

## **Written evidence submitted by the Security Industry Authority (SPI0015)**

### **Introduction**

1. This submission is provided on behalf of the Security Industry Authority (SIA) at the request of the Home Affairs Committee Inquiry into Spiking, in advance of the oral evidence hearing on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022, when Paul Fullwood, the Director of Inspections and Enforcement will give evidence to the committee on behalf of the SIA.
2. This submission provides an introduction to the roles and responsibilities of the SIA and explains some of the actions we are taking to protect the public.
3. Paul Fullwood is the Director for Inspections and Enforcement for the SIA; he was appointed the interim Director in March 2021 and subsequently as permanent Director in December 2021. As part of his role, he has responsibility for the SIA inspection, intelligence, and enforcement response across the United Kingdom, by protecting the public through effective regulation of the private security industry and working with partners to raise standards across the sector. He also has strategic responsibility for public protection which includes the SIA's response to violence against woman and girls in support of the Home Office Violence Against Woman and Girls strategy.
4. Prior to joining the SIA, he retired from policing in 2020 after 32 years public service. He served as a police officer in the role of Assistant Chief Constable for Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Constabularies, where he was responsible for providing specialist policing services across three police forces to protect life, keep people safe and bringing offenders to justice. He was also the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead for the strategic investigation of complex, serious and organised or major crime investigations.

### **Background**

5. The SIA is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Home Office. We were established by the Private Security Industry Act 2001 ("PSIA") to regulate certain activities within the private security industry for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
6. Our purpose is to protect the public. We do this through effective regulation of the parts of the private security industry, we have responsibility for and by working with partners to raise standards across the sector. Our activities protect people, property and premises and set high quality standards of training for licence holders.

7. The PSIA gives us a number of statutory duties. Principally, we must: license individual security operatives to work in specific sectors; prepare and publish the criteria we apply to individuals applying for a licence; and approve businesses that seek approval under a (voluntary) Approved Contractor Scheme (often referred to as the “ACS”). ACS is a voluntary scheme by which companies seek accreditation to attain SIA approved contractor status.
8. To help deliver these duties the PSIA gives powers to the SIA conduct inspections, set and approve standards of conduct, training and supervision for licence holders and set and approve standards for those approved under the ACS.
9. The PSIA also set outs a number of oversight functions. These are to:
  - keep under general review the private security industry and the operation of the legislative framework
  - monitor the activities and effectiveness of those working in the private security industry
  - make recommendations to improve standards in the provision of private security services and activities
10. The SIA licences individuals, not security businesses, and not the venues who employ directly or contract with security businesses to provide security. Individuals who work within specific sectors of the private security industry are required to be licensed by the SIA. Not all security related work requires a licence. It is a criminal offence to undertake security work which requires a licence without one.
11. As of December 2021, there were over 390,000 active licence holders, 290,000 of which held “Door Supervisor” licences. Around 10% of licence holders are female.
12. The SIA’s roles and responsibilities, and the fact that SIA licence holders are often at the front line in protecting members of the public, mean that spiking is an issue of concern to us. Regretfully, spiking – whether administered through a needle or as a liquid put in a drink - is just one manifestation of the sort of abhorrent behaviour we want, working with the security industry and venues, to help eliminate.
13. We are committed to playing our part in deterring and responding to such behaviour.

### **Our role in protecting the public**

14. There are essentially three main strands of our work through which we protect the public.
15. First, we ensure that individuals who apply for and obtain an SIA licence are fit and proper persons to hold that licence. This includes ensuring that those who are licensed have undergone the basic training for entry and are aware of the behaviours expected of licence holders.
16. Second, we have a programme of inspections and enforcement activity which seeks to deter and disrupt non-compliance and criminal activity. This includes both the persons we licence and those who are not licensed but are committing offences under the PSIA – for example, those who employ unlicensed staff to perform licensable activities.
17. Third, we work collaboratively with industry partners, enforcement bodies and others to raise awareness and standards across the private security industry.

### ***Licensing standards and training***

18. Our licensing process seeks to ensure that the person to be licensed is a fit and proper person to engage in licensable conduct and includes as a prerequisite to applying for a licence they have achieved a qualification attesting to the basic skills required to work effectively in the role which they have been licensed for.
19. Our licensing criteria is set out in “Get Licensed” – this is statutory guidance which sets out the criteria an applicant must meet if the SIA is to issue them with a licence. “Get Licensed” is published on the gov.uk website.
20. As part of the application process, all licence applicants are subject to identity and criminal record checks. We also require applicants to demonstrate they have the prerequisite qualifications set out in “Get Licensed” relevant to the type of licence they are applying for before they can submit an application for a licence.
21. The SIA’s role is not to deliver or provide training. The SIA is required to set or approve standards of training and this is done by creating and publishing specifications for learning and qualifications. These specifications are used by government regulated awarding organisations. The training is delivered by training providers who are in turn approved and audited by the awarding organisations. Those awarding organisations ensure that delivery of assessment is conducted within a robust quality framework. The SIA does not regulate the qualifications or training delivery.
22. To ensure operatives are sufficiently equipped to protect the public, particularly people in vulnerable situations, the mandatory training

requirements include topics such as recognising where there is a moral or legal obligation to ensure the safety of others; identifying factors that make someone vulnerable and indicators of abuse; how to deal with allegations of sexual assault; and identifying the actions they should take to help vulnerable individuals. It identifies behaviours that may be exhibited by sexual predators such as close monitoring of people who may be in vulnerable situations, buying them drinks or gifts, and suspicious behaviour around certain times and venues. The inappropriate use of technology e.g. up skirting with phones is also referenced.

23. Licence holders' training includes to understand when it is appropriate to step in to call a friend for assistance, to call for a licensed taxi, or to seek help from other professionals or services better placed to help. They are taught how to deal with allegations of sexual assault, namely by following the organisation's policies and procedures, notifying the police and recording and documenting all available information.
24. Mandatory training also covers awareness of the use of drugs in facilitating sexual assaults, with particular reference to GHB or drugs commonly known as 'date rape' drugs.
25. Once a licence is issued, we expect licence holders to meet the good standards of behaviour covered in the qualification, including that they do not abuse their position of authority and that they behave with integrity. Front-line SIA licence holders play a vital role in protecting members of the public. They have a duty of care to people in vulnerable situations and have been trained in ways to identify and report predatory behaviour.
26. Standards of behaviour form part of the training, and complaints against operative behaviour can be measured against these. We have taken action against licence holders, including withdrawing a licence, where we consider that behaviour has fallen below that required. The standards of behaviour include the need to avoid inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature.
27. The standards of training and qualifications required for new licence holders is periodically reviewed, no less than every five years. The most recent changes were implemented in 2021. We introduced new requirements which includes new and updated content on terror threat awareness and dealing with emergencies. We also introduced a requirement for applicants to have an emergency First Aid at Work certificate - this was implemented for new applicants from April 2021 and made a requirement for those renewing their licence from October 2021. The syllabus for this course is set by the Health and Safety Executive. This current generation of licence-linked qualifications also contains assessment criteria relating to violence against women and girls content. Operatives must correctly answer exam questions in this area of the syllabus to obtain a qualification.

***Inspection, enforcement and compliance***

28. As a public body, we follow the principles of best regulatory practice to ensure that our work and actions are targeted, consistent, accountable, transparent and proportionate.
29. We have robust and proportionate processes to assess and investigate allegations of criminality and wrongdoing made by employers, licence holders, public bodies or members of the public.
30. We take a risk and intelligence led approach to our compliance activity. Our emphasis is on proactively detecting and disrupting non-compliance and non-conformance in the private security industry and taking account of the information received from a wide variety of private security bodies.
31. Our regional inspections and investigation teams work with individuals, businesses and venues to raise standards and ensure compliance with the regulations and requirements. Where encouragement fails, investigators employ a range of formal interventions (e.g. warnings and improvement notices), and we take prosecution action where necessary.
32. From a search of our records, we have received very limited intelligence with the word 'spiking' or 'spiked' included within the text of the intelligence. For the period January 2020 to December 2021, we received a total of 25 intelligence logs relating to alleged drink spiking, with nine of these having been received in the last two months of the reporting period, most likely directly related to a higher media profile on spiking.
33. However, even taking this into account, intelligence that is actionable from an SIA perspective is very limited, with the majority of reports references alleged spiking within a night time economy venue, where the intelligence report also relates to security operatives for another reason, mainly relating to alleged standards of behaviour/conduct of unknown security. None of these reports refer to security operatives being directly or indirectly involved in the alleged spiking within the venue. When intelligence relates to an alleged criminal activity, the intelligence report is disseminated to the appropriate police force.
34. None of the intelligence reports received by us have referred to any specific type of drug, nor have any reports contained allegations of spiking by a needle.
35. We have taken direct licensing action in two cases involving licence holders, one case where we suspended the licence of one individual after a police disclosure included previous intelligence about spiking. We also suspended

the licence of a second case where a named licence holder was under investigation by the police for 'alleged rape and spiking' offences.

36. We are not however complacent about the low number of reports - this reporting period includes when the night time economy shutdown due to COVID-19 restrictions, with no reports being received between May 2020 and October 2020, and only 2 between May 2020 and April 2021. We continue to monitor any intelligence that references spiking allegations.

### ***Raising awareness and working with partners***

37. We have a comprehensive programme of engagement across the private security industry, talking to partners at regional and national level.

38. We have historically undertaken a wide range of work in relation to supporting people in vulnerable situations, particularly in the night time economy. However, there has been increasing awareness of the risks to women and girls' safety. In response to the Government's Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Strategy we developed an Action Plan in July 2021 which seeks to promote information and material to the wider security sector that raises awareness of the safety of women and girls in all environments.

39. The aims of our Action Plan are to:

- Promote information and material to increase awareness.
- Enhance and build on partnerships.
- Provide support in Higher Education.
- Work with the Night-time Economy and promote stakeholder schemes.
- Review the Standards of Behaviour we expect of licence holders.
- Review qualifications to include specific content relating to violence against women and girls.
- Build on our multi-agency working and information sharing as this is vital in our work in pursuing offenders by taking robust licensing decisions.
- Commission research to identify where we should target our prevention activities in order to reduce violence towards women and girls.

40. In support of this Action Plan we are running a long-term public safety campaign targeted at the private security industry focussing on the prevention of violence against women and girls. Recent initiatives have included:

- In October 2021 we sent a broadcast message to over 380,000 licence holders reminding them of the vital role they can play in preventing violence

against women and girls, including identifying and preventing predatory behaviour. The message included a reminder of their training, that they play a vital role in protecting members of the public and that they have a duty of care with regard to people in vulnerable situations. The message also included advice of what to do should they have concerns about someone's safety

- During November and December 2021, investigators from our Compliance and Inspections teams visited numerous towns and cities across the UK including Aberdeen, Manchester, Leeds, London, Birmingham, Cardiff, Winchester and Norwich promoting our advice on how to tackle violence against women and girls. Our visits included many student locations where we raised awareness of the issues around safety and spiking.
  - Our investigators spoke to security companies and their staff who were deployed in either higher education establishments or night-time economy venues, whose clients include large numbers of students. They met large numbers of door supervisors face to face who were deployed in the night time economy. As well as checking their understanding and knowledge of how to deal with vulnerable persons and how to tackle violence towards women and girls they shared a QR code which links directly to the broadcast message sent to licence holders.
41. A large number of security staff are traditionally deployed in the night time economy and our Inspection and Enforcement teams will continue to promote essential advice amongst the private security industry to help make women and girls safer in these environments.
42. We will be continuing our work on tackling inappropriate sexual behaviour within the Private Security Industry which will complement existing national best practice and support our stakeholder initiatives, continuing our public safety campaigns and wider stakeholder engagement to promote safety amongst security businesses.

### **Collaboration**

43. Our work is dependent on partnerships not just with the police and other public bodies, but increasingly with security providers and the wider industry. We seek, and continue to benefit from, the support and cooperation of those working in the private security industry and our many partners to provide effective regulation, and to pursue robustly those who choose not to comply with legal requirements.
44. We work with police, partner agencies, security providers, buyers and venue owners to understand, identify and successfully mitigate a range of public safety and safeguarding risks. These include terrorism, serious and organised

crime, modern slavery, labour exploitation and child sexual exploitation and abuse.

45. We have a history of working in partnership with partners on related themes such as Safer Streets, Business Watch, Safer workplaces, Safer nights out, the Safer Business Network and are signed up to the Women's Night Safety Charter. We also attend the NPCC 'Spiking Working group' alongside many stakeholders across the police service/private security industry. This is a valuable source of information and intelligence on the prevalence, methods and types of spiking incidents being detected in the community.
46. Collaboration between various agencies and law enforcement bodies is particularly essential in tackling offences such as spiking. The SIA's remit does not extend to the whole security industry and so there will be events and venues at which there is no SIA licensed operatives' presence. This could be because the venue does not need or employ licensed door staff. The scale of the private security industry and its geographical spread means that intelligence and information sharing is very important to us.
47. In support of public safety, the SIA would benefit from the regular sharing of intelligence and information from police forces and UK law enforcement. Whilst the SIA has its own statutory responsibilities and remit, it is available to support joint operational activity in support of public safety initiatives across the private security industry.

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