



Security Industry Authority

# SIA National Conference 2014

## Moving Forward – Elizabeth France CBE

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16 October 2014

Elizabeth France spoke from notes. This is a summary of Elizabeth's speech, please check against delivery.

### Welcome

I would like to open the SIA Stakeholder Conference 2014 by welcoming you all here today. This is my first SIA national conference and I'm looking forward to a busy day ahead, with interesting and thought provoking presentations.

I am also looking forward to hearing what you have to say. You will have an opportunity to let us know your thoughts, and to ask questions, at two question and answer sessions.

This year we have an international flavour to the day when we hear about security regulation in Brazil, and also from our two nearest neighbours, France and the Republic of Ireland. I know we will all learn a lot and leave here today with much to think about.

There are three themes that run throughout today: Supporting Business; Delivering Effectively; and International Perspectives.

Under Supporting Business we have two presentations:

- Making the UK a great place to start and grow a business - a presentation by Anastasia Osbourne, from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills. And,
- Why Regulation Matters – a presentation from Baroness Angela Smith. Shadow Home Office Minister.

In Delivering Effectively we will hear about:

- Tackling Cyber Crime in the UK – *Andy Archibald, Deputy Director NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit.* And,
- Security at the Commonwealth Games - *Ian Thomas, Consultant to Police Scotland.*

Our international Perspectives presentations are:

- Private Security French Perspective - Jean Yves Latournerie Prefect, Director of the National Council for Private Security Regulation, Paris.
- Private security regulation in Brazil – From the president of the National Federation of Security Companies and Transport Markets (FENAVIST)
- Republic of Ireland – John Ryan, Chief Executive, Private Security Authority

## Moving Forward

It has been exactly four years since The Public Body Review. In October 2010, it was announced that the SIA would “No longer an NDPB” and that there would be a “phased transition to a new regulatory regime”.

Four years is a long time, and much has been achieved since 2010. The SIA has worked with the industry on moving regulation forward, including work on the specification of a new regime focussed more on businesses and less on individuals.

However, there is still no business licensing, which is disappointing and frustrating.

We at the SIA recognise the expenditure and effort the industry has put towards preparing for business licensing, and of course, the ongoing costs of continuing uncertainty.

But, business licensing is now a Government matter. We at the SIA are creatures of statute. We must work to the legislation provided for us, and we cannot work without proper legislation or powers. We have done everything we can to prepare for business licensing, the SIA and industry stand ready for business licensing, as and when we have the legislation.

However, the SIA and industry cannot stand still and wait on business licensing – together we have to move forward.

Let us first reflect briefly on what we have achieved, and I will then share with you our initial thinking on our future plans.

## Achievements

We cannot move forward without first reflecting on what we have achieved so far. We have provided a better service to individuals and to businesses and improved public safety. Any of you who use our service will have noticed marked improvements over the last few years.

### Individuals

The vast majority of our individual licences are processed within three weeks, and we have maintained that high standard for some time. Our online application system and face to face service at the Post Office has delivered a high standard

of accuracy, and application form rejections are now down from 40% to fewer than 10%.

We have a firm 98% compliance rate with our licensing regime, and our investigators and our enforcement partners work hard to maintain that high rate.

We have built a large following through our digital media channels; Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, which allow us to communicate with vast numbers of our stakeholders quickly, effectively and cheaply. They are two-way channels of communication which allow us to listen to what the industry has to say and to voice what it wants from us.

## Businesses

The regulation of individuals has been successful, but we now have a clear focus on security businesses.

Our Approved Contractor Scheme has continued to grow and has gone from strength to strength. There are currently 784 approved contractors. Members are drawn from all sectors and from all sizes of businesses, from large, medium, small and micro companies. Size and sector are no barriers to a commitment to delivering high quality services. Security buyers are increasingly demanding ACS status in their tendering requirements, with the ACS recognised as a hallmark of quality security.

We have made it easier for businesses to be involved in the licensing of their staff, something which the industry has been telling us for years they need.

We support our enforcement partners to target organised crime gangs involved in the private security industry. We have robust and targeted enforcement and successful prosecutions, focused on businesses that are breaking the law. You only have to visit the news section of our website to see the lists of news releases about business we have prosecuted or seized their profits of crime.

## Costs and quality

As a regulator we must deliver better, more extensive and effective service to you at a lower cost. We have worked hard to deliver the high levels of satisfaction with our service that you demand, and I am pleased that this year we were retained our Cabinet Office award for Customer Excellence.

We will continue to deliver better services to you, and to deliver the services you tell us you need, and we will work to reduce our costs wherever possible.

## Working with the industry and partners

We will continue to work alongside businesses and the industry through our consultation groups, our ACS networks, our roadshows, and events such as today's conference.

We are involved in a joint initiative on tackling organised crime across the UK and we have worked closely with our police partners on a vulnerable people initiative which was launched in Northumbria, and has now been rolled out nationally.

## Shared framework for business licensing

We have worked with the industry on our shared framework for business licensing. Our work with industry and consultation groups represents a significant and valuable collaboration, which has delivered a clear statement of future intent.

Of course, we recognise that there are significant loose ends. We do not yet have mandatory business licensing; the status of the SIA remains unchanged; we have not developed a further recognition of good businesses; and we have not defined the role of the customer in regulation.

But let us not be downhearted, there is further scope for better services, more integration between the SIA and industry, and of course – lower costs.

## Planning for the future

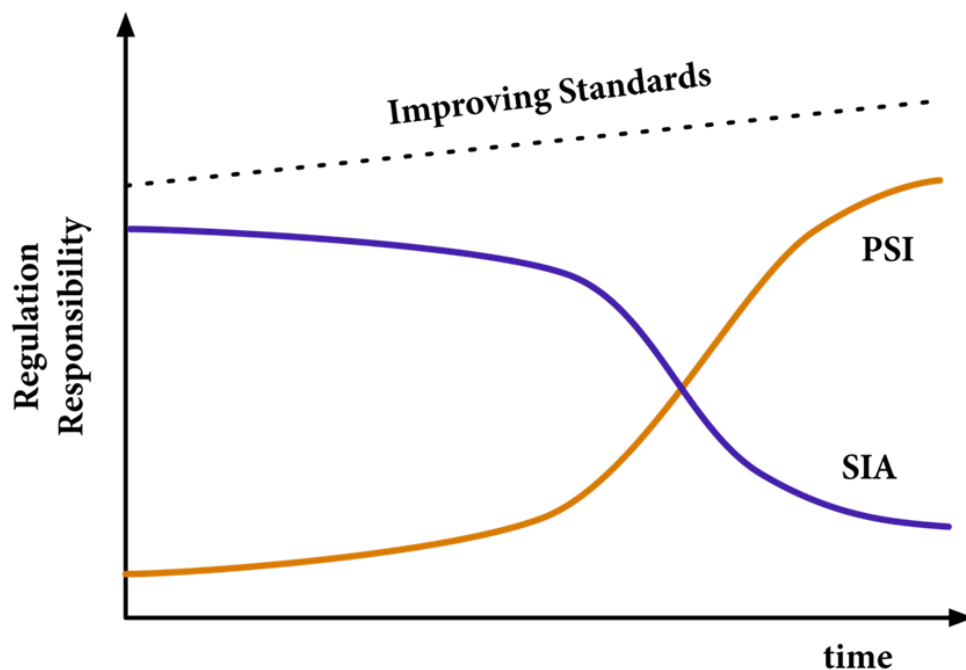
We are gathering our initial thoughts on our future plans. It is very much a work in progress but I wanted to mention it today because we want your involvement. We want to know what you think, and to offer you the chance to comment on, and to shape our future.

## Mission, Vision and Strategy

We take our mission from the Private Security Industry Act 2001, our legislation. Our main aim is the protection of the public, and we do this by ensuring those who provide security in the designated sectors are fit and proper participants. We are also charged with improving standards across the industry. This we do through our Approved Contractor Scheme and by working with industry and security buyers.

We have a vision of sharing responsibility of regulation with a respected and professional industry. Over time the regulatory responsibilities of a regulator will naturally reduce and interventions with the industry will be minimal, while the

responsibilities of a professional industry will increase – leading to improved standards across the whole industry.



Our strategic aim in this is to reduce the risk to the public by; improving standards; ensuring only fit, proper, and competent individuals are part of the industry; and engaging with security buyers to support them in making an informed purchasing decision.

### What does this mean?

What will this mean to individuals and businesses?

For individuals, there will be further improvements to the licensing process, with a fairer share of the cost of regulation being passed to businesses.

For businesses, this will depend of the shape and health of the business, but our aim is to shift regulation from individuals to businesses.

**For businesses in a poor shape** there will be regulatory or legal interventions, clear use of licence conditions and restrictions, the removal of the licence to operate, and higher indirect costs.

**For aspiring businesses**, there would be clear standards for improvement, and intervention to support improvement. The burden of regulation would be proportionate, and there would be protection from incompetent and criminal businesses, and there would be proportionate costs.

**For good businesses**, they would be recognised for delivering a respected and professional service. They would benefit from low levels of intervention with increased responsibility for staff. Protection will be provided from incompetent and criminal gangs. There would be good customer recognition, and lower indirect costs.

This is not just good news for businesses. Customers will have greater engagement with us and there will be clearer information to support informed security purchases. Our enforcement partners will benefit from our current strong relationships, and we will develop new relationships with local authorities and other regulators.

## What next

So how do we get to the future, and what next?

We are currently working on our draft business plan for the next three years. We want you to be part of that plan.

We will consult with you this winter and we need you to tell us your thoughts, what we're doing right, what we're doing wrong, and what do you think about our direction of travel.

When we have your views we aim to have our new plan in place for the financial year 2015/16.

## Summary

Let me summarise my points and set out our respective roles and responsibilities for regulating the private security industry.

For the SIA

- We have made good progress and a sound base on which to build regulation
- We are ready for the Government's decision on business licensing, but we're not distracted by it.
- We will be audacious with the powers we already have. We will continue to move forward, to deliver the most effective regulation possible, to protect the public, and support legitimate business.
- We will recognise good businesses and tackle those which are not so good – or even downright bad!
- We will encourage informed buyers to play their part in ensuring effective protection of the public, by working with suppliers which are respected and professional.
- We will deliver better services and lower costs.

From you, the industry, we ask two things:

- Respond to our planning consultation.
- Be part of a respected and professional industry.

Thank you.