



## Watchword



I make no apologies for dedicating two articles in this issue to the achievements of our team members. Both our awards day and our quarterly roll-call of commendations are given top-billing in this Watch, and I'm happy to add my congratulations to all the individuals concerned.

But whilst the achievements of these staff are to be applauded, I would just like to mention a remark made to me by a client last month. We'd been talking about extending our coverage of his site, and I asked if he was happy with the officer who was currently seconded to him. "He's a first-class lad," said the client. "Always very well turned out, and extremely polite."

I found that comment particularly interesting. If someone had asked me why I rated that officer, I would have mentioned how well he had done in training, and his thorough understanding of the procedures we use when attending premises and responding to incidents.

To this client, though, it was the officer's appearance and manner which made the biggest impression. And to me, there was an important message here. For although we are highlighting some examples of excellent staff performance in this issue, they don't give the complete picture of how we work.

Yes, it's good to know that when a sudden situation or emergency demands, an officer will show exemplary behaviour. But just as commendable are our staff who show a positive and committed attitude on a day-to-day basis to their duties.

I hope we do our part to encourage this in two ways. Firstly, by maintaining a high level of supervision within the company which ensures that personnel receive constant feedback and support, and always have someone to whom they can turn if the need arises. Sadly, this policy is something of an exception in our industry.

Secondly, as a separate article in this edition makes clear, we create as many opportunities as possible for staff to develop their careers by learning new skills.

It's an investment on which we don't always see the return, perhaps because we can't always immediately offer a position for which a person is then qualified. But what we do benefit from is an overall higher level of motivation which makes itself evident in everyone's attitude to work.

And if this comes across in the way in which officers take pride in their everyday duties, or respond in an always positive manner to routine work, then I think this is just as worthy of praise. So to all our staff who can't be celebrated in 'The Watch' due to lack of space, I'd like to pass on our thanks for their contribution.

*Paul Hopper*  
*Managing Director*

### ON THE TRAIN FOR A FAST-TRACK CAREER

New training opportunities for 2007 have been announced by NSL as part of its commitment to a lifetime learning policy. The latest raft of development programmes is targeted especially at security officers employed by the firm, and provides the means by which any individual can help put his or her career on a faster track.

In order to help deliver the programmes, NSL has linked with Learning Curve of Bishop Auckland. The organisation is one of the North's leading training providers, and is an accredited centre for a wide range of occupational courses that lead to nationally recognised qualifications, such as the NVQ.

gain learning and skills which will help them to progress within the company.

The wide range of security-related services provided by NSL is reflected in the number of different training programmes which will be made available. Specialisations include, for example, the roles of mobile drivers, control centre operators, and operations supervisors.

In each case, formal job-specific training will be provided to officers. Successful completion of the course will then enable individuals to provide holiday and other cover for existing personnel, and allow them to be selected for full-time positions when these become available.

In addition to these security-related programmes, NSL employees also have the chance to gain Level 2 NVQ qualifications in more general business skills such as 'customer service' and 'team leadership.'

It's hoped that many NSL officers will take advantage of the opportunity to apply to join an appropriate personal development programme - and to

### Annual Awards Ceremony



Award Winners with the NSL Operations Team and Company Directors.

(Back Row L-R) Peter Smith Sales Director, James Turner, Alan Byers Operations Manager, Jeff Hewitson, Jerry Stephenson Operations Support Manager, Paul Hopper Managing Director, Phil Ellwood, Paul Heeran Operations Director.

(Front Row L-R) Darren Pilmoor, Helen Brennand, Gary Everton and Ray Gouldthorp.

Missing from the photograph was Paul McCauley.



## Greatest Hits makes NSL a Chart Topper!

When Northern Security's upgraded website first went live a few months ago, a gradual rise in the number of visitors was anticipated. But the reality was very different - for within weeks, [www.northernsecurityltd.co.uk](http://www.northernsecurityltd.co.uk) was receiving hits that were being measured in hundreds every day. And now, thanks to the escalating number of visitors, the website is ranked in the number one spot on Google and other search engines when tags such as "security in Cumbria" are keyed-in. Feedback from NSL clients and other users helps to explain why the website is now topping the popularity polls for those seeking security knowledge. It is, say visitors, not just extremely well designed, but also easy to navigate and packed with genuinely useful information.

The pages were created by one of Northern England's top graphic studios, but the content was the result of a careful study by NSL on what type of data was mostly sought by those

logging-on. It was found that visitors were, in the main, looking for hard facts about the company and its services, and weren't especially interested in general statements which told them little or nothing about what was being offered. For that reason, the website presents a detailed picture of NSL's security capability, divided into easy-to-find sections on specialisations such as manned guarding, CCTV and access control. The site also examines specific areas of expertise, such as larger corporate sites, aviation and warehousing.

In addition, there are regularly updated news sections which archive press stories issued by NSL, plus on-line access to present and past editions of The Watch, and links to professional bodies and organisations with which NSL is associated. There's also advice on the latest legislation which affects the security industry and its clients, plus careers advice for those interested in working in the sector,

along with a list of current vacancies. But NSL emphasises that the website is not set in stone. New features and content are being constantly added, and the company welcomes comments from all visitors and suggestions on how it could be even further improved.



Take a look, and do let us have your thoughts.

[www.northernsecurityltd.co.uk](http://www.northernsecurityltd.co.uk)



## DON'T RELAX YOUR GUARD, NSL WARNS



Northern Security Ltd recently joined the security industry's watchdog, the Security Industry Authority (SIA), to help put company bosses on alert about the risk of employing illegal guards.

Since March 2006, all security guards have been required to hold an official licence, only issued after they have received formal training and a criminal records check. But some guarding companies are still employing unlicensed officers - so earlier this year,

an SIA campaign was launched urging firms to check that their guards on patrol were not breaking the law.

It was backed by Northern Security which issued media notices to newspapers and radio stations throughout the North of England, warning companies of the dangers. Northern Security was one of the early campaigners for the mandatory licensing of guards as a means of driving up quality standards.

According to the SIA, there have since been some high-profile prosecutions of non-complying companies - but recently it was revealed that there were still illegal operators out there:

In its press statements, Northern Security advised bosses to heed the SIA's advice to ask for evidence that a guarding company's officers all hold a current government-approved licence.

## Northern Security Limited welcomes..... Chris McCormick

A new senior appointment at Northern Security has signalled another major expansion phase for the firm. Chris McCormick, who comes in as Business Development Manager, now takes charge of the company's fast-growing portfolio of blue-chip clients in the North.

Chris, who lives in Hexham, brings to Northern Security more than a decade of experience as a senior negotiator in the guarding industry, advising clients on solutions to safeguarding people and property. Previously based in the North East, he worked as a business development manager for two leading national guarding firms before establishing his own security consultancy based in Hexham.

Chris will now be responsible for managing the increasing number of clients from the public and private sector which rely

on Northern Security to provide protection for their personnel and premises. Northern Security MD Paul Hopper says the creation of the new post reflects the importance his firm attaches to providing a first-class service to all clients.

Meanwhile, Chris McCormick is riding high not just in his new professional role. For in his spare time, Chris is a keen mountain biker, and his list of achievements includes a sponsored fund-raising pedal up Helvellyn on a mountain bike - and down again via the notorious Striding Edge.



# Northern Security Limited's Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony

## NSL'S TOP PERFORMERS TAKE A BOW

Top-performing members of the NSL team were celebrated recently at a special awards ceremony. Held at Carlisle Racecourse, the event brought together employees from the company's offices in the North West and North East for a weekend day of relaxation and congratulation. Inaugurated last year, NSL's awards programme highlights members of staff who have achieved high standards of excellence in a range of different categories. The accolades are available to all employees, and are based on feedback received from both clients of the company and from NSL management.

Stepping forward to receive their award certificates from Managing Director Paul Hopper were both long-serving members of the company, and more recent employees - all of whose performances were judged to be a credit to themselves, the company, and the organisations for which NSL works. They were applauded not just by fellow team members, but by the wives, husbands and partners of staff, all of whom were also invited to the Sunday reception at the racecourse's VIP suite.

In his speech, Paul Heeran commented that although the company's success was very much a product of close team work, it was right to pay a special tribute to individuals whose loyalty, dedication and achievement had made a particularly strong contribution. But it wasn't just front-running staff that were being cheered on during the celebration event. Although bad weather had caused the day's racing at Carlisle to be cancelled, a video derby provided just as much entertainment and as many thrills - not to mention as big a pile of torn-up betting slips! And here were the two-legged winners of the day...

### Customer Recognition Award

Phil Ellwood, Carlisle



### Best Newcomer Award

Helen Brennand, Carlisle



### Special Achievement Award

Gary Everton & Daniel Pilmoor, Middlesbrough



### Best Suggestion Award

Gary Everton, Middlesbrough



### Loyalty & Commitment Award

James Turner, Carlisle  
5 years service



### Best Team Award

Jeff Hewitson & Ray Gouldthorp, Middlesbrough



Unable to make it to the ceremony was Paul McCauley who also won a Loyalty & Commitment Award for 5 Years service. Thank you to everyone who was nominated for an award and who came along to the Awards Ceremony.

## The Extra Mile

Every quarter in The Watch, NSL pays tribute to staff whose diligence and display of initiative have drawn special praise from the company and its clients. Our thanks to these employees, and to everyone who has helped to reinforce NSL's reputation as a true quality service provider.

### 15th December 2006 - Alan White, Middlesbrough Football Club Shop, Middlesbrough

#### Threatened but Duty came first



When Alan helped to detain a shop thief at Middlesbrough Football Club's store in December, the suspect was determined not to go down without a fight.

He intimidated staff, and threatened violence to Alan as he attempted to detain him. The incident could have escalated seriously - but as the store's assistant manager afterwards wrote in a letter to NSL, Alan's calm and professional handling of the situation kept everything under control.

"He is a real credit to you company, and should be congratulated," she wrote, adding that Alan's commitment was also evident in his willingness to stay after working hours to ensure that the Police were given full details of the incident.

### 12th November 2006 - Paul McCauley, AV Dawsons, Middlesbrough

#### Fast response to medical alert

As an NSL officer carried out his patrol duties one November night at the Middlesbrough firm of AV Dawson, he tripped and fell. Suspecting that his condition might be serious, the officer made a distress call which was picked up by Paul, who quickly arrived on the scene.

Paul judged that the officer required immediate medical attention, and summoned the emergency services. He then set about administering first-aid to his colleague, preventing his condition from worsening until paramedics arrived on the scene.

Paul's prompt and cool-headed response earns him a special "thank you" from the company. The officer concerned has now made a full recovery.

### 21st January 2007 - Ian Pirie, Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough

#### Calming Troubled Waters

It's not always effective crime prevention which wins clients' praise. In January, a member of staff at Middlesbrough Football Club's store raised the alarm when she found the shop's stock room was starting to flood.



Ian quickly identified the culprit as the kitchen's dishwasher and prevented the situation from worsening before calling the plumber and then wading-in to help clear the mess and stop further damage occurring to stock.

The Riverside Stadium's Head of Operations and Safety wrote to pass on his "sincere thanks" to Ian on behalf of the Club, adding that NSL had once again demonstrated a flexible and customer-focussed approach to its work.

### 16th January 2007 - Kevin Gemmell, William Armstrong, Longtown

#### A Positive Impression

Regular Service Level Agreement review meetings with its clients ensures that NSL continues to provide the highest levels of service and protection.

During one such discussion in January, with Longtown-based William Armstrong, the client was invited to comment on his general impression of NSL's security officers.

The response was positive - with officer Kevin Gemmell singled out for special mention thanks to his "can-do" approach to tasks, commitment to the job, and smart presentation.

A reminder, perhaps, that in this people-based business, it's individuals and their attitude which form the front-line of our reputation.



### 12th December 2006 - Paul Heeran & Grampian Country Pork Team, Grampian Country Pork, Middlesbrough

#### Middlesbrough team : Crime-busters praised

It was far from just "routine patrols" which were required when NSL was contracted to the Malton company of Grampian Country Pork.

Over the period, a series of serious attempts to breach the perimeter of the firm were made, requiring officers to take fast and positive action to prevent more serious crimes taking place. Their prompt and decisive response was praised in a letter to NSL from the firm's security manager who thanked the team for its diligence.