

# Forward with confidence

By Jonathan Levine

**It has been an extraordinary year in the history and development of Axis Security, a year in which so much has happened and so much has been achieved.**

It is fair to say that Axis Security has evolved greatly since the beginning of 2008. We now have a new logo and our smart new uniform is gradually being introduced to all of our existing contracts. This uniform portrays a more professional image and has been well received by Axis clients and employees alike.

We have developed our website and are delighted by the number of visits it receives. It incorporates an employee log in area, enabling us to communicate news and information to our personnel (see back page for details).

We have relocated our head office to Kings Cross. The new offices provide a more pleasant working environment for our HQ based staff and the excellent transport links reduce travelling time to the vast majority of our sites. This has resulted in an increased number of management visits to clients and site-based employees and enables us to respond rapidly to incidents on site. Consequently, our clients are receiving a better service and our employees greater management support.

The Axis Security operations department has also been strengthened and restructured in the last year. Headed by John Fitzpatrick, Operations Director, this department is now well placed to deliver a market leading service to our clients. Each contract now has an Account Manager and an Account Support Manager servicing it. This structure is proving to be immensely successful and both our clients and employees are beginning to reap the benefits. As a result of significant new business wins, we are currently in the process of appointing an additional Account Manager.

The Axis Security control room team has been strengthened, to effectively deal with the increased workload. The TimeGate rostering system used by our controllers has also been upgraded and this has improved the efficiency of this vital department. We are also increasing the size of our mobile supervision team, so that we can ensure that our



Managing Director, Jonathan Levine toasts a successful year at the Christmas luncheon

site-based employees working night shifts receive sufficient support.

We are aware that we are a 24-hour business and have a responsibility to our clients to continually maintain our service regardless of events beyond our control. Consequently, we have devised a disaster recovery plan that will enable us to continue our business should, for any reason, our Kings Cross HQ become inoperable. All of our systems are replicated at, and backed up to, our DR site which is located in the suburbs of London. In September, we successfully

**“The marketplace has noticed Axis’ reputation for delivering a professional and personal manned guarding service”**

tested our DR plan over a two-day period. All staff were relocated to the DR site and our business was up and running within two hours of our HQ being evacuated. We learnt many lessons from this drill and intend to practice and refine this plan on an annual basis.

During the past 12 months we have worked tirelessly to achieve the quality accreditations that are required to demonstrate that Axis security is a professionally managed business and one that complies with industry regulation and environmental responsibilities. We are therefore delighted to

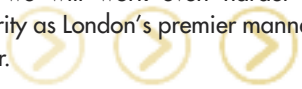
announce that we are now accredited to ISO 9001:2000 standard, that we doubled our previous year’s SIA Approved Contractor Scheme score, and we have achieved SAFEcontractor status. Most recently, following an in-depth audit process, we were awarded the environmental standard ISO 14001.

The marketplace has certainly noticed that Axis Security is developing a reputation for delivering a professional and personal manned guarding service and as a result of this reputation many new, high profile clients are now working with us. These clients include Savills, Stockley Park, Misys, James Andrew RSW, Jones Day and the Institution of Civil Engineers.

We were delighted that so many of our clients, joined us at the RAC Club in December for our Christmas luncheon, where we celebrated the past year’s successes and recognised the achievements of the 2008 Security Officer and Security Team of the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all Axis employees for your hard work and professionalism during the past 12 months, as our success is ultimately based upon your efforts and commitment. I trust that the new benefits package you are now receiving demonstrates how much we value your contribution.

I look forward to working with you all in 2009, a period during which we will not be resting upon our laurels, but when we will work even harder to establish Axis Security as London’s premier manned guarding contractor.



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# Axis rewards security excellence

**The inaugural Axis Security Awards were announced at the Christmas Luncheon. There were two prizes at stake, one for Team of the Year and an individual award for Security Officer of the Year.**

Presenting the prizes, Operations Director John Fitzpatrick said: "It is useful to remind everyone here of the importance of our workforce and it is our duty to recognise the hard work and effort that usually goes unrewarded."

## Team of the Year

Against fierce competition the Team of the Year category was awarded to Discovery Communications EMEA based at Chiswick Business Park. The team comprises 6 officers, alongside Security Manager Steve Kendall, and is responsible for the European HQ, its 1,500 staff and the live broadcast from site. The nomination was made by David Russell, Director



Axis Managing Director and Bill Hall

of Facilities, based on the excellent customer care, site knowledge, attitude, and team approach demonstrated by the Axis team.

The team has an intimate knowledge of the site, its working and improvements, which have been added since the team began at the site. It also administers and manages Discovery offices in Amsterdam, Madrid, Milan and Warsaw in addition to Discovery House, with Bucharest soon to be added. This has involved writing alarm procedures, monitoring access/CCTV for these offices and issuing their cards from London.

It consistently supports and assists with all events relating to Discovery House, including the Discovery Kid's Day where over 80 children visited the building, alongside other Town Hall events and Media events where large numbers of visitors have to be coordinated.

As a growing organisation, the team has helped introduce numerous procedures beyond the security remit, including working alongside Discovery's Human Resources department to improve lines of communication and taking an increased role with Discovery's emergency procedures and systems.

## Security Officer of the Year

The individual award for Security Officer of the Year was presented to Bill Hall, for his excellent work as Security Manager at the Brixton offices of the Refugee Council.

The Refugee Council is the largest organisation in the UK working with asylum seekers and refugees. Throughout the year, Bill has done a remarkable job in sometimes very challenging circumstances. The people that visit the RCB are very vulnerable and often suffer mental health problems because of the



Jonathan Levine and Steve Kendall

traumas they have endured before coming to the UK seeking asylum.

Bill has a team of four Officers working for him providing Front of House Reception, manning the switchboard and signing clients and visitors in.

Visits to the Brixton centre in South London totalled 32,000 for the year, averaging 200 clients per day. Across this period there was a total of 93 incidents, including four assaults on security staff. There were also 17 cases of self-harming and overdoses, including one very serious incident in which an asylum seeker slashed his wrists in the main reception.

Bill was praised by the Refugee Council for having worked proactively at the centre, acting as one of the main drivers in successfully steering the security and reception from being separate functions to a combined front of house service. "He thoroughly deserves the award and our congratulations go to both him and his team without whose support and contribution we would not have been able to make the change so successful," said Alan Rumary, Head of Business Services.

## Axis does its bit for charity

**Throughout the year Axis Security has been determined to support charitable causes whenever possible, making charitable donations at the Annual Golf Day, and supporting the Child Victims of Crime Annual Dinner and Auction, where a staggering £100k was raised on the night.**

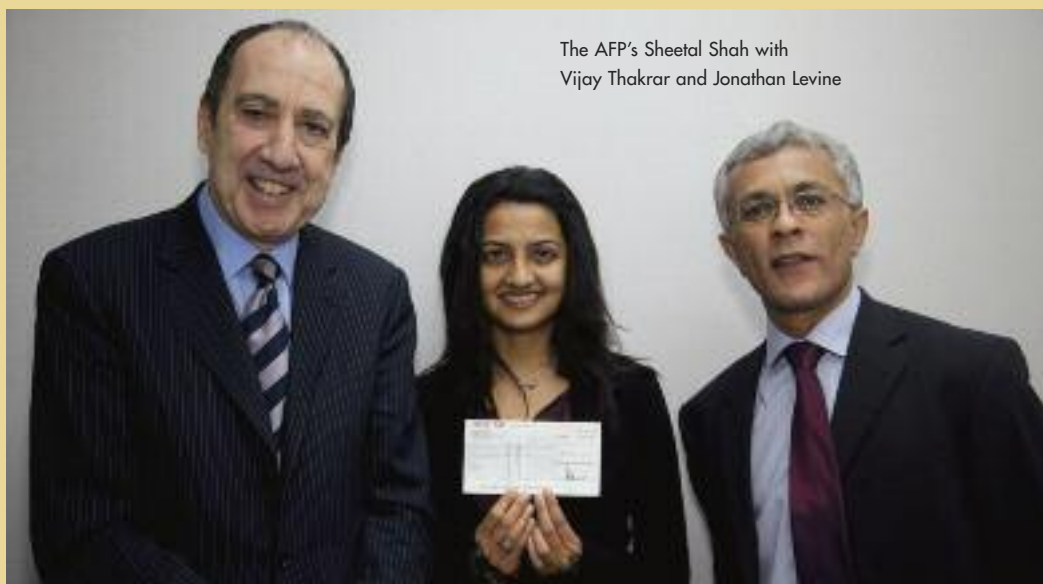
Moreover, Axis also pledged to donate a proportion of its turnover each year to charity. Half of this donation will go to a charity of Axis' choosing, with the remainder going to a worthy cause selected by a commercial partner.

This year our chosen charity is The City of London Crime Prevention Association, which works to encourage co-operation in developing crime prevention measures. At the Annual Christmas Luncheon, Don Randall, Chairman of the Association was present to accept the donation and to say a few words about the Association's work.

A draw was also held at the luncheon to determine the second charity for Axis' donation. The guest

charity was won by Vijay Thakrar of Ernst and Young, who named the Asian Foundation for Philanthropy as his chosen charity. The Asian Foundation for Philanthropy is a UK-based charity

which helps British Asians who want to make a difference to social and economic development in India, providing avenues for donating and volunteering towards grass-root causes. It is currently working with 14 carefully selected Partner Organisations in India.



The AFP's Sheetal Shah with Vijay Thakrar and Jonathan Levine

# Broad Horizons

Sean Feast talks to Michael Priestly



**H**aving served in the Royal Navy for 30 years, Michael Priestley, Head of Business Services at the international law firm Withers LLP, is no stranger to security, as Sean Feast found out over a recent coffee.

**SF: Tell me about your time in the Royal Navy?**

**MP:** I was in the Navy for 30 years and spent eight years in the Fleet Air Arm serving on carriers. My particular aircraft for those who know about that sort of thing was the Hawker Siddeley Buccaneer, but I also flew helicopters both in a search and rescue (SAR) role and on anti-submarine patrols preventing the Russians from penetrating our defences. I retired as a Commander.

**SF: So you know quite a bit about security?**

**MP:** Security is an innate part of life in the Navy, whether on shore-establishment or on ship, so I had experience in many different areas virtually from day one including document security, electronic security and establishment security.

**SF: How did you come to work at Withers?**

**MP:** Having left the Navy, I was relaxing on a beach, planning to spend some time with my wife travelling the world, when a colleague indicated that a job was available in London that I might be interested in. The job was as Office Manager for Withers. I liked the company; I liked the culture, and was offered the job. That was nine years ago and quite a bit has changed since then.

**SF: How has your role developed?**

**MP:** Originally my role was relatively small: I had responsibility for what they called 'general office' – meaning the mailroom, filing, centralising records, copy editing etc. Then we had just the two offices, both in London, employing around 120 people. Today we have eight offices not just in the UK but also in Switzerland, Italy, the US and Hong Kong. I am now the Head of Business Services for the UK and Europe, working from a headquarters in London that is three and half times bigger than when I started. Day to day I am now responsible for all M&E activities, the facilities helpdesk, cleaning and hygiene, catering, health and safety, reproduction, client area facilities, general administration, travel and communications, document production centre, and of course security. I am also responsible for

overseeing the design and fit out of any new offices, to ensure the brand experience is consistent, and make sure that the experience our international clients have of Withers is the same wherever they happen to be.

**SF: What do you look for in a manned guarding company?**

**MP:** Fundamentally I am looking for a Partnership with a capital 'P'! The officers that work with us have to understand and embrace our culture, and work with us in delivering a professional service. The officers are of course usually the first point of contact for our clients – the initial 'meet and greet' from which our clients form their initial impressions. They protect our buildings and our people 24/7, but they also have to manage contractors, couriers, deliveries etc., as well as some of the lost souls that we sometimes find in our building, being located by the Old Bailey.

**SF: What qualities do the individuals have to have?**

**MP:** They have to have tact, gravitas, and a helpful disposition at all times. They have to multi-task and be multi-disciplined. They manage not just the front of house, but also the CCTV and perimeter security technologies, as well as responding to and reacting to emergencies. We currently have a team of six, led by supervisor Edelmiro Martinez who brings a level of maturity to the service we deliver.

**SF: How long have you worked with Axis Security?**

**MP:** We appointed Axis in 2006. I reviewed the tenders with our Facilities Manager, Steve Laver, our Internal Facilities Manager, and together we reached our decision. Steve is responsible for managing the contract at our end. It is important to stress that we did not decide upon the cheapest. Yes, price is important, but we were looking for the company that offered best value.

**SF: Have you noticed a difference since the new management team has been introduced?**

**MP:** Yes there has been a difference. We have met

with the Managing Director and his team on a number of occasions and they have explained their intentions. It is clear that they place tremendous emphasis on their staff, and value their officers as the most important asset in their business. They also recognise that each client has its own specific needs, and they work with us to achieve what they refer to as 'a common goal'. They also listen to what we have to say, and respond accordingly. In the early days there were challenges for Axis to resolve, but they responded quickly to provide solutions. Often contractors are not very good at communication, but Axis is good at communicating at all levels, and this avoids problems from occurring. Similarly, contractors often add to our burden of administration, but Axis take it upon themselves to run the contract and respond to our needs.

**SF: You obviously enjoy your work but what do you like to do outside of office hours?**

**MP:** At work, at the moment, I have an additional new responsibility that I am really enjoying around our corporate social responsibility (CSR). My challenge is to improve our carbon footprint and our environmental credentials and this is keeping me busy. I used to live in the country but moved to London because I enjoy the Arts, and regularly visit the theatre and ballet. I also like clubbing, but before you laugh too much I mean Blues and Jazz clubs. I also have an interest in heritage railways, and actually have a license to drive historic steam locomotives.

**SF: Do you also have an interest in heritage aircraft?**

**MP:** I do. I went once with my sons to the FAA Museum at Yeovilton where they had one of the prototype Buccaneers that I flew more than 40 years ago and had my name stencilled underneath the cockpit canopy. My sons thought this was really funny: "Look Dad," they said, "you're a museum piece!"



## Face to a name: Louise Lewis

Every issue of *Axisdirect* profiles a member of the Axis team to help put a face to the name. This time is the turn of HR assistant Louise Lewis.

Louise started out in the security industry five years ago when she joined Initial Security as a receptionist. She was soon promoted to a HR role where she was responsible for screening officers.

Louise joined Axis Security to further progress her career. "I really enjoy meeting people," explains Louise, "and the role at Axis enables me to do this on a day-to-day basis. I oversee the HR process at all stages, from the very beginning with recruitment and screening to ensuring that the officers are site ready by issuing the uniform and ID cards. The role is very varied and no two days are the same, which keeps me on my toes.

Alongside the recruitment and uniform duties, Louise is also in charge of SIA licences. "Using the computer system I can automatically check when licences are due to expire. We check when the licences need to be renewed and automatically write to the officers in advance of the expiry attaching an SIA application form. Once completed and returned to us, we check the forms and forward them to the SIA, tracking the progress along the way. A valid SIA Licence is



essential to our officers, so making sure that all licences are up-to-date is an essential part of the HR role at Axis."

Born and raised in London, Louise now lives in Abbey Wood and commutes into the City each day. In her spare time she enjoys socialising with friends.

## InBrief

### Stockley Park

Axis Security has been awarded a three-year contract to provide manned guarding at Stockley Park, one of Europe's largest and most prestigious business parks, located just a few miles from Heathrow airport.

Axis will provide over 20 personnel to the 400-acre plus site, which includes a golf course, a country park and over 1.5 million square feet of office accommodation. In addition to controlling access to the park and monitoring electronic systems, the Axis Security team will also conduct patrols on foot, on bicycle and in all terrain vehicles.

### Misys

Axis Security has been awarded a prestigious contract to provide security/concierge services to protect the new Global Headquarters of application software and services provider 'Misys' in Paddington. Axis Security is delighted to have this opportunity to work with one of the UK's most prestigious blue chip organisations and look forward to a mutually beneficial long term business relationship.

### Employee Area Website

The Axis Security website ([www.axis-security.co.uk](http://www.axis-security.co.uk)) is already proving to be a useful tool for customers and potential customers alike, enabling them to find out more about the company, highlighting its ethos, history and all the latest news from Lighterman House. The site also hosts a special employee area, offering Axis officers access to up-to-the-minute information and staff resources at the click of the mouse.

"The area has been designed to streamline some of our internal processes and supports our environmental ethos of reducing paperwork within our business," says Operations Director John Fitzpatrick.

To log into the employee area, visit the Axis homepage, click on the "employee area" header and enter your employee number and password. Once in the area, officers may perform a number of functions such as submitting a request for annual leave or uniform online, finding out more about licencing or downloading a number of key documents, including the Axis Employee Feedback Form and sections from the Employee Handbook.



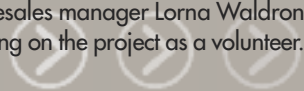
## Axis goes green!

**Axis Security is committed to helping the environment, and reducing the environmental impact of all its processes, wherever possible.**

An important benchmark of these efforts has been the recent achievement of ISO 14001 accreditation. ISO 14001 is the international management standard for the environment, providing businesses around the globe with a structured process for making environmental improvements.

After passing stage one of the standard in November, Axis was audited for the second (and final) stage of the accreditation in January, passing with flying colours to achieve full ISO 14001 accreditation – a great boost to the business.

In addition, Axis is taking its green initiative one step further, offsetting its (very low) carbon footprint with a donation to the Ecuadorian Rainforest Project. This project is involved in rebuilding, replenishing and sustaining the rainforest ecosystems in the High Andes of Ecuador, and telesales manager Lorna Waldron is currently working on the project as a volunteer.



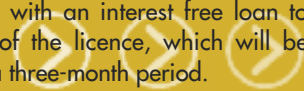
## Licensing 2009

**SIA licences are compulsory to individuals working in the private security industry, including manned guarding. SIA licences were first introduced in 2006, and are valid for three years, meaning that 2009 will see the first wave of renewals.**

To help officers through this process, the HR Department will automatically write to officers between three and four months ahead of the expiry of the licence, attaching an SIA application form for the officers to complete. Once completed, the forms must be returned to the HR Department who forward it to the SIA.

Once renewal has been successfully completed, the new licence will be sent directly by the SIA. Should the original licence expire during the renewal process, the officer will be issued with an LDN (Licence Dispensation Notice) by the HR Department, which will be valid for 10 weeks. Please note an LDN can only be issued if a licence application is underway.

In order to ease the financial impact, Axis will provide officers with an interest free loan to cover the cost of the licence, which will be recouped over a three-month period.



To find out more please contact:

✉ [sales@axis-security.co.uk](mailto:sales@axis-security.co.uk)

☎ 020 3077 2145