



Welcome to the Spring 2006 edition of the SSAIB magazine which includes articles from several independent contributors as well as those from various SSAIB staff, I hope you find these both interesting and informative.

Geoff Tate Chief Executive SSAIB

The vast majority of SSAIB registered firms are involved in the design, installation and maintenance of intruder alarm systems and the biggest issue facing these firms has been the transition from UK to European standards. This change has been a long drawn out affair with the changeover date having been delayed and the whole matter greatly complicated due to not all the standards in the European series (BS EN 50131) being available. This was overcome by the publication of PD 6662 which described a "scheme" for the design, installation and maintenance of intruder alarms based on the European standards which had been published, but calling up existing British standards where European ones were not yet available. At the time of writing (mid April 2006) it is obvious that registered firms are grappling with the changes. We have received numerous calls asking for clarification on various aspects of the standards, the answers to many of these were included in the guidance notices we have since circulated and published on the website. Many queries related to the grading schemes included in Part 1 of the European standards, particularly the notification option, but we also received many other queries, e.g. about tamper detection requirements on magnetic door contacts.

The other major issue arising from the introduction of the European standards for intruder alarm systems related to the requirements that a "risk assessment" be carried out. This requirement has been the cause of considerable concern; many firms being particularly concerned about the potential for the increased liability that might arise. We have organised a large number of training sessions intended to acquaint SSAIB firms with this issue and have been fortunate to obtain the services of an individual who recently retired from a senior position in the insurance industry. Hopefully those of you that attended the sessions relating to risk assessment will be

better placed to deal with the issue. Those of you who have not attended these sessions should contact the SSAIB. If there is sufficient demand we will arrange for more dates to be added to the programme.

Intruder alarms are not the only area in which SSAIB firms are facing new challenges. Partly in response to an unacceptable level of false alarms from remotely monitored fire alarm systems (RMFAS), the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) published a policy document in September 2004. The policy document introduced various requirements relating to the monitoring of RMFAS similar to those introduced some 10 years ago by ACPO with respect to intruder alarm systems. These include the certification of organisations installing, maintaining and monitoring RMFAS. The policy set out a phased introduction programme for critical requirements and we are now just 12 months away from the first major change. As from the 1st April 2007 all RMFAS must be maintained by a certificated organisation, e.g. certificated in accordance with the BAFE SP 203 scheme, and as of the 31st March 2008 all new RMFAS must be installed by a certificated installer. Recognising that the timescales were creeping up on them, we began to receive enquiries about BAFE SP 203 certification and have already certificated a number of firms. There will, no doubt, be a rush of applications as the deadline draws nearer, but I would urge those of you that maintain RMFAS to consider your certification requirements early rather than waiting until the last minute.

Those of you who operate in the guarding services sector will be well aware of the Security Industry Authority (SIA) and its requirement that all guards be licensed as of the 20th March 2006. In addition to its licensing requirements the SIA has also introduced an "Approved Contractors Scheme". The criteria for the scheme are based on the European Foundation Quality Model and the SIA has developed a self assessment workbook (SAW) based on this model which applicant firms must complete. The claims made in the self assessment workbook are then verified by an SIA approved assessment body. The SSAIB is one such body and we have received several enquiries about the SIA approved contractors scheme.

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The Irish government is adopting a very similar, albeit more extensive, approach to the regulation of the private security industry in Ireland. The Private Security Authority (PSA) was launched on 21st July 2005 introducing licensing for anyone working in the security industry, in the manned guarding, security systems and monitoring sectors. Unlike the UK approach, the PSA has also introduced licensing for companies supplying security related services. Licensing is being introduced in a

phased manner, with the requirements for the licensing of individuals due to commence in 2007, while contractor licences are already required for security guard and door supervising companies. It is now an offence for unlicensed companies to offer their services in these sectors and it is illegal to use the services of an unlicensed supplier once the critical date for that sector has elapsed. For full details of the PSA approach see the article on page 13, where Geraldine Larkin (CEO, PSA) updates us on the roll out dates for each sector and on the approach taken by the PSA. As such the Irish scheme goes some way beyond the scheme operating in the UK. As in the UK the SSAIB is approved by the PSA and certification granted by the SSAIB is acceptable to the PSA as evidence of compliance with technical standards, e.g. IS 999, IS EN 50131-1 and IS 228. In addition to our security schemes we are also developing a scheme for companies designing, installing and maintaining automatic fire alarm systems in Ireland. We already operate such a scheme in the UK as mentioned above.

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Another issue which many of you will have heard discussed on the radio or on television is the TrustMark scheme. The scheme was developed by the DTI to protect consumers from the activities of "rogue" traders. I am sure we have all seen examples of the activities of such organisations on consumer protection programmes such as Watchdog or of course Rogue Traders. The scheme sets out a range of criteria a trader must meet in order to obtain TrustMark approval. The good news for SSAIB firms is that you almost certainly meet the TrustMark criteria and on that basis we are applying for "deemed to comply" status for SSAIB registered firms. The scheme also requires TrustMark approved firms to offer an insurance backed warranty and we are in discussion with insurance brokers who can arrange the required warranty. We will keep you informed of progress with regard to both "deemed to comply" status and the warranty, but we hope to have both in place in the near future. I believe this will demonstrate SSAIB's commitment to supporting a responsible approach to providing quality services to consumers.

When I first joined the SSAIB some 6 years ago the main issue we faced was the reluctance by the insurance industry to accept intruder alarm systems installed by SSAIB registered firms. I hope you will agree we have made major

progress in this respect and whilst we still receive requests for help they are now at a very much reduced level and tend to arise due to insurance brokers not understanding the current position of the insurance company in question. Irrespective of progress to date we are maintaining our communication with the insurance industry to get our message across to them. We are currently running a series of seminars intended to bolster insurers' confidence in the SSAIB and the firms we have registered. At the time of writing we have held 5 seminars and I believe these have been very well received. We have a very good message for the insurers, the SSAIB approach to certification is both robust and practical and the service provided by SSAIB registered firms is generally first class. However our reputation is only as good as your performance so it is essential that you maintain high levels of service, remember the old adage about a chain only being as strong as its weakest link!!

In the Autumn we plan to hold a series of "Regional Forums" for registered firms, these are intended to give you the opportunity to raise any issues you might have about the SSAIB and how we operate our schemes. For our part we would welcome the opportunity to hear your views and provide an input into the future development of the SSAIB. To make the events more interesting we will be inviting a range of suppliers of equipment and services to the meetings to give a short presentation on their products. We have not finished the arrangements but envisage the forums being of around 3 hours in duration, starting at 4pm with tea/coffee and ending at around 7pm with light refreshments.

Finally IFSEC is almost upon us once more and we are looking forward to another 4 days manning our stand! Recognising the impact of the Security Industry Authority on the industry we have joined with the International Professional Security Association to take a stand in the new "manned services" part of the exhibition hall. Our main stand will be more or less in the same location as last year, I will be moving between both standards so I look forward to seeing you at one or other of our stands or even both!

Geoff Tate
Chief Executive

