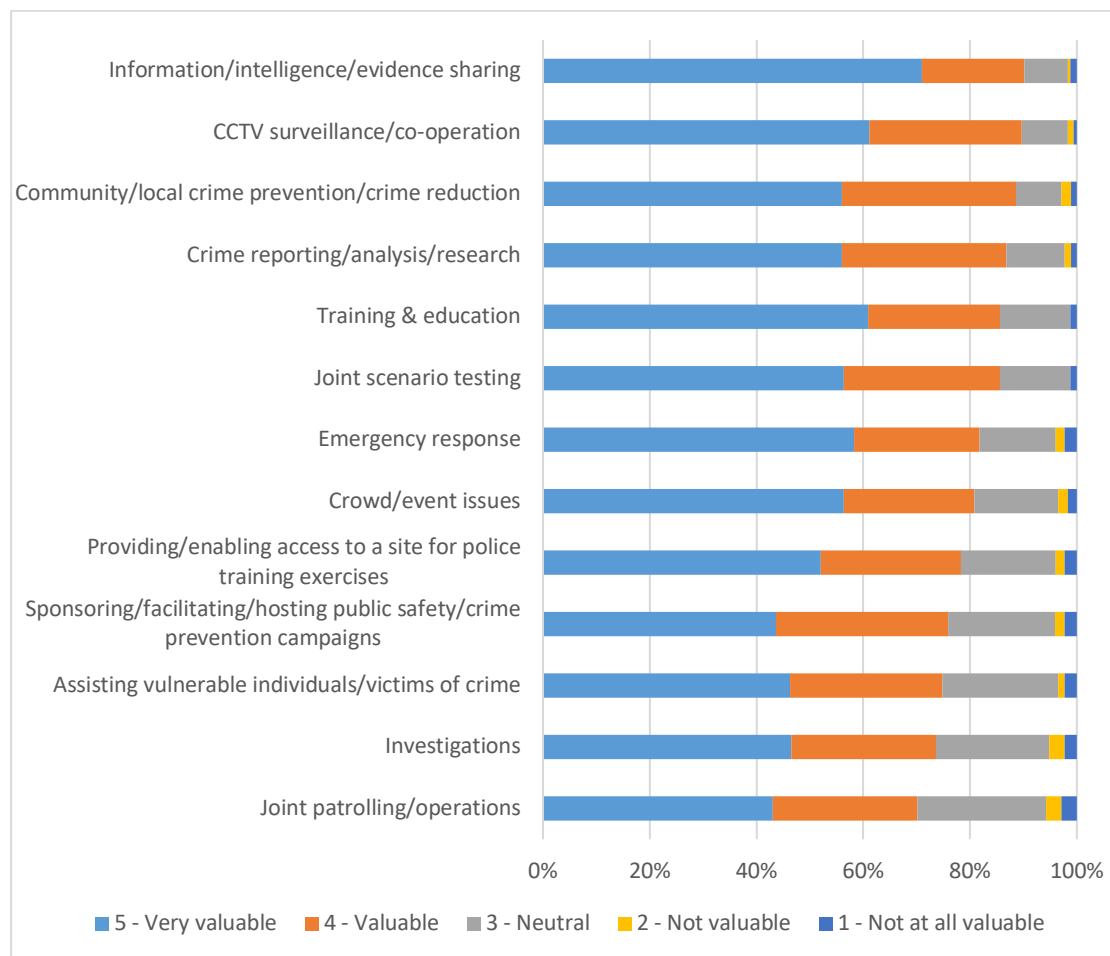


- 4.44 Respondents were asked whether there were any other key benefits of collaborative working not already covered by the survey. There were no particular themes apparent, although individual responses noted benefits such as improved public perception of policing and private security, and improved public perception of safety.

## Ways of engaging with the police

- 4.45 The survey explored two specific aspects of the ways of engaging with the police. First, how valuable specific types of activities were perceived to be; and second, how often those same types of activities take place (specifically where partnership working between the police and private security is involved).
- 4.46 A majority of respondents (70% or more) rated each of the activities to be valuable or very valuable.
- 4.47 The ways of working together most commonly considered to be valuable were:
- *'Information/intelligence/evidence sharing'* (90% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'CCTV surveillance/co-operation'* (90% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Community/local crime prevention/crime reduction'* (89% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Crime reporting/analysis/research'* (87% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Training and education'* (86% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Joint scenario testing'* (86% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
- 4.48 The ways of working together that were least commonly considered to be valuable are presented, albeit all were considered valuable overall:
- *'Joint patrolling/operations'* (70% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Investigations'* (74% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Assisting vulnerable individuals/victims'* (75% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
  - *'Sponsoring/facilitating/hosting public safety/crime prevention campaigns'* (76% indicated this to be valuable or very valuable)
- 4.49 The full list of activities explored, and the full breakdown, is shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Perceived value of specific types of partnership working % (n=172-175)



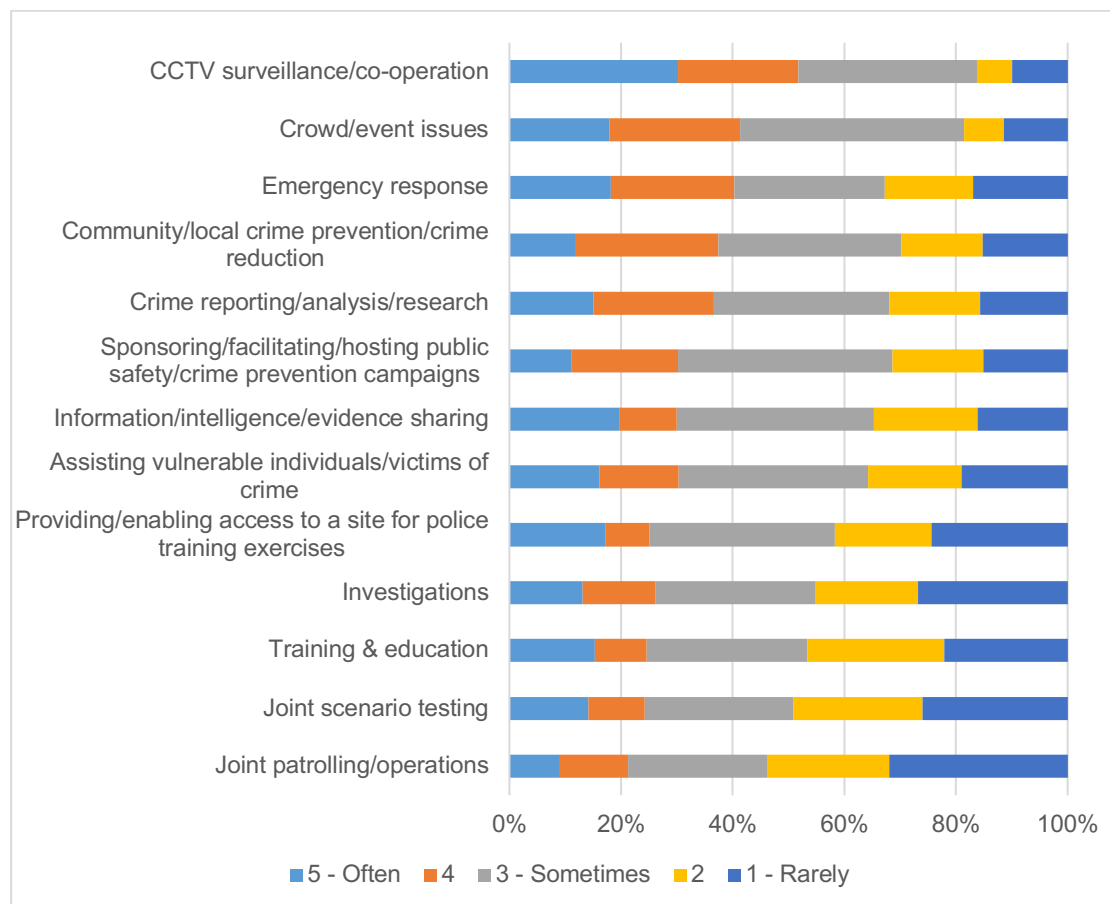
4.50 When asked how often those activities take place where collaboration between the police and private security is involved, the most prevalent individual answer option for each of the factors explored was '3 - sometimes' with around a third of respondents selecting this option for each factor.

4.51 '*Joint patrolling/operations*' was the activity considered most rare by respondents (54% indicated 1 or 2), followed by '*joint scenario testing*' (49% indicated 1 or 2), '*training and education*' (47% indicated 1 or 2), '*investigations*' (45% indicated 1 or 2) and '*providing/enabling access to a site for police training exercises*' (42% indicated 1 or 2).

4.52 Meanwhile, '*CCTV surveillance/co-operation*' was the factor considered most common (52% indicated 4 or 5). This was then followed by '*crowd/events issues*' (41% indicated 4 or 5) and by, '*emergency response*' (40% indicated 4 or 5).

4.53 The full list of activities explored, and the full breakdown is shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10: How often specific types of partnership working take place % (n=163-172)



4.54 Comparing perceptions of the value and the frequency of these activities shows some examples where the activities considered most valuable are considered to be undertaken most often – such as *CCTV surveillance/co-operation*. In theory at least this is promising – that activities that are considered most worthwhile are receiving attention.

4.55 However, there were also some examples where the activities considered important are considered comparatively less common. For example, *'information/intelligence/evidence sharing'* was one of the activities considered most valuable but sits in the middle of the list of activities explored by the survey, for how often it takes place. Meanwhile, *'training and education'* and *'joint scenario testing'* sit just above the middle of the list in term of how valuable they are considered to be, but sit towards the bottom of the list in terms of how often they are undertaken in partnership between the police and private security.

4.56 The lack of a clearer correlation between how valuable an activity is and how often it takes place appears to tally with the finding above that around half (52%) of respondents thought that generally joint working occurs where it is needed the most. Overall, it seems that a number of activities considered valuable would benefit from a greater focus for partnership working in future.

## Future focus

- 4.57 Respondents were asked whether there are particular problems/issues where the police and private security should work together in future (such as a specific crime type or a challenge that the police face). 78 respondents provided an answer to the question, although some indicated more than one issue – therefore 99 responses were made in total.
- 4.58 Crime types noted included retail-specific crime, and acquisitive crime more generally (such as theft, robbery and burglary). Cyber-related crime, ASB, Counter Terrorism and protests/public disorder were also suggested.
- 4.59 Respondents were also asked whether there are particular skills or resources that private security has that are not being used that could aid the police (free of charge). 71 respondents provided an answer to the question, with a small number indicating more than one skill – therefore 75 responses were received in total.
- 4.60 The main themes that emerged were:
- *'information'* - i.e., that private security collect information and intelligence and that they know the areas they operate in and that more use of this could be made by the police to assist in their understanding of crime trends.
  - *'technology/CCTV capabilities/equipment'* - which respondents noted was beneficial in detecting, responding to and investigating crime.
  - *'the experience and special knowledge'* within private security - for example that many people in security have worked in the industry long term and built-up considerable knowledge, and that other specialist knowledge such as business knowledge and analytical skills are present in the private sector.
  - *'the physical presence'* provided by private security - providing significant capacity, able to occupy spaces, patrol, deter and act as eyes and ears.

## Variation by role

- 4.61 For some aspects of the survey there was variation by whether the respondent's role was 'in-house' in nature or a 'supplier' role (or 'other').
- 4.62 It was apparent that in some respects, those in 'in-house' roles may have had more positive experiences in respect of partnership working with the police than those in 'supplier' roles (and those in 'other' roles).
- 4.63 Those working in an 'in-house' capacity less commonly agreed that, *'in general the police believe that the private security sector cannot be trusted'* (34% agreed or strongly agreed) than those working in a

'supplier' capacity (43% agreed or strongly agreed) and those working in an 'other' role (56% agreed or strongly agreed).

4.64 Those working in an 'in-house' capacity more commonly felt that the following key success factors were typically present when working in partnership with the police:

- '*clear and open communication*' (56% of 'in-house' respondents indicated 4 or 5 – often, compared with 36% of 'supplier' respondents and 34% of 'other' respondents)
- '*good leadership*' (61% of 'in-house' respondents indicated 4 or 5 – often, compared with 43% of 'supplier' respondents and 25% of 'other' respondents)
- '*complementary skills and resources*' (62% of 'in-house' respondents indicated 4 or 5 – often, compared with 45% of 'supplier' respondents and 31% of 'other' respondents)
- '*shared risks and rewards*' (38% of 'in-house' respondents indicated 4 or 5 – often, compared with 30% of 'supplier' respondents and 13% of 'other' respondents)
- '*flexibility and adaptability*' (39% of 'in-house' respondents indicated 4 or 5 – often, compared with 32% of 'supplier' respondents and 16% of 'other' respondents)

### **Variation by length of time in security**

4.65 For some aspects of the survey there was variation by the length of time the respondent had been working in security.

4.66 It was apparent that those that had been working in security the longest (30 years or more) were more sceptical about the attitudes of the police towards private security:

- Those working in security the longest (30 years or more) more commonly agreed that, '*there is a lack of appetite among the police to work with private security*' (73% agreed or strongly agreed) than any other length of time working in security (48% of those working 20-29 years; 40% of those working 11-19 years and 45% of those working 10 years or less)
- Those working in security the longest (30 years or more) more commonly agreed that, '*in general, the police believe that the private security sector cannot be trusted*' (65% agreed or strongly agreed) than any other length of time working in security (45% of those working 20-29 years; 30% of those working 11-19 years and 28% of those working 10 years or less)

- Those working in security the longest (30 years or more) more commonly agreed that, *'the police will only really trust the private security sector when they are actively engaged as part of the statutory regulation of the sector'* (72% agreed or strongly agreed) than any other length of time working in security (44% of those working 20-29 years; 46% of those working 11-19 years and 44% of those working 10 years or less)

### **Variation by how partnership working is perceived to begin**

4.67 For some responses there was variation in views which related to the respondents' overall view on how partnership working tends to begin.

4.68 There was some indication that where the police are seen to be initiating collaborative working, this increases the perception that they think positively about engaging with private security:

- Respondents that thought the police tend to initiate (29% agreed or strongly agreed) and that thought there is an even split in who initiates (36% agreed or strongly agreed) were much less likely to agree that, *'there is a lack of appetite among the police to work with private security'* than those that thought private security tend to initiate (62% agreed or strongly agreed) and those that thought joint working *'just tends to happen'* (85% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Respondents that thought the police tend to initiate (29% agreed or strongly agreed) and that thought there is an even split in who initiates (33% agreed or strongly agreed) were much less likely to agree that, *'in general, the police believe that the private security sector cannot be trusted'* than those that thought private security tend to initiate (54% agreed or strongly agreed) and those that thought joint working *'just tends to happen'* (64% agreed or strongly agreed).

4.69 There was also some indication that respondents that thought joint working *'just tends to happen'* are more sceptical in some ways about the viability of partnership working:

- Respondents that thought that joint working, *'just tends to happen'* (60% agreed or strongly agreed) more commonly agreed that, *'much of the work of the private security sector is not aligned with policing priorities'* than both those that thought the police tend to initiate and those that thought private security tend to initiate (for both 38% agreed or strongly agreed), and than those that thought there is an even split in who initiates (33% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Similarly, respondents that thought that joint working *'just tends to happen'* (54% agreed or strongly agreed) more commonly agreed that, *'partnership working requires too much investment (such as time*

*and/or resources) to be widely adopted'* than those that thought private security tend to initiate (36% agreed or strongly agreed), those that thought the police tend to initiate (29% agreed or strongly agreed), and than those that thought there is an even split in who initiates (20% agreed or strongly agreed).

4.70 There were also some instances where those that thought there is a fairly even split in who initiates collaborative working held distinct views:

- They were much less likely to agree that, *'despite some exceptions, there is a lack of joint working'* (32% agreed or strongly agreed) than those who thought the police tend to initiate (67% agreed or strongly agreed), those who thought private security tend to initiate (69% agreed or strongly agreed) and those who thought joint working *'just tends to happen'* (70% agreed or strongly agreed).
- Those that thought there was an even split also placed more value on being able to respond to each other more effectively (although it should be noted, this was generally a highly valued outcome); Respondents that thought there is a fairly even split in who initiates collaborative working more commonly considered, *'a more appropriate/effective response provided to each other'* to be an important outcome (100% important or very important) than those that thought the private sector tends to initiate (84% important or very important), those that thought the police tend to initiate (85% important or very important) and those that thought joint working *'just tends to happen'* (88% important or very important).

## Summary

4.71 Generally, respondents saw value in collaborative working with the police: the vast majority think there is huge potential for police and private security to work together; few agreed that private security lack the appetite to work with the police; and few agreed that the merits of partnership working tend to be overstated. Of primary importance (by working together) was being able to better protect the public and customers/organisations, and to increase overall capacity to respond to crime. A need for strong leadership within both the police and in private security was flagged as important to be able to further develop partnership working.

4.72 Nonetheless, the overall picture from the survey is that there is much more that could be done: two-thirds thought private security need to do more to demonstrate how they can support the police; and just over half thought there is a general lack of joint working. All of the activities/ways of engaging with the police explored by the survey were generally viewed to be valuable but were by no means considered to be commonplace. And it was clear that some important elements of partnership working such as consistency of personnel and shared risks and rewards were

somewhat lacking (although for some elements this was less so among 'in-house' respondents); and further that some barriers need to be overcome such as fears about breaching data protection.

- 4.73 There was some indication that private security professionals consider themselves to be more enthusiastic about collaborative working than the police (and particularly among those that had been working in security for the longest). Relatively few respondents indicated that the police tend to initiate joint working arrangements; around half of respondents thought there is a general lack of appetite among the police to work with private security; just under half thought the private security sector will have to change radically for it to be perceived as a worthy partner by the police; and just over two-fifths of respondents thought the police believe that private security cannot be trusted. However, two-thirds of respondents thought that if the police were more informed about the work of the private security sector it would facilitate greater collaboration.
- 4.74 In terms of areas to focus on for collaboration in the future, retail-related crime, and acquisitive crime more generally, were most commonly suggested although the numbers were relatively small overall. The specialisms that respondents most consistently thought could be made better use of included the information and intelligence that private security hold, their technological facilities/capabilities and their specialist security knowledge.

## Section 5. Interviews

### Background

- 5.1 This section contains findings from interviews carried out with 33 professionals. Interviewees held a variety of positions including in-house and supplier/contractor as well as consultants and other security experts. A small number of participants were police or very recent ex police although it should be noted that they shared their own views and experiences and were not 'representing' any official standpoint of the police.
- 5.2 For context, an indication of role of the interviewee is provided against quotes included in this section. It is also noteworthy that some of the security professionals that participated had a prior career in policing. However, only individuals who were very recent former police are attributed as such.
- 5.3 The semi-structured interviews covered a number of topics relating to partnership working, primarily: the benefits of collaborative working; the challenges; future areas of focus; and moving forward on collaboration.

### The benefits of collaborative working

- 5.4 We asked interviewees about the motivations for participating in collaborative working and the benefits that could be achieved.

#### ***Mutual benefits***

- 5.5 A theme that came across prominently from interviewees was that collaboration can have a real impact on the **standard of security** in a location and the amount and types of **crime that occurs** there. This is mutually beneficial as the public and organisations are better protected:

*'We've put a lot of effort and time into this work [to reduce a specific crime type] for the greater good of the communities we serve.'*

*(Interviewee 15, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

- 5.6 Specific initiatives such as joint patrols were noted to have a tangible impact because involving private security increases the visible presence of 'capable guardians' which is an effective way of deterring crime:

*'We have found that when you get the police and private security patrolling together, that is a force multiplier in visibility. The data shows that when they run high-vis days with the police and private security together, we would see a significant reduction across all crime types for 48 to 72 hours after. That ripple effect that saw reductions days and*

*days after. Criminals are thinking we are not going to do anything today.'*

*(Interviewee 3, Supplier - Senior Leadership – very recent ex police)*

*'Anyone carrying out hostile recon [on our site] would see we are very involved with the police and how vocal we are on social media about mitigating crime. That is really good for us.'*

*(Interviewee 16, Supplier – Site Security Manager)*

- 5.7 Similarly, collaboration such as facilitating police training on a client site enables a more effective response by the police which in turn supports a more effective response by (and for) private security:

*'Say an officer with a drone or a dog and they are always looking for ways to exercise their dog or practice with their drone, so I am always thinking, 'how can I get them involved?', I can get a sniffer dog to browse a site before it opens and I can get an explosive dog there, the right contact will do that because they want to use and train their dogs.'*

*(Interviewee 24, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.8 It was also evident that there are specific crime types and operations that the police could **not run effectively** without relevant information from corporate security or (their) security suppliers, but equally where police advice and input was essential to organisations:

*'[To target ATM crime] The police were needing things from us – where ATMs are, when they would be loaded [so the police could catch the offenders]. But also, why we are putting so much money in them. Because it only gets loaded once a week, we had their advice to reduce the amount and increase the deliveries. We managed to solve the problem quite a bit. It was a balancing act, to work together, to try to figure out which is the best way to do these things.'*

*(Interviewee 22, Security Consultant & former In-house Security Director)*

*'Having that blend of experience and knowledge from different stakeholders.'*

*(Interviewee 16, Supplier – Site Security Manager)*

- 5.9 It was also highlighted that private security may be present in situations where there is a **threat to life**, and that being equipped to deal with emergency situations and being able to work collaboratively with the police in such situations, can and has saved lives:

*'They are grateful for anything we can provide. [At one event there was a serious attack involving weapons] they were all okay, but what we were able to provide the police was very beneficial to them, to support them. Four security officers were commended by the police at an award ceremony. To be recognised in that instance where clearly*

*private security were a key factor in that operation that ended up all well, but could have ended worse had anyone lost their life... to appreciate and honour them with these awards was quite special for them.'*

*(Interviewee 12, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

- 5.10 Interviewees often talked about the value of building relationships – that one form of collaboration often led to further joint working and that this assisted both the police and private security to be **effective** in their respective roles:

*'We've seen that it builds relationships. The days of action are very good and spun off to more localised work - speaking to the Security Managers and then raising their own operations. It spins off to other activities which was good.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'From my perspective, to have that relationship is so beneficial to pick up the phone or drop an email and have that knowledge and support it is invaluable.'*

*(Interviewee 20, In-house – Security Manager)*

*'There is no greater risk than going out uncoordinated and not working with us and anyway if we have intel that can help people policing public space why would we not pass it on? There is much more risk in not doing so.'*

*(Interviewee 33, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

- 5.11 One in-house security lead from the education sector whose organisation had previously part-funded a police officer but no longer had this arrangement, noted a plethora of benefits when the collaboration had been in place. Ultimately it was the service that could be provided to their students and staff when they were victims of crime that was strengthened when it was in place and weakened when it ended. The close links had streamlined processes and meant each had insights, resources and links that they wouldn't have otherwise had access to.
- 5.12 One interviewee in a senior leadership role for a security supplier noted that the mindset of reputable security suppliers is increasingly one of caring and being supportive beyond their own contract/domain and that this has much wider benefits:

*'Security officers are not just a resource, we genuinely care. They are our colleagues, our friends, our responsibility. The ability to all work together, particularly on major incidents. The police may determine a hot zone. One time ... there was an incident and a competitor couldn't send a relief officer in for their security officer [when relief was due]. We provided one, gave them a break, communicated, it wasn't our employee, but that was*

*really important to the security of the environment at that time but also the individual's welfare perspective.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

### **Benefits for the police**

5.13 The existence of private security taking a dominant role in tackling petty and volume crime, at least in private space, was referenced as an unqualified good. Private security was noted to play a sizable role in the protection of the national infrastructure; in limiting the amount that the police need to get involved; and by providing insight and intelligence. That said, they were largely unacknowledged and not reflected in any government endorsed strategic approach. A number of interviewees noted that collaborative working is of direct benefit to the police.

5.14 Some highlighted that generally policing is facing **challenges with resourcing** and to some extent with **public confidence** and that it is in their interest to engage with those what are willing to assist them:

*'At a front-line level – a police officer knowing there are not many resources available, will still value having trained security with them to assist. That tactical level of helping each other is improving. They know there's no other help. We have numerous examples where police have thanked us and were grateful the security officers were there. That wasn't a formal partnership, that was just helping in the moment.'*

*(Interviewee 1, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'There is an acceptance across policing that confidence in the police is not in a great place at the moment – people may turn to private security for support and guidance. Previously they turned to the police. The police need to get other bodies to support public policing. Share with other bodies. Now more than ever the public approach others for help.'*

*(Interviewee 3, Supplier - Senior Leadership – very recent ex police)*

5.15 A number of interviewees highlighted specifically that private security offers a level of **capacity** that the police do not have. In many instances private security is already working on sites that border on and/or encompass public spaces and/or are accessible by the public:

*'[In the UK] There are 400,000 SIA accredited staff. There are 150,000 police officers. In our public realms, they've got a role to play for eyes and ears.'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

*'That amount of support and help. Those eyes and ears can be used for community policing. We say to officers, don't just look at the front doors. Look out windows. Look at street.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'The importance of safeguarding. Policing alone aren't going to see all of that. For example, in pub environments security see a lot more first hand. So we have to provide them information and vulnerabilities to get information back.'*

*(Interviewee 30, Other Security Expert - speaking about perception from time in Police Management role)*

- 5.16 Further, this presence generated a level of **information** and insight that was of significant value to the police. Their presence generates a multitude of benefits, such as acting as a deterrent to crime, sharing intelligence that can assist the police, reporting crime, providing a first response to incidents, assisting vulnerable individuals, and collecting evidence which can aid the police:

*'The hostile recon angle. We have lots of eyes on the ground, we can provide behaviour recognition, we have different skills and training. We can give intelligence to the police control room and they can evaluate that. That stuff means we are genuinely working together.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'Greater level of intelligence – that's a resource that isn't tapped in to. We have much more – our officers can tell you who the perpetrators are. Do the police have that information? A revenue stream of intelligence they can tap into.'*

*(Interviewee 9, Supplier - Management)*

*'Technical capability of the private security industry – that is underestimated. Policing is quite surprised at the capability they have, the resources they have, the options on intel reports and packages and they can do things policing can't – look at social media, forecasting, horizon scanning – use GPS trackers for stolen goods which gives policing ideas where those goods are going. Stuff like that.'*

*(Interviewee 19, Other Security Expert)*

*'It's the richness of the picture you can get by having a greater pool of intelligence. That information is going to be a unique insight that you are not going to achieve any other way. Its reaching parts that you're never going to be in those positions, to gather that information. That completeness of the picture. Understanding people in positions that through their role can enhance the police's response to things, as well as their roles that policing doesn't need to do.'*

*(Interviewee 30, Other Security Expert - speaking about perception from time in Police Management role)*

- 5.17 Interviewees also talked about how collaboration with private security has been **reducing the demands on the police**. Examples included, enabling police to reduce their input to some environments (such as events) and that when they understand the evidence police require they can cover as much of the investigative ground as is appropriate, reducing

the amount of time the police need to spend when they pick up an investigation:

*'Private security standing on a pub as a door supervisor has minimised some kind of policing requirement which has become a trend in the last 15 years.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'In security, the growth of intelligence centres has led to demand reduction. If they can say we've got this offender, the CCTV footage, statements from staff, they've reduced that demand for that work for the police. It's driving towards, 'what can we do that the police hasn't got capacity to do' – because those offenders are causing problems.'*

*(Interviewee 19, Other Security Expert)*

*'The management of demand is key, the police are increasingly struggling to meet demand and the private security sector can help with high visibility patrolling, say CCTV monitoring, community intelligence and some of the engagement within a business setting, shops for example.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

- 5.18 A note of caution, however, was sounded about how the withdrawal of the police is problematic where it extends to minimising engagement in tackling problems. One interviewee suggested that retail crime and violence in the retail sector had become unmanageable since the police reduced their response to incidents such as shoplifting. It is a reaffirmation of the point that while some issues can and are effectively delegated to the private sector to manage, ongoing engagement with the police is key.

- 5.19 Interviewees from the education sector noted that students, particularly some international students whose prior experience of police in their home country was very negative, tended to mistrust the police. This was significant in at least two ways: one was that the private security employed in those organisations could engage with students to **convey key messages** (from the police), in a way that would be rejected if the police attempted to do so:

*'The people's perception of the police – particularly with students, those from different countries that see police in a certain way. Campaigns work better for us when we don't have police involvement – we get more engagement. Engagement leads to behaviour change, culture change and [in some instances] confidence to report.'* [speaking in respect of a campaign on what constitutes unacceptable behaviour towards women].

*(Interviewee 27, In-house – Security Lead)*

- 5.20 The other was that collaborative working with private security and the organisations they serve could **open doors for the police to engage**

**with specific communities**, build trust and pave the way to a better relationship between those communities and the police;

*‘With the international community and getting involved in groups – that had an immense impact on international students and how they view the police. That has huge benefits for the police. Some would avoid law enforcement. [The police officer going to various] groups, dropping in, have a chat, social – but getting security messages across as well.’*

*(Interviewee 25, In-house – Security Lead)*

- 5.21 One interviewee spoke about how collaboration with private security, enables the police to **spread key messages wider** and that this type of awareness raising was valuable:

*‘The potential is the amplification – we give up a space for free and let them deliver their message. Five years ago the police didn’t know who looks after the buildings, they didn’t know who the security companies were, or the managing agents responsible for those spaces. Now it is a one-to-many voice and we can continue to support them to get their message out.’*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.22 This point was also borne out by a police stakeholder (although in reference to a different type of initiative) highlighting the merit of private security supporting police initiatives:

*‘A number of major private security companies are going to adopt [a specific scheme to support public safety] and give their staff that training – that just means we’ll have thousands of ambassadors that understand the value of [the scheme].’*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

### **Benefits to private security**

- 5.23 A number of interviewees spoke about how collaboration with the police **increases the knowledge and skills of private security** professionals. Sharing information about relevant issues increases security officers’ ability to respond effectively and increases their confidence, morale and motivation; and similarly, when it is absent it can complicate the process of securing locations effectively. Further, the more that security officers understand the way police work and key concepts such as evidence standards, the more capable they are, the better able to communicate and ultimately, the more professional they are:

*‘It builds confidence for private security professionals if the police can give them information and they can talk on the same wavelength. If you have confidence that private security has that knowledge, that creates a better environment. That ripple effect - making private security*

*more professional and making private security feel more professional. It has a tangible effect. Our people are becoming more professional.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'It keeps morale up. In the security industry that is very important, when you have got security officers working 12 hour shifts, 60 hours a week. Getting involved in different initiatives gives your team a purpose. If morale is being kept up on a site, and on multiple sites, then you have got a happy company.'*

*(Interviewee 16, Supplier – Site Security Manager)*

- 5.24 While improving security and reducing crime was typically the primary goal of collaborative working, interviewees noted a secondary benefit was that engaging with the police could **improve their reputation**. This is because organisations look favourably on their security team/ security supplier developing good links with the police:

*'Their reputation and connections that they make through doing that work. They do a lot free of charge. They do a lot to increase professionalism, they are always keen to get involved.'*

*(Interviewee 5, Other security expert)*

*'We want clients to feel valued and safe, it means a lot to them to have the police on site, and because clients like it, it is good for us if we organise that.'*

*(Interviewee 29, Security Consultant)*

*'Ability to walk in and do road shows – talk to staff in a reception area, that's good for tenants, managing agents, police, but without ramming it down their throat and scaring people.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.25 Some felt this was 'win-win', because the time and energy they put in to providing a better service by developing their collaborative working, could also have a **commercial benefit**. Some described instances where **security suppliers are more likely to win contracts**, if they can demonstrate effective partnership working, and that where this was with police, this was particularly well regarded:

*'In tenders there are scores about relationships. If they know that people are involved in police initiatives then you score much higher. There's no monetary value as such.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'There's brownie points for value add. They can see we are a better company. There is a community and social value, from an altruistic perspective. But we can also demonstrate we have a better network, get information quicker, get trends quicker, there is also a commercial*

*point, we can give more, be better, that pays forwards quickly.*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

## **The challenges of collaborative working**

- 5.26 While interviewees typically considered collaborative working to be valuable and worthwhile, many highlighted that challenges exist. There were a number of main themes which are considered here in turn.

### ***The reputation of private security***

- 5.27 The reputation of private security (particularly those in contract 'door supervisor' type roles) has long been identified as an issue that affects collaboration with the police.

- 5.28 Some interviewees noted that while this had improved to some extent, it was still considered to be a key challenge. It was noted that the police and the public sometimes lack faith in the capabilities of private security:

*'There is still potential stigma – does it really add value, is it corrupt? There's been reports about fake licensing in London where applicants are given the answers rather than properly passing. It's the impression that we are not really professional. That's probably the biggest barriers.'*

*(Interviewee 1, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'There are issues with faith in the police. But still that public perception remains – police are higher trusted than private security.'*

*(Interviewee 4, Other security expert)*

*'Public confidence in the private security industry has never been high.'*

*(Interviewee 21, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'Part of the problem is the quality of private security. There are some really good security officers in existence and as we know there are bad ones, in a conduct point of view or how they present themselves. If I was in the police I would be concerned that just because they have an SIA badge doesn't make them a credible person. A quality issue – therefore there is a trust concern from the police – are these people really capable – are they going to be good ambassadors? Are the public going to trust them as well? When you pay people £8 an hour. The bad apples are the ones that take the headlines.'*

*(Interviewee 14, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'Their perception of private security is very rock bottom, stereotyping of door supervisor on a pub. What do you expect?'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

5.29 The view was borne out by police related interviewees:

*'Well, there's the skill of private security...sometimes the professionalism of private security, does it cause more problems? If police turn up, private security doesn't know what's going on, English may not be their first language, something goes wrong. It leaves a bad impression.'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

*'Trust is an issue, there is a legacy of poor companies and they still exist, albeit fewer of them. Private security has improved and is better, but there are still charlatans and crooks and some with links to organised crime. Some have permanent employees that are well trained. Say Olympics or a party conference, but for some events there will be huge numbers recruited at short notice and so assurances around accreditation need to recognise that.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

5.30 It was also highlighted that the variation in quality between security officers makes it harder for the police to be confident to engage:

*'One thing may not help us as a security sector, they deal with my guys and see how they are trained and see that they have a brief and they like that, but then they come across the next security guard and he is not the same standard and not happy to be there, can't speak English and does not understand what he is supposed to do. Within the police the quality variance is not so great, they are all trained to a minimum level.'*

*(Interviewee 24, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'There is still a lack of trust, it is because police officers don't understand how security can be. They see officers in rubbish places on minimum wage, no training and that is how the industry is seen. Now compare the bad with the good and that is so much different.'*

*(Interviewee 29, Security Consultant)*

5.31 One interviewee talked about how there were misconceptions of private security, but to some extent that private security lacked an understanding of the work of the police and could also be guilty of underestimating them. It was highlighted that it is only by engaging more that they can better understand each other's capabilities and strengths:

*'We each have a view of the other. Some of its right, but actually largely its misconception. Being exposed to senior people in the police...I've been really pleasantly surprised by how amazing the people are. Before I would have underestimated how good they are and how good they are at keeping us safe. By having more engagement with the leaders of private security, those police stakeholders are pleasantly surprised by how the industry has come on –*

*and a lot of that's down to the work of the SIA and licensing and cleaning up our act. The mood music has changed as both stakeholders understand more – we are all in this together and can work together.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

### **Building and maintaining relationships**

5.32 The most prevalent issue raised by interviewees was the challenge of both building and maintaining relationships between the police and private security. There were a number of facets to this.

5.33 One interviewee noted the advantage that within private security there is a volume of former police officers (working as employees and contractors), and that these individuals are often effective at engaging with the police, because there is a comradery and an understanding of the police that paves the relationship. Nonetheless, it was still noted to be a challenge to get buy-in from both sides. A striking observation, and one that merits further research, is that former police officers moving on to work in private security have a more positive attitude to the sector (and/or a less jaundiced one) than they did when working for the police.

5.34 A prominent issue here was the difficulty of establishing the key relationship needed to initiate some form of engagement. This is in part about identifying relevant individuals and then having done that, creating the opportunity to speak with them, getting buy-in can take time:

*'I spent 18 months trying to cultivate a relationship with [a specific task force]. I finally got a meeting with the then lead and the number two. I kid you not, the day after our meeting, after 18 months of trying to arrange it, he was re-deployed, and it just died. It is really difficult.'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier – Management)*

*'It's taken from [when I came to this site] till five years later to become more of a partnership.'*

*(Interviewee 16, Supplier – Site Security Manager)*

*'It can be difficult and take a long time to build them up at first especially with high-ranking individuals. [High profile event] helped, it gave us a good relationship with certain units then and we worked closely. That opened up the high-level engagement we have.'*

*(Interviewee 20, In-house – Security Manager)*

5.35 It was apparent that collaborative working often hinges on the motivation and drive of specific individuals driving it, and them remaining in position long enough. The fact that this often did not happen was disruptive:

*'When the local inspector left, it was like starting from scratch with the new person and then they left after about six months so it gradually fizzled out. Officers lost the trust*

*in it because it became hard work - you give up and don't bother.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'The approach initially is usually a local contact and then generally feed into their network, their skipper. It becomes very myopic though – with only one point of contact – if that officer moves on it kind of dies.'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier – Management)*

*When I first joined [company] we had a great interface – when [that individual] retired it fell by the wayside. That's what has been lost – the interface between security and policing. Having known senior police officers. Its sometimes now harder to get the collaboration.'*

*(Interviewee 7, Supplier - Management)*

*'There were two key individuals that drove it. The problem is that individuals move on. Hopefully they leave a cultural change and legacy behind.'*

*(Interviewee 20, In-house – Security Manager)*

*'The things that made it difficult – rate of change of staff within police forces. It was difficult to get anything persistent.'*

*(Interviewee 28, Former Senior Leadership for a Supplier)*

- 5.36 Another issue was finding a willing contact at a sufficiently senior level to generate engagement and provide a basis for more authoritative and speedy progress. Because relationships are often forged at the local level, this can be a problem:

*'Relationships are often very local - sergeant level – so it can lose momentum.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

*'[Some senior police] are really engaging and seeing the potential of private security. It tends to fall down with the people in the middle – making it happen – that's where it comes to a halt and doesn't progress. There's still a bit of an issue of it sounds good, but do we trust them? They want to keep control.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'One of the difficulties is to get in high enough [in terms of seniority] It's impossible to get to the top, and to discuss this is what we have and can share – to filter it down. It is always a better option when the [leader] has said get involved. We need to know who to go to start conversations. PC level or sergeant level isn't quite enough – it dies a death.'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier – Management)*

*'Setting up [an initiative] is a good idea but it's tough to get the police on board, I approached a senior contact and received no reply. It is down to individual relationships. I needed buy-in from high up but it came eventually from a*

*local contact and then I built up local contacts and did it that way but it took a while, I had to find the right person.'*

*(Interviewee 24, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.37 Another issue some interviewees experienced in relationship building is inconsistency between forces (and also within them), with some receptive to collaboration and others less so. It was lamented, that activities that work well in one force area, and that should be possible to replicate, cannot necessarily be replicated in another. Changes/restructuring within a force could also make engagement harder and undo collaboration that previously worked well:

*'We tend to find inconsistencies between forces. Some are supportive on working alongside each other. Others you get nothing. [One specific area] the police presence [at the site] is great, the support of security officers is great, there is open communication, we share intelligence, it enables our teams to work strategically.'*

*(Interviewee 7, Supplier - Management)*

*'It depends on the Chief Officer – if you have a chief officer that is willing to engage in collaboration and had positive experiences they will push it down their organisation.'*

*(Interviewee 15, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.38 The issue of force 'culture' and the impact this had on relationship building was a significant one. It was highlighted, for example, that countries such as Northern Ireland and Scotland where there is a single police force may be at an advantage compared to countries such as England where there are 39 police forces, because working with one force is likely to be easier or at least more consistent than working with some or all of the 39. This is in part why respondents noted that initiatives were easier to establish with forces such as the City of London and the British Transport Police (the first operates in a confined area and the second is a national service):

*'Why no one else can do that in the same way; [the British Transport Police] operate on iconic public spaces, site specific, CCTV rich, where people are occupied on the premises. Only the City of London is in any way similar. For other forces there is less of an equivalent, maybe BIDS or shopping centres, and I can see a lot of parallels.'*

*(Interviewee 33, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

- 5.39 The CSAS is a case in point. While interviewees often thought there was potential merit in the scheme, it was noted to have been used differently in different force areas, and made overly complex, expensive and difficult to obtain (including some forces not accepting the vetting requirements of other areas):

*'The barriers are chief police officers who are unwilling or unable to accredit more powers to private security officers. We got it for [police force area] who were unbelievably*

*difficult to deal with. The barrier was training because you need the training office in the host force to train our teams, and they did not have the resources. There are 22 powers that can be approved by CSAS, but no force has given more than four or five.'*

*(Interviewee 21, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'The police do have the CSAS. That is a good programme to propel people to another level. Having gone through that process, that is not taken up by every force, it's not a national police initiative. The expansion of that [would be beneficial] and simplification; it's a pain to go through.'*

*(Interviewee 14, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.40 One interviewee from a security supplier noted that police could sometimes be more receptive to engaging with businesses in specific sectors (such as retail) but may overlook the value of involving security suppliers to their own detriment:

*'We would like to go to police gatherings with retailers. A retailer has to sign us in to those meetings. We can't go as an interested body that work with those retailers – we can't represent ourselves which is slightly short-sighted because there is a lot we can do to influence the retailers that don't already go, to get involved.'*

*(Interviewee 9, Supplier – Management)*

- 5.41 The same interviewee highlighted that some opportunities occur by chance, and they therefore wondered if opportunities were missed:

*'[We had engagement with the police on SCan] at certain points of the year we can ensure teams are highly aware of the key risks in those central markets. The police came in and did that. Are smaller companies aware they can do that? That came about because of a meeting we went to that [an individual from the police] was there.'*

*(Interviewee 9, Supplier - Management)*

### ***Unifying private interests***

- 5.42 There was acknowledgement that some challenges work both ways, and that it was not always easy for the police to link into the private sector because of a lack of unity.

- 5.43 The size and breadth of the private security sector and its inability to speak with a 'clear' or 'single' 'voice' renders it difficult to engage with:

*'No one knows how big our sector is. We don't know what we have. That does not make communication easy.'*

*(Interviewee 29, Security Consultant)*

*'One point for the police is the amount of different security companies. If there could be a coordinated approach to that, that would be an advantage. It is hard to build up trust*

*if you are going to different people. At the main shopping centre, we had a single, central point of contact. That became a well trusted relationship. We knew information was well managed and good quality. When you are doing that with many different people and companies, with new relationships, there is less trust.'*

*(Interviewee 30, Other Security Expert - speaking about perception from time in Police Management role)*

*'Security is not good at self-promotion, there is no unifying voice.'*

*(Interviewee 21, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'The police need to reach out. But they need to know who to reach out to and need to know the quality is there. It can't be your standard SIA licensed officer. There is so much more than can be done – collaboration is needed. But private security need to get their act together.'*

*(Interviewee 14, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.44 One senior leader at a security supplier noted that no obvious attempts have been made by the police to engage with the leaders of security companies to discuss a way of collaborating.
- 5.45 Another highlighted that police will more naturally engage with organisations (and therefore in-house security leads or their contracted site security managers) than directly with the leadership of security supplier companies, because collaborative working has been largely based on issues affecting specific local areas.
- 5.46 It was also highlighted that organisations don't always want to share information in order to protect their brand:

*'There has to be an openness and willingness for both parties to come together – this is what we can and can't do. I don't think we will achieve that unless people come round the table and talk. Some clients we deal with have their own stance on brand protection and will fiercely protect that.'*

*(Interviewee 9, Supplier - Management)*

- 5.47 Further, organisations can work very differently to one another which makes collaboration complex:

*'Each [organisation in a specific sector] has their nuance of how to do things so it's like herding cats.'*

*(Interviewee 15, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'Also, different philosophy between commercial groups.'*

*(Interviewee 28, Former Senior Leadership for a Supplier)*

- 5.48 Some police-related contacts noted that there is a reality that clients are paying for a service from their security officers, and therefore there is a need to balance the assistance the police would like, with what clients are willing for their security officers to spend their time on:

*'If you own a building and are paying for guards on your building, you are not going to let them wander around the area [on a joint patrol]. [Private security] are hindered by their own clients and what they can do.'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

*'There was also a suspicion that [police force] may task to locations less important than to the paying customer. So there is resistance.'*

*(Interviewee 33, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

- 5.49 In another way, security suppliers have to set aside commercial interests and be committed to joint interests, in order to facilitate collaborative working, particularly to engender trust among partners:

*'[In a collaboration between the police and bank security] We could be open because we knew the guys [from a security supplier company], and the work was for each other's benefit. If we thought someone was exploiting it for commercial value that wouldn't have worked. We could improve our security because of those meetings. But if some of them were coming back and trying to sell us back the information they gained by being involved, we wouldn't have involved them.'*

*(Interviewee 22, Security Consultant & former In-house Security Director)*

### **Legal issues**

- 5.50 Another challenge that limited some types of collaboration was in respect of legal issues. Data protection was a case in point:

*'The mechanics of this is difficult – sharing protocols – the police have theirs and we have ours and we get to an impasse. We want to share but can't access each other's sharing solutions. The police should collectively consider their IT systems and policy.'*

*(Interviewee 17, In-house – Security Director)*

*'It would be great to flick a switch if there is an issue, a marauding attack – give the police control of the CCTV, so they can assess the scene before they get there. Be able to have access to the system on request through the flick of a switch. Let them be able to take it over and digitally survey the scene. GDPR got in the way. Everyone was open to that though.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.51 The issue of who becomes liable, was also considered to prevent some forms of collaboration (particularly 'operational' ones) that would otherwise be valuable:

*'Having accredited officers, is okay, but the problem is accountability. If I am a commander and use accredited community staff and someone does something wrong then*

*it's tricky, if it's a mistake, ok, you can train for a better result next time, but what about if the accredited officer is neglectful or criminal, then what? Police are accountable, what about in these circumstances? If you are a commander, you worry about giving power to people, always, always, there are some people who will abuse it, some police do, I mean there have been some really bad cases, and that is with all the safeguards. Now without those safeguards, to put people in positions of power would make me and other police officers nervous. It is a reasonable idea but there needs to be these safeguards too.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

*'Often responsibility and liability get in the way of having some really good stuff. Looking at if there was a situation and they say we need 30 [security] officers to help us over here. Why from a legal and responsibility perspective that doesn't work for the police. You send someone you say is trained appropriately – the police have to trust they meet the criteria because there's no time to check in an emergency situation. They use them on the cordon to stop people coming through, but say they don't do the job properly. [The police chief] is going to be in the dock at the public enquiry saying we delegated responsibility to another person. That's where insurance, liability, the complex nature of it – meant paralysis. They could go to prison if they made bad decisions. That's a big deal. And vice versa – if security staff take direction from police – do they [police] become responsible – where does the liability sit? It's the legal bit that gets in the way sometimes.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'The idea was if something happened in [specific location], the police could put out a call asking for help with a cordon by security staff that are vetted and trained. That would leave police officers to gather evidence, witness interviews. It was a great idea, but it fell internally. They wanted a lot of vetting, and issues on training. It fell at that logistical hurdle. That ties in with CSAS, dealing with cordons has been refused as a possible power under CSAS.'*

*(Interviewee 19, Other Security Expert)*

### **Lack of reciprocation**

- 5.52 Some interviewees raised the issue that the relationship could be one-sided. In respect of reporting crime, there were experiences of feeding into the police, but not getting acknowledgement or feedback. This meant that the private security teams had no way of knowing whether the information had been useful. Consequently, they can be unsure whether there is merit in continuing to feed-in, and there is no opportunity

to understand whether there is something they could do to improve the information/evidence so that it is more effective in future:

*'Feedback – we report hostile recon, crime. There may be no police response, no follow up. Particularly with [Counter Terrorism] when we've had legitimate incidents of hostile recon, we hear nothing. We burn the CCTV. What it instils [in security officers] is, 'What is the point?'. Which for us – regardless we think if you don't report it, no one knows. So regardless of whether there is a response, you have to report it. But if there is no response, we are sat on footage, we get nothing back – it's easy to understand the frustration. Why bother with the police, it creates negativity?'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier – Management)*

- 5.53 A practical example of how a lack of follow up could also be a missed opportunity for the police, was in respect of private security reporting an incident, the individual being arrested and under bail conditions required not to be in the location the offence was committed. If the private security team are made aware of those bail conditions they could support the police by contacting them if/when the offender re-appears:

*'We haven't been made aware and it has happened where people have shown up again. If anyone is in breach of bail conditions that is an arrestable offence. So that can be relayed, and these people can be put behind bars. So the seriousness should warrant a direct response. Information sharing is paramount in my opinion.'*

*(Interviewee 11, Supplier - Management)*

- 5.54 It was acknowledged that the police resources are stretched and that it is a lack of capacity to give feedback or respond to incidents or other constraints that limit them. Indeed, this perspective was confirmed to be the reality by a police interviewee:

*'They don't decide what to do or not do – they are a slave to the radio – and the response is based on risk, people go from job to job to job. The threat has to be conveyed to the control room that police presence is necessary. If it was violent but they have now left scene, then they can't attend because they are attending another incident where the suspect is still there. Consistency [in being able to respond] is a big issue. [Some forces] have more police officers, there are massive differences. People don't realise. Some have the resources to do it, and some don't. Some think it's not down to resources, its priorities. Well shop theft will never beat youth crime, knife crime, domestic abuse, so actually it is about resources. It's difficult for forces.'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

- 5.55 Some interviewees noted it was best not to expect to get something back:

*'It's a tricky one – we share information with the police and we kind of expect not to get anything back – once it goes to the police or public sector generally, it's going to be wrapped up – we don't expect anything because of the constraints around them.'*

*(Interviewee 17, In-house – Security Director)*

## **Future areas of focus**

5.56 The interviews also explored whether there are specific issues that should be the focus of further partnership working in future. Views were somewhat diverse, and to some extent link to areas of priority for their own work. They largely mirrored the survey findings:

- The rise in retail crime, and the violence being used, was mentioned by a number of interviewees, although it was also recognised that this is an area that is now receiving more structured collaboration at least in respect of organised retail crime.
- Training, equipment, and exercises in respect of the approach to counter terrorism was also flagged as an area for further collaboration.
- Violence against women and girls was noted to be a key theme for the UK government and police and an area that is attracting increasing attention, for example through the Safe Havens app and through awareness raising initiatives.
- Low level crime and anti-social behaviour was also noted. Indeed, one former senior police officer suggested the police most need help with 'high volume and low risk' incidents.
- Mental health-related incidents were also mentioned, as there are many settings in which private security can be the first response and resources across the public sector to support people in crisis are stretched.

5.57 Some interviewees also reiterated the view that better use should be made of the considerable amounts of information that private security hold. They felt this area held a lot of potential for future collaboration.

## **Moving forward on collaboration**

5.58 While exploring the benefits and challenges of collaborative working, it was apparent that there are some overarching themes in terms of actions that interviewees thought were needed to develop and improve engagement between the police and private security. These are considered here.

### ***Determining what the police want from private security***

- 5.59 A number of interviewees suggested that it should be a priority to review the role of the police and identify what activities they should be undertaking, and which should be undertaken by private security. It was acknowledged that there have already been adjustments to their respective remits over time, but that the landscape of offending had changed considerably in recent times, and therefore it is time for a 're-think'. It was suggested this was a necessary first step (i.e. to update their 'separate' roles), which would then enable consideration of how 'joint' working can develop:

*'If we invented the police from scratch tomorrow it wouldn't look like it does today. Asking one organisation to deal with everything does not look like a good fit. We are still dealing with Peelian principles, and we need a rethink. Responding to an emergency has to be on blue lights. But high volume and low-risk, taking statements and patrolling, transportation of exhibits, lost and found property management, all this needs research.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

*'Re-evaluate the role of the police. It originally stems from core principles from 1829. Policing has outgrown itself because of changes, the cold war, the IRA, historic moments that challenge policing. Anything in the world, even right now, will impact on policing day-to-day. If you take the Middle East, the amount of disorder in London. It has to be contextualised somehow. It isn't necessarily broken but a huge re-evaluation wouldn't go amiss. Cyber is a big challenge now. Where does policing sit in society? It needs a review and forward thinking.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'What we don't have is the strategic overview of what the public does and what private does.'*

*(Interviewee 4, Other security expert)*

*'What are we trying to achieve now with collaborative policing? Are there some things policing could actually let go of, where reputationally it doesn't damage what policing is? Do police need to stand on a cordon? No, what you need is someone who can physically stop someone walking past them. You could do that with a door supervisor badge, working under supervision of police officer at that crime scene.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.60 Some noted that the reality is that some services are being offered by private security, because the police don't have capacity to provide them. While police may not like this, it is likely to continue:

*'[Private security offering services similar to a police response] fills a gap where police are disappearing. Some*

*practices are not that different. Citizen's arrest, handcuffing people. It may drive better collaboration. My personal view is the policing rarely likes to relinquish control. Where that's happening as a consequence it has the potential to become fraught, almost a competition. More of that may emerge and we'll see how much that drives collaborative going forward.'*

*(Interviewee 18, Other Security Expert)*

*'[A council area] has recently take on [a major security supplier] – one aspect, night time community patrolling on council owned properties which are estates – probably to give reassurance to tenants because of known crimes, anti-social behaviour. Why they have done that? Policing can't cope with it. It can't give its community spell of policing to some of those locations, because their priorities have changed. Anywhere you could use this example, you never see police and if you do, it's because someone rung them, they turn up and go away again.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

- 5.61 One in-house security lead noted that retaining separation from the police was also important to organisations in some contexts and that part of working together is recognising and respecting when distinctions are necessary:

*'In terms of how we approach things, we don't want to be seen as an alternative to the police, our focus is around support for our community and being quite soft and customer focused. Our priority is safety of individuals – we need to keep that relationship really positive. We want that fantastic relationship that people are happy to approach us. That's the challenge. It's not necessarily how we can support the police more, its differentiating what we provide. That different approach supports the lack of police resource. That different approach has allowed police resource to be focused elsewhere.'*

*(Interviewee 27, In-house – Security Lead)*

- 5.62 In terms of 'joint' working specifically, it was noted that this has often arisen as a by-product of other work, or a necessity to address problems or when things are going wrong, rather than a 'desired' approach:

*'Change is driven by disaster, and when that happens change occurs. As such they have been quicker to embrace change when there are problems.'*

*(Interviewee 21, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'[Policing] deals with here and now and not the issues that would help us going forward.'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

- 5.63 Consequently, there was thought to be a lack of strategic thinking about what could be achieved; indeed, it was suggested that the police don't

know what types of collaboration are possible, or what they want from private security, and that they need to consider this and ask for the help they need:

*'They aren't aware of the resources available. To be honest they don't have a clue how many security officers there are or where they are located. When the police arrive at a scene, we could do so much more for them. The problem is if they don't say what they want how can we help them? If they were to tell us what they want, we can help them. There is a chasm between us and them with just a few bridges. They need to step back and decide what they want us do.'*

*(Interviewee 29, Security Consultant)*

*'In terms of collaboration, there is a lot more freedom in how to work with the police now but we need that initial relationship to be established. We have a willingness to say here's what we can do. It isn't reciprocated. The police don't know what they can use as a resource. It's trying to open that. Police need to get around the table with private security companies to say we need venues; we need open space – whatever.'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier – Management)*

*'It has not been shaped yet to say what the 'can do' is. Right now, there are good examples all over the country where examples of collaboration are working already.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'Security officers are not replacing police officers. We staffed a cordon and released police officers while they went back to work. Sometimes we can do this as part of our duties. I mean, what can we do as part of our duties that can and does help the police? They will talk about first response, but they are often not, we are. How can that responder help you? Photographs, statement? Just tell us. We can do it for you.'*

*(Interviewee 29, Security Consultant)*

- 5.64 The issue of reporting crime was a case in point, where there was conflict over whether to encourage this or not. On the one hand there was noted to be a lack of reporting which limited the picture the police can form and therefore their response. But it was also observed that if organisations were to report 'everything', it would be 'too much' for the police. Clarity is needed:

*'The biggest issue is they [police] don't have enough reporting.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'My thought is that if reports are compiled to correct standards why would they not accept them? We hired a retired police officer to train us and the police liked that.'*

*They were worried about too many reports. We have offered to put Niche on our platform, it allows reports of crime, but they don't want that. We can actually make their figures worse. They can't cope already and we add to the workload.'*

*(Interviewee 29, Security Consultant)*

*'Private security could detain them all. But police haven't got resources to deal with them all.'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

*'There is a rub between local and national policing about reporting; we say we want to know so we can allocate resources but locally they will get frustrated about being told too much because resources are limited.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

### **A need for leadership to drive it**

- 5.65 Linked to the point above that more strategic thinking is needed, a number of interviewees felt that there was a need for senior police leadership to drive the approach to collaborative working:

*'Unless we [private security companies and customers] sit down with the top of police – Chief Constables and Commissioners and say – you have nearly all security companies over a certain size - £20 million turnover and above would be more than happy to say, our client basis is this, what do you want – at a senior level – and then filter that down. Some might be pie in the sky but I'm sure there will be some nuggets we could all help with. The dialogues have to be pushed to be open.'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier - Management)*

*'It needs direction and governance from policing.'*

*(Interviewee 3, Supplier - Senior Leadership – very recent ex police)*

- 5.66 A specific suggestion included having the national lead for police and security partnerships review good practice models and roll that out to other forces via each forces own partnership lead:

*'Then drill that into each force ... It's got to be from the police - from the top. You need a strong governance contact to drive it. Most forces have a partnership lead. Who the partners are will vary from force to force.'*

*(Interviewee 3, Supplier - Senior Leadership – very recent ex police)*

*'There is a rotation of people - constant churn - you lose enthusiasm when there is a constant new face to brief. You should have a police and security lead per force. To drive it across each force area and then some consistency and continuity.'*

*(Interviewee 2, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

- 5.67 It was highlighted though that the onus could not be purely on the police to determine the approach, and as already noted previously, the private

security sector must get better at providing coordinated ways that the police can communicate with them:

*'I do think if the security industry could offer the potential around the possibilities here, that would be good, so they need to lobby.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

5.68 One interviewee suggested that the UK regulator had a role to play here:

*'How do you get the National Police Chiefs Council to sign off? The SIA has to broach that discussion with NPCC and Home office – if they took it forward, the industry would have more respect.'*

*(Interviewee 1, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

5.69 Similarly, it was suggested that private security has a role to play in helping to bring clients (some of which are competitors) together to agree ways of working:

*'Normally competitors, bring them together and bring the police into it. Private security are quite good at facilitating and being a conduit.'*

*(Interviewee 26, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

### **Agreeing 'standards' for private security officers**

5.70 A number of interviewees felt that a key part of developing joint working was to create a structure around 'standards' (above the existing SIA licensing) in terms of agreeing the skills/knowledge/accreditation of security officers that would be needed to facilitate specific types of joint working. This was considered key because establishing what is possible and what would be useful remain moot unless there is certainty that whatever is agreed will be carried out competently and consistently:

*'There's a need for recognised training for security officers, so it's seen by the public and the police as these individuals are more qualified.'*

*(Interviewee 9, Supplier - Management)*

*'If private security wants to support the police and work in collaboration they've got to have an equally robust process. There is no point in highly qualified police officers being supported by an unknown person. That has to apply to the criteria for the nominated private security officers that support them.'*

*(Interviewee 14, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'Initiating some degree of framework to accredit, formalise and train people to do something over and above an average member of the public, so there are rules.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'If each town had a core group of security officers that were qualified and approved. If it has differentiation between a*

*basic SIA licence holder and ones that liaise with police. That would add professionalism, reassurance, integrity to the whole piece.'*

*(Interviewee 14, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

*'There is a need to have a certain standard of recognition around standard operating procedures in order to harness opportunity of being able to turn around and say we need these resources, there has to be a standardised approach to that. Comes from joint working on training – if police put more resources into supporting the training, they would have a better understanding from the outset, rather than going afterwards and saying it's not good.'*

*(Interviewee 30, Other Security Expert - speaking about perception from time in Police Management role)*

*'At that basic level [in other countries they] build that in. There are legislative mechanisms to work together by assigning power to the private sector when needed.'*

*(Interviewee 4, Other security expert)*

5.71 There were a number of suggestions on how this could be achieved, although each was made by only one or two interviewees, and in places views on suitable methods conflict. However, they illustrate that there are a range of possibilities that could be considered.

5.72 First, was to make better use of the existing police framework provided by the CSAS and the RSAS:

*'Try not to run before we can walk. Use the existing legal framework and push hard and experiment. Work with the police framework.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

5.73 Although it was also noted that this needs to be updated to be effective:

*'CSAS offers scope to give private security more powers. That is 20 years old now. It is inconsistently used. I think they need to put in a policy to vet the powers they will have. For example, Level 1 – traffic management – when there's a festival, directing traffic – they will go nowhere near a police station or officer. That should be a low-level of vetting. But some forces say no, all sources have to be a high level and includes financial vetting – if they have CCJs that can prevent them from being CSAS accredited. The powers are 20 years old – they need updating, they are just out of date. If private security have dogs, do investigations, make them accredited. If they are [incompetent], they lose the accreditation. Why would we not want to give private security, in times of need, the ability to put on a cordon?'*

*(Interviewee 23, Senior Management in a UK Police force)*

5.74 One interviewee suggested that legislative change was needed to set out what the CSAS can do, and that it should no longer be down to Chief Constables to set which powers can be applied for, to remove the inconsistency associated with the scheme.

5.75 A second, was to link an approach to security suppliers that are part of the SIA Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS):

*'At the moment it is left to individual companies to reach out and see what is available and see how they can interface. Through schemes like ACS, could we introduce something more proactive? When they become ACS could there be automatic cross over?'*

*(Interviewee 6, Supplier - Senior Leadership)*

5.76 A third, was taking an approach similar to that used in respect of Special Constables:

*'A bit like the Special Constabulary used to be where you would get Specials turn out, they would be told what do, task a, b and c. Anti-social behaviour and the night-time economy means we need more visibility, more response and to work together as a team. That's what Specials would do. They would need to be supported and get stuck in, under the umbrella of working with police officers.'*

*(Interviewee 32, Supplier – Senior Leadership)*

5.77 Indeed, a fourth, suggestion for setting standards, specifically proposed security officers becoming special constables as a way to gain the standards required:

*'I like the idea of accrediting security officers as Specials. Police encourage people to be specialist to take security knowledge back into the workplace so what better than a security guard, this has a lot of potential, why would you not encourage it? One of the biggest complaints is about the risks associated with the private use of force so extra training would arguably help here not hinder. Specials are being used more now, there is a need for them, so this could be an avenue.'*

*(Interviewee 31, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

5.78 However, another interviewee specifically noted their view that private security officers working as a special constable had dangers and that a better option would be to explore a franchised force:

*'One minute I am not warranted and the next minute I am and if there is any form of predicament and you are a special and there is a tipping point, and the subject who is arrested just wouldn't know by whom under what conditions and so would be confused. Is there an option to have a franchised force that is badged and accredited and*

*a badge that would say [police force] security? This is an exploration.'*

*(Interviewee 33, recently retired Senior Management for a UK Police force)*

- 5.79 A fifth suggestion was to create different levels of SIA accreditation for security officers, with those with enhanced levels of accreditation given greater responsibility:

*'Also, that industry standard nationally. Take the SIA as an organisation. If there are levels in that that demonstrate you have got that quality and that standard set. Elements of expertise to be identified within that structure.'*

*(Interviewee 30, Other Security Expert - speaking about perception from time in Police Management role)*

- 5.80 Similarly, another interviewee suggested that certain knowledge relevant to partnership working with the police, could be integrated into the existing SIA scheme for accrediting security officers:

*'The SIA – we don't need officers to be lawyers, but we do need them to understand the legislation the police can operate is still hampered. Police have to manage activities that are legal. The reason the police look like they are doing nothing is because they are managing slow movement protestors which is legal. With private security the partnership is in being able to understand that – they don't need to understand PACE, but need a better grounding about what the police do, what private security need to do.'*

*(Interviewee 13, Supplier - Management)*

- 5.81 One interviewee suggested (speaking generally) that it was not realistic for police to provide the training required and that this should come from the private sector:

*'Another barrier is police resources in providing that initial added support and training for these things. That needs to be provided by private industry. Where do you get your training and accreditation from? Who trains them? It needs to be thought through from start to finish. As to what needs to be in place.'*

*(Interviewee 30, Other Security Expert - speaking about perception from time in Police Management role)*

## **Section 6. Discussion**

- 6.1 We have sought to explore the forms of joint working that take place between the security sector and police, and the barriers that can prevent this work from developing. In so doing we start from an assumption that this is seen as an unqualified good, albeit this is not always the perception. While much has been made of police scepticism to work with outsiders generally and the private sector specifically, there is another issue to contend with.
- 6.2 An inspiration for this project was an observation from a senior police officer that asking the police what they wanted from private security might not be as useful as one might assume, because many senior officers – the decision makers – do not have sufficient insight on the options, nor what the benefits and barriers are. While some will have preconceived and often negative perceptions of collaboration, they are also under pressure to manage a high demand for services with resource constraints and need to tap into any help available. The challenge is to provide a set of arguments and explanations that enable even sceptics to engage.
- 6.3 Earlier we outlined the benefits and barriers to joint working. In this section we highlight what we see as key routes to better harnessing the work of the private security sector for the public good. We have structured these around six key (and overlapping) opportunities, namely: understand what the private security sector does now; stress the similarities; be clear how private security benefits; be clear how the police (and the public) benefits; joint working does not have to be onerous; and there is a need for strong leadership (on both sides).

### **Understand what the private security sector does now**

- 6.4 Our survey findings revealed that two-thirds of respondents thought that if the police were more informed about the work of the private security sector it would facilitate greater collaboration. This was a recurring theme throughout the research, and as noted, a reason for it.
- 6.5 A challenge for the police is managing volume and petty crime, which drains time and attention from more pressing offence types and social problems. Consider then, how much more pressure there would be on police if all the 'private spaces', the workplaces, the shopping centres, the universities, the transport networks, the sports and entertainment venues, the estates and so on – which of course the public visit, work at and live in – were left to the police service to police. It would be impossible. What the security sector already does, every day, 24/7, is assume primary responsibility for ensuring private spaces are properly protected. Add to this the role private security plays in protecting the national infrastructure, it is immense.

- 6.6 A key point in committing to raising awareness about what the sector already does is to begin the process of meaningfully challenging any seriously flawed assumption that the police are mostly responsible for keeping people safe. Policing society is a joint effort, it always has been, so let's commit to ensuring that the private security sector work – by in-house security departments, and security suppliers - is recognised, is supported, and feeds into the police in the most productive way to support the public good. The main beneficiary of the current fractured system is the criminal and that is damning.

### **Stress the similarities**

- 6.7 As noted, much of the work that has been undertaken on police and private sector collaboration has tended to include an emphasis on the different philosophies of the two groups, which, as already mentioned, has tended to feed negative perceptions police hold about private security. Yet, the similarities are striking too. For a start, a popular second career for police officers is within the private security sector (it is another benefit of the sector to the police and for that matter the public too). More than that, both groups have an interest in, and a commitment to reducing crime and maintaining public order,<sup>32</sup> and both see a key component of that as gathering intelligence (which both have) and generating as much resource as is available, such as labour (which both have).
- 6.8 It is more than that though. A glance at the aims and objectives outlined in *Police Vision 2030*<sup>33</sup> reveals a number of strategic overlaps in role. The document, for example, discusses aspects such as safeguarding vulnerable people; reducing serious violence and specifically violence against women and girls; improving collaboration including with the private sector to, '*prevent crime and exploitation*'; increasing the availability and quality of data to enhance crime prevention approaches; and to increase visibility in communities. These are important; and as has been demonstrated above, private security plays a part here.
- 6.9 This research has also outlined the range of ways in which joint working is already taking place.<sup>34</sup> It covered such a wide area, took place at different levels, varied greatly in scale and it was difficult to do this meaningfully. We have referred to them as:

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<sup>32</sup> White, A. and Gill, M (2013) The Transformation of Policing: From Ratios to Rationalities. *British Journal of Criminology*. 53, 1, January, pp. 74-93.

<sup>33</sup> *Police Vision 2030*, National Police Chief's Council.  
<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/policing-vision/policing-vision-2030.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> Our survey respondents saw great value in a variety of different forms of engagement, including information/intelligence/evidence sharing (90%); CCTV surveillance/co-operation (90%); community/local crime prevention/crime reduction (89%); crime reporting/analysis/research (87%); training and education (86%); joint scenario testing (86%).

- Crime Reduction
- CCTV Surveillance and co-operation
- Crime investigation and reporting
- Education and awareness raising
- Facilitating access to a site for police training exercises
- Joint patrolling
- Private security adopting special policing powers
- Funding police time
- Emergency response
- Public events
- Assisting vulnerable individuals/victims of crime
- Critical infrastructures

6.10 This whole report has stressed the many ways in which positive joint working takes place, and seemingly successfully, because in these cases there are sufficient similarities in role, purpose, and objectives to make things work.

6.11 This collaboration is an enormous contribution to the public good, and we know it is done well. The private sector does not tolerate poor performance for long. It pays for its services, and that focusses attention. Indeed, it is an irony that police are concerned that private security is driven by profit at the expense of the public good. While this is a legitimate concern, there is a commercial imperative to perform well and we will return to this later. To be clear, in most circumstances if private security is not protecting effectively, it will make changes. This does not imply that poor performance is not in evidence, it is, there have been some appalling behaviours from security personnel, but there again there has from police officers too. This point is not to denigrate any service, but to state a reality. The joint agenda here is to generate an understanding that effective protection – of people and places etc – is a skilled task, which involves managing unpredictability, and conflict and it is by its very nature complex.

### **Be clear how private security benefits**

6.12 There is a need to be clearer about what the benefits of joint working are for the private security sector. In private security the profit motive is always a prime consideration, it has to be of course. Logically it can mean (bad) companies adopt unsavoury and illegal approaches to 'make a quick buck' which tarnishes the whole sector. In practice reputation in business is a primary asset and that provides a check; developing a reputation for competence, an ethical approach is the best way of winning business. Important though this debate is, the point here is to develop a narrative on how the sector benefits that provides a more rounded and accurate way to interpret roles and motives.

6.13 For private security there is the commercial benefit of engagement with a valued and trusted source; clients/organisations generally see

engagement with the police in positive terms. Some suppliers noted that successful engagement with the police was particularly well regarded by some clients in tender negotiations. Some welcome police engagement on the premises and are reassured when the police are involved in helping to train security/company personnel; conduct audits or advise, say, on improving the response to the terrorist threat; and show a visible presence on site by patrolling or by testing an approach they are perfecting by conducting a training exercise on a client premises.<sup>35</sup>

- 6.14 Some security personnel noted that a good rapport with specific officers at the local level can be instrumental. Certainly, where the police were involved in security forums, business security groups, the information exchange was highly valued and provided for better security. It was noted that engagement could improve the knowledge and skills of private security and increase morale. Moreover, as the survey findings showed, the appetite for collaboration amongst security professionals is unambiguous in believing it has huge potential (91%); resulting in better protection of the public (93%) and of customers/organisations (91%); with an increased capacity to respond to crime (90%).<sup>36</sup>
- 6.15 It is important though to understand the value to security companies in partnering with the police. While the police are highly regarded and working together is viewed to be beneficial, a lot of security work is not dependent on input from the police. A 'customer service' role is increasingly valued by clients, and most of the work security officers do is about preventing disorder and responding quickly to ensure the chances of escalation (and the need for police involvement) are minimised. Most security teams are not looking for more powers, nor seeking joint patrols (although they are valuable, 70% of our survey respondents thought so), and while they would be willing to consider all requests to help the police, in reality any response would always need to take account of the needs of the client first.

### **Be clear how the police (and the public) benefits**

- 6.16 One could sometimes be forgiven for believing that the vast majority of the work undertaken by the private security sector is controversial. This is far from true. As we have seen, in the majority of cases, activity is not in domains the police could realistically cover, not unless vastly more resources were allocated. Mostly they work without conflict, indeed the relationship is typically cordial and sometimes excellent. Most of what has been presented in this report and in this final section has drawn attention to the benefits that accrue for the public good from private

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<sup>35</sup> This is not universally the case, and caution is needed here, for some clients too much policing, or security for that matter, can give the impression that a locale is unsafe and tarnish its attraction to visitors or customers.

<sup>36</sup> In some cases of course the police service is a client, but here we are mostly concerned with harnessing work that is taking place anyway for the better protection of the public.

sector security work and how directly and indirectly the police benefit; they need to be articulated.

- 6.17 For the police the private security sector offers resources, expertise, intelligence and information as we have seen; it protects people, places, and infrastructure in a way that it could not match. It is able to use the private security sector to promote police messages and causes; a major benefit that is largely unheralded, and which greatly enhances the protection of the public. In a different way, private security can help implement police requirements for an event at least in the space for which it has responsibility.
- 6.18 There is one other point we would like to note here, and that is the dangers of not engaging. We have seen private sector initiatives, that have sought to fill a gap, by providing a service that arrests and prosecutes offenders privately. From a police perspective, this may more clearly be seen as competition, and something police would prefer to be undertaken via some sort of police engagement. It was argued that this type of activity might drive better collaboration.

### **Joint working does not have to be onerous**

- 6.19 We need to be thoughtful about what is meant by terms such as 'joint working', as it can mean different things. We have noted that there are different ways of working in partnerships - Awareness; Cooperation; Collaboration; and Partnership, and we noted that as the level increases so does the amount of stakeholder engagement and therefore the degree of formality. But that does not mean that a higher level is better or more productive or useful. Clearly respondents highlighted a need for a more strategic approach to joint working, to overcome some of the barriers (not least the difficulty of establishing relationships). However, it was apparent that much (often unheralded) joint working is at the lower levels in terms of 'formality'. Most often this refers to joint working in some way to generate insight, provide information, or guide people about a specific issue such as to promote a counter terrorism message, 'run, hide, tell'.<sup>37</sup> In this way private security acts not only as the 'eyes and ears' of the police but as a voice too. Surely this is an unqualified good? It is commonplace. It works effectively. And recognising that joint working does not have to be onerous, is a steppingstone to breaking down barriers and facilitating other opportunities.
- 6.20 To be clear, there are excellent examples of more formal collaborations, and they are to be welcomed. But they are not necessarily the Holy Grail, not in all circumstances anyway. Most often, joint working is not about the police being asked to transfer responsibility, provide police powers for security staff, and those, understandably, generate concerns about commercial interest and the public good. The truth is that these concerns

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<sup>37</sup> <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/run-hide-tell>

apply to only a small part and area of joint working and not the most common part either.

- 6.21 There is one other thing important here and that is the issue of cost. In the absence of any cost effectiveness evaluation of the initiatives at the different levels of formality – which is long overdue – it is not possible to determine whether for example those operating at the more informal level are cheaper. They do though, by definition, involve less formality and there are generally less barriers to entry. This merits more research.

### **There is a need for strong leadership (on both sides)**

- 6.22 Three-quarters of respondents to our survey thought there was a need for strong leadership on joint working, on both sides. Part of the problem is that each is difficult to deal with; the private security sector has no identifiable single voice to communicate with, while each police force has a separate identity and acts autonomously with differences in approaches and appetite for engagement. This is why anything beyond ‘awareness’ forms of collaboration tend to be local; generating engagement across security teams on the one hand and different police forces on the other is administratively burdensome. The structural differences don’t stop there. The statutory regulation of the security sector is viewed as basic and does not include a police input, as such it has not provided reassurance that all security suppliers can be relied on leading to the feeling from the police that, *it is difficult to know who we are dealing with*.
- 6.23 Even on a practical level we have seen how a range of issues – solvable by good leadership – are getting in the way of harnessing forms of engagement that could better protect the public. For example, identifying who to engage with (for private security and for the police); ensuring the relevant personnel have sufficient authority to meaningfully align priorities and deliver on them; understanding mutual risks and rewards; providing continuity and consistency; managing concerns about a lack of reciprocation and so on. Moreover, effective leadership would facilitate strategy development, and avoid mixed messages. One classic that emerged was the contradiction between on the one hand the police encouraging the reporting of incidents when it lacks the capacity to manage them and in some local cases at least raises concerns that this practice, *‘makes the police look incompetent’*.
- 6.24 Similarly, our survey revealed the concern about sharing data; 56% thought fears about breaching data protection impedes joint working. Yet, it is far too simplistic to see data protection as *the* barrier. There are plenty of initiatives where some types of relevant data are shared; good leadership would focus on these and the remedies they provide. And ideas are not being examined such as the suggestion that some security personnel in certain circumstances could be sworn in as Special

Constables. It has its challenges of course but it merits consideration if it offers a potential route to improving the protection of the public.

- 6.25 Another quite different case we discussed was that of the CSAS. If the objectives include a wish by the police to accredit security officers with limited powers in certain contexts because it helps better protect the public, the scheme needs to be updated and refined. In a similar way the private security sector needs to provide ways of reassuring the police that its own process of accreditation recognises those who are additionally vetted, trained and skilled, and therefore could be relied on and/or be given more responsibility; something that some clients as well as other stakeholders would find attractive too.
- 6.26 The starting point is not difficult. As was suggested the National Police Chief's Council could decide to appoint a national lead for joint working, and the security sector, via the regulator or one of the associations, commit to the same. Until they do offenders gain and the public suffers.

### **Final comment**

- 6.27 There is no shortcut to the security sector committing to making itself more attractive as a 'partner'. There was a general view that the perception of private security continues to impact on the potential to work together and that the sector needs to do more to demonstrate the possibilities. The results of this study show that the current approach is fractured and confused, agencies do sometimes work together but it is too often left to individual initiative; there is no meaningful strategy, and it is not logical; certainly the view is that there is considerable potential and that opportunities are being missed. The logic of all those responsible for protection to work together is compelling. Indeed, the drawbacks in not collaborating are considerable for both sides and, as we have emphasised, the loser is the public, the gainer is the offender.

# **Appendix 1. Methodology and Sample**

## **The approach**

The study involved a review of available sources on partnership working. These were used to give context and to help identify key issues and themes to explore in the consultation with security professionals.

The review of the literature was followed by two main approaches: 1) an online survey on security professional views on partnership working; and 2) extensive discussions including semi-structured interviews with a range of security professionals to gain a more in-depth understanding of the topic.

## **Survey**

The survey examined the views of security professionals on a number of key themes: the current status of partnership working; barriers to working together; key success factors, benefits to working together; and issues to focus on in future via partnership working.

The sample was, self-recruited and clearly those with an interest in the topic were most likely to respond. While no claims are made that the survey is representative of the security industry as a whole, responses were received from a range of roles and countries. Attempts were made to publicise the survey widely, including via participants from previous research who had elected to be contacted for future research; links in the Perpetuity newsletter and social media; security associations; security press; announcements made at conferences and other security events; and personal contact with a range of organisations who were informed about the survey and invited to publicise it and pass on the details to their members. We cannot be sure of the manner in which adverts were disseminated by these groups, but their contribution greatly enhanced the reach of our survey.

The survey ran from Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April to Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

A total of 221 responses were received, although not every respondent completed every question in the survey. The data was analysed using SPSS. The data are categorical; therefore, it is not possible to assess the normality of data. It is important that this is borne in mind.

## **One to one interviews**

The approach in this work was to engage with security professionals from a range of roles and sectors that may be able to add insight. We engaged both informally and formally with a wide range of professionals in conversations about the issues covered in this report. We contacted specific people by word-of-mouth, and they sometimes referred us to others. We drew upon personal

contacts and their networks; and some individuals who volunteered to offer more details after taking part in the survey.

Obtaining the sample in this way allows for potentially more valuable responses, as those taking part are more likely to be knowledgeable about the research. The interviews typically lasted thirty minutes and semi-structured interview schedules were used. The schedules were based on the information taken from the literature review as well as previous research. An advantage of a semi-structured schedule is that it gives the flexibility for interviewers to probe the issues raised.

We formally interviewed 33 professionals.

## Appendix 2. Additional Data Tables

Table 2: Length of time respondents have worked in security (n=221)

Length of time	N	%
Less than 12 months	7	3
1-3 years	9	4
4-10 years	42	19
11-19 years	58	26
20-29 years	52	24
30 years or over	53	24

Table 3: Sector that respondents provide security in (all that apply) (n=221)

Sector	N	%
Property	90	41
Public Admin, Other Services, Government	74	33
Education	61	28
Retail	57	26
Finance	53	24
Health	43	19
Construction	36	16
Transport	34	15
Energy	33	15
Leisure & the Night Time Economy	33	15
Manufacturing	29	13
Other	26	12
Hotel & Catering	25	11
ICT	25	11
Pharmaceutical	23	10
Post & Telecommunications	21	10
Production	21	10
Mining, Quarrying & Utilities	20	9
Motor Trades	15	7
Wholesale	14	6
Agriculture	9	4

Table 4: Country where the respondent conducts the majority of their work (where they are based) (n=195)

<b>Country</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
UK	152	77.9
Canada	12	6.2
USA	7	3.6
Ireland	4	2.1
Australia	2	1
Singapore	2	1
United Arab Emirates	2	1
Benin	1	0.5
China	1	0.5
Ecuador	1	0.5
France	1	0.5
Iraq	1	0.5
Italy	1	0.5
Kazakhstan	1	0.5
Malaysia	1	0.5
Netherlands	1	0.5
New Zealand	1	0.5
Nigeria	1	0.5
South Africa	1	0.5
Thailand	1	0.5
Zimbabwe	1	0.5

## 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.

## About the SRI

The Security Research Initiative (SRI) started 20 years 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 ADS, ASIS International (UK Chapter), the British Security Industry Association, IFPO UK, IPSA, The SASIG, and the Security Institute, and includes membership from leading security suppliers and corporate security departments who share the commitment to the development of new knowledge.

Previous studies have focused, for example, on police views on private security; tackling cyber crime – the role of private security; the broader benefits of security; aspiring to excellence; 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/](http://www.perpetuityresearch.com/security-research-initiative/)

## About the Authors

### Charlotte Howell

Charlotte has over 15 years experience in crime and security research and holds a first class LLB (Hons) in Law and an MSc in Criminology. Charlotte's role as Research Manager encompasses responsibility for managing the delivery of research contracts, and our team of research staff. She also manages the Secured Environments scheme run by Perpetuity Research on behalf of Police CPI, auditing organisations in respect of their security management practices. Charlotte is an accomplished project manager with experience of working with a range of clients including businesses,

associations, police forces, government organisations and charities. Charlotte has delivered a range of projects for example relating to: the work of security officers, careers in security, women in security, offenders views of security measures, the benefits of security, security culture, prison security managers, the needs of victims of crime, hate crime, domestic abuse, financial investigation, serious acquisitive crime and violent crime. Charlotte has consulted with a range of individuals, including stakeholders (such as individuals from the police, security professionals, local authorities, service commissioners and staff), offenders (both in prison and in the community) and clients accessing services (such as drug and alcohol treatment services, domestic abuse services and support services for sex workers). Charlotte is adept at quantitative and qualitative analysis and has a wealth of experience analysing survey responses, client/service data, performance/outcomes data, literature and interview findings.

### **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 security, private policing and business crime on topics including: organised crime and fraud; why offenders offend; the (in)effectiveness of different security measures; and the scope of security management. 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 15 books including the third edition of the 'Handbook of Security' which was published in 2022. He is the organiser and Chair of the Security Thought Leadership webinar series. 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 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 2022 he was recognised by *Security Magazine* as one of the 'Most Influential People in Security' and also received the Mervyn David Award from the ASIS UK Chapter 'for his significant contribution to the security profession'. In 2016 he was entered onto the Register of Chartered Security Professionals. Martin is the Founder of the Outstanding Security Performance Awards (the OSPAs and Cyber OSPAs); the Tackling Economic Crime Awards (the TECAs); the Security and Safety Entrepreneurial Awards (the SSEAs); and the Fire and Resilience Awards (the FREAs).

## **Doctor Janice Goldstraw-White**

Janice is a criminologist who has worked with Perpetuity since 2010 and has expertise in the areas of crime, governance, audit, risk management and security. With more than 20 years' prior experience as an accountant, mainly in the public sector, she is particularly interested in crime in the workplace, fraudster behaviour and the role of women in white-collar crime. She has extensively researched in the area of white-collar crime both here and in Australia, with a focus on offender accounts of criminal behaviour. She has particular experience in interviewing within prisons and has undertaken over fifty interviews with incarcerated white-collar offenders.

She has managed and delivered on a range of projects including research on tackling fraud in local authorities; whether the reporting of fraud in the UK should be compulsory; fraud in the Middle East; the problems of using digital evidence; and improving the police response to victims of fraud and scams. Her research interests however are by no means confined to white-collar crime and other research includes why death rates for security officers from COVID-19 are so high; security for data centres and the use of AI in security. She is currently involved in a study developing KPIs for the security sector.

Janice's research skills cover the spectrum of qualitative research, including desk-based literature and policy reviews; analysis and mapping of practice and procedures; interviews with professionals and service users; and facilitating focus groups. She also has a good understanding of quantitative data collection methods and analysis.

Janice has published a number of articles and co-authored separate chapters in books on workplace crime and the motives of white-collar criminals. Her own book entitled 'White-Collar Crime: Accounts of Offending Behaviour' was published in October 2011.



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