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NZSecurity

Seeing Purple

WD Introduces Its Latest Surveillance Data Storage Line-Up

Lessons for Security in New Zealand

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Government, Transport, Tourism
Access Management,
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June-July 15

Wholesalers and Manufacturers
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Seeing Purple

WD Introduces its Latest Surveillance Data Storage Line-Up

At a 3rd December seminar at Auckland's Mercure Hotel, the theme was a definite purple, with data storage leader WD providing New Zealand with a formal introduction to its latest stable of surveillance storage products. Sitting amongst an impressive line-up of stable mates, the star of the event was the company's latest high-capacity internal drive for surveillance applications, the WD Purple.

Headquartered in Irvine, California, WD has long been at the forefront of data storage. In addition to being deployed within the company's own storage products, its hard drives are deployed by other manufacturers in desktop and mobile computers, enterprise computing systems, consumer electronics and digital video applications. WD Purple was added to its surveillance range less than 12 months ago, and its latest iteration boasts some impressive enhancements.

In laying out WD Purple's credentials, Albert Chang, WD's Senior Product Marketing Manager, put it simply, "WD Purple has one purpose – surveillance."

WD Purple is designed for use in surveillance and security systems up to 8 bays and optimised for 32 HD cameras. It is built for 24/7 always-on, high-definition surveillance applications, and can handle an impressive 6 terabytes per drive. According to Albert, WD Purple outperforms its competition, including the surveillance storage solution of choice of many small businesses: the common desktop hard drive.

AllFrame Technology

Playback is where desktop hard drives fail to adequately survive. They aren't built to handle the inevitable transmission errors that result in playback being interrupted by seconds-long gaps in footage. During a gap, all a guard in a control centre can see

on their monitor is a suspended frame. And just like when a live-streamed sports game is interrupted by stuttering, one misses any action occurring in the meantime.

WD Purple does away with frame freezing through its AllFrame technology. Unlike desktop hard drives, which stop incoming data while trying to recover data lost through noise or other interference, the WD Purple's inbuilt intelligence continues to record the data, and then repairs. This results in smoother playback so that the system – and the personnel monitoring and retrieving critical surveillance footage – doesn't miss a beat.

Although size does matter, it is the nano-technological advantages of WD's enterprise class data centre drives that makes them truly stand out from other drives in the market

Cool Running

With its aptly named IntelliSeek technology, WD Purple is able to calculate optimum seek speeds, which lowers power consumption. 45% better consumption means that the drive generates less heat; less heat means no need for a fan to keep things cool; and no fan means no associated noise and vibration to distort storage accuracy. That being said, the drive is built for higher temperature 24/7 operation. Its operating temperature of up to 65 degrees compares favorably to a PCs' 50 degrees.

This reduces wear and tear and breakdowns, and drives up the drive's cost effectiveness. It's all about what Albert passionately refers to as a key element in the WD Purple equation – total cost of ownership (TCO).

Compatibility

WD Purple is compatible with a wide range of security camera systems, including Lorex, Q-See, Panasonic and Dahua, among others. Built for seamless integration into new or existing video surveillance systems, WD Purple is designed and tested to surveillance-class standards and is compatible with industry-leading chassis and chip-sets. The good people at WD have also made available on their website a Compatibility Selector to assist customers with their surveillance drive selection.

Back up!

Nothing describes the stunning evolution of computing better than the mind-bending developments in data storage that have taken place since the days we relied on punch cards and magnetic tape to do the job. Within living memory, the terabyte has gone from the stuff of science fiction to something you can put in your pocket.

While Albert took his audience on a humorous trip down data storage memory lane, he also painted an equally staggering picture of the not-too-distant future. He forecast that by 2020 more than 200 exabytes would be needed globally for social media alone, and that worldwide data storage requirements would hit a massive 40 zettabytes in total. "The data created, replicated and consumed in a single year", he continued, "is growing annually at a rate of 46%."

That's a lot of data to back up. And as a data storage professional, Albert was vigilant in impressing upon his audience the importance of making regular back

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ups. “I always back up seven copies”, he explained. For the rest of us, Albert recommended backing up at least twice.

While many within his audience may have been somewhat bemused by his puritan dedication to ensuring the safety of his data, no one would disagree with the point being made. Data is valuable. There is no shortage of storage options available to consumers and businesses, but making the right choices around how one stores their data and how one backs it up can mean the difference between securing it and losing it.

Enterprise-class storage

Albert recommends that those looking to invest in a surveillance data surveillance solution ask themselves two questions from the outset: “What do I do, and how big do I need?” The size of a business, the type of business its in, and the security requirements it has are all important factors in determining what surveillance data storage solution is appropriate for it. “Choosing the right device”, Albert pointed out, “delivers the lowest TCO.”

While WD Purple provides a premium solution for a smaller business requiring up to 32 HD cameras, its stable mates, WD Se and WD Re provide larger scale enterprise class solutions.

WD Se is designed for mid-range and small-to-medium enterprise surveillance, catering for up to 64 HD cameras. As its brochure suggests, WD Se is ideally suited for bulk cloud storage, replicated environments, content delivery networks (CDNs), SMB network attached storage (NAS), backup and archiving.

At the big end is WD Re, suited to high-end and mission critical surveillance required by the likes of hospitals and casinos. The gutsy WD Re can host an unlimited number of cameras. It is designed to handle a whopping 550 TB per year in any heavy application datacenter, and boasts the highest workload capabilities of any WD 3.5-inch hard drive.

Size Matters

Although size does matter, it is the nano-technological advantages of WD’s enterprise class data centre drives that makes them truly stand out from other drives in the market.

WD’s Rotary Acceleration Feed Forward (RAFF) technology includes an accelerometer in the drive that detects and corrects vibration in real time. The result is a significant performance improvement in high vibration environments. Its Dual Stage Actuator – a head positioning system with two fine-tuning actuators – improves positional accuracy over the data track(s).



WD's Senior Product Marketing Manager, Albert Chang

Adding to the WD drive’s impressive list of design features is dynamic fly height technology, which ensures that each read-write head’s fly height is adjusted in real time for optimum reliability. As Albert explained, “It’s like a spoiler for your hard drive”, ensuring a smooth flow of air over the top of the rotating disc that’s reminiscent of the role a spoiler plays in stabilizing a sports car.

The drive’s multi-axis shock sensor automatically detects the slightest shocks and compensates to protect the data, while its motor shaft is secured at both ends to reduce system-induced vibration. All of this means less wobbling and smoother tracking for unrivalled accuracy, reliability and durability.

Pushing boundaries

Just when some of us had made up our minds that Albert’s insistence on seven back up copies was probably just a marketing ploy to promote his product, he explained that due to different types of usage and all the possible environments that hard drives operate in, backing up your data – preferably in multiple copies – ensures data integrity and peace of mind.

Being the leader in storage industry, WD is committed to bring the best

quality and innovative products to customers, a fact amply displayed at Storage Visions 2015 in Las Vegas in early January when WD demonstrated the world’s fastest 4 TB hybrid drive. Commenting on the event, WD’s Storage Technology senior vice president Matt Rutledge stated, “WD is committed to working with the industry to push the boundaries of what you might expect from a traditional hard drive.”

It is this insistence on pushing the boundaries that has given WD Purple its industry-leading performance. Investing in the right surveillance storage solution will – as Albert suggests – minimise total cost of ownership, and, most crucially, it will ensure that the footage your cameras are taking can be monitored and retrieved as completely and accurately as possible.

For more information on WD data storage solutions, visit www.wd.com.



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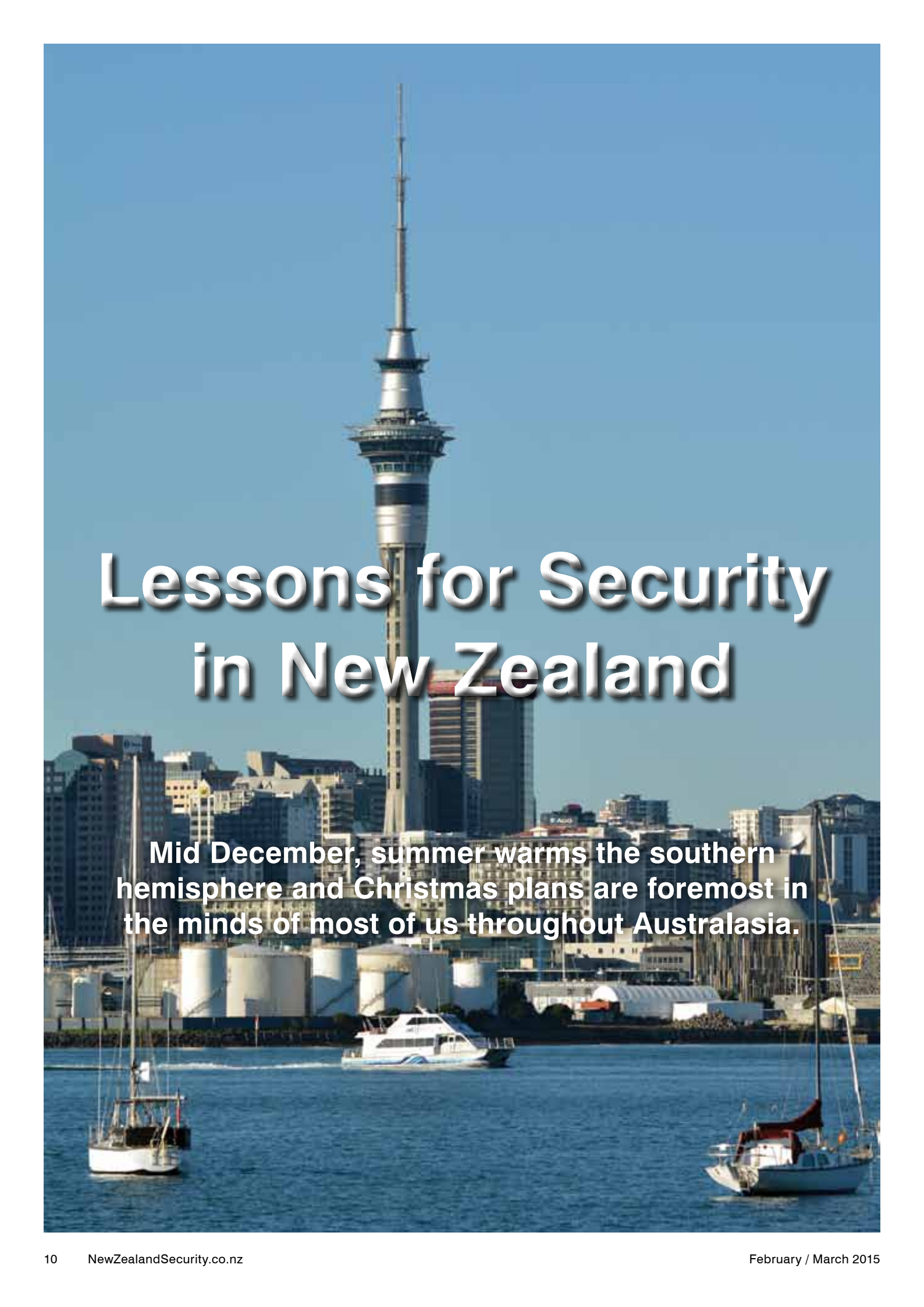
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The background of the slide is a photograph of the Sky Tower in Auckland, New Zealand. The tower is a tall, slender structure with a glass-enclosed observation deck and a spire at the top. It stands prominently against a clear blue sky. Below the tower, the city skyline is visible, featuring various buildings and structures. In the foreground, there is a body of water, likely the harbor, with several boats. Two sailboats are visible on the left and right sides, and a motorboat is in the center. The water is a deep blue color.

Lessons for Security in New Zealand

Mid December, summer warms the southern hemisphere and Christmas plans are foremost in the minds of most of us throughout Australasia.

Then the news comes through – a hostage situation in the Sydney CBD – has Islamic Terrorism hit close to home?

What Happened

15 December 2014: At 0945hrs (Sydney Time) an armed man, later identified as 50 year old Iranian refugee Man Haron Monis, locked himself and an unknown number of hostages in the Lindt Coffee Shop in Martin Place in Sydney.

Shortly after 1000hrs Monis forced some of the hostages to hold up an Islamic flag at the café window; raising fears of a wider terror plot that brought Sydney's CBD to a standstill.

At 1530hrs three hostages were able to make their escape, followed by another two at 1700hrs.

16 December: At 0200hrs seven of the remaining hostages made a dash for the door. Shots rang out and police entered the building. Monis and two of the hostages were killed.

Was this Terrorism?

The terrorist threat level in Australia had been raised to high in September following a series of police raids in Brisbane and Sydney. Reports at the time indicated that those arrested in Sydney were planning to abduct a random member of the public and behead them in Martin Place.

Monis himself seems to have seen his actions as linked to ISIL and the call for jihadist attacks; but he was not currently on the Australian watchlist, and does not seem to have had any direct contact with ISIL; he even had to request one of their flags amongst his very small list of demands. While he does not appear to be connected to any group, he was trying to gain publicity for a cause. It was not accidental I am sure that he chose a target that was in full view of Channel 7's Sydney office.

After the fact, the designation as a terrorist incident becomes a legal and financial issue.

On January 5th 2015 the Sydney Morning Herald reported: Sydney retailers whose earnings were slashed by up to 70 per cent during the Martin Place siege face smaller insurance payouts if the siege is deemed a terrorism event, because a government body will step in to curb insurers' losses.

Lessons for Security in NZ

The Martin place siege; the attack on Canada's parliament in October; and the January attack on the offices of a French satirical magazine, all took place in societies like our own by people who espouse jihadist ideologies. So called 'Lone Wolf' actions are difficult to predict as they may not attract the attention of Police and Intelligence services.

During this period New Zealand became a member of the UN Security Council, discussed sending troops to fight ISIL, and raised its terrorist threat level while the government extended the surveillance powers to combat potential threats. The Prime Minister said at that time that there was a heightened threat because of February's Cricket World Cup. And it has been revealed 40 people are being monitored in New Zealand for their involvement in terrorism-associated activity.

The question asked above – "Terrorism or not" is of less relevance when we consider the need to defend against such an incident – the attack on the Work and Income office in Ashburton on August 31 was not terrorism, but had the same deadly consequences. Most 'active shooter' incidents are the result of the psychology of the shooter rather than political or religious motivations.

Security professionals at all levels in New Zealand need to be aware of these potential threats and be able to communicate the risk to their clients, and to provide mitigation strategies. We all need to know our role, and how we interact with the Law Enforcement, Intelligence and Anti-Terrorism communities.

Front line security officers need to know what to do; but as we are not armed we cannot train to respond like Kevin Vickers, Canada's parliamentary Sergeant-at-Arms, who brought that incident to an end with three shots.

Trained officers can provide valuable eyes and ears at all times, be alert to suspicious behaviour, and be able to react appropriately. Response options may be limited to 'RUN/HIDE/FIGHT'; but these need to be clearly communicated to ALL staff and practised regularly if you are protecting a potential target. This could be anywhere where people gather such as:

- Shopping Malls (Nairobi)
- Schools (Columbine, Peshawar)
- Transport systems (London, Madrid)
- Hotels (Mumbai)
- Government buildings (Ottawa)
- Cinemas (Aurora, "The Interview" threats)
- Bars/Nightclubs (Bali)
- Media (Paris)

Or just that quiet little inner city coffee bar you call into for refreshment while you are doing the Christmas shopping.

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Secom Guardall takes fail-safe to a new level

For Secom Guardall, the Auckland-based security installation and monitoring leader, providing security solutions runs in the veins

Specialising in CCTV, access control and alarm monitoring and management, the company combines a unique blend of local know how and national distribution with the backing of an international network of offices in 13 countries and annual revenues of NZ\$9 billion.

The result of an acquisition by Japanese security pioneer Secom of long-time local firm Guardall, Secom Guardall is part of a global market share leader employing over 50,000 staff worldwide and servicing two million customers. Putting it succinctly, Marek Pulawski, the company's project design and management specialist, states, "Secom gave us wings, and access to technology that's truly global."

Known for their work in large sites in the banking, commercial and retail sectors, their clients include some of the biggest names in their industries, and their extensive sub-contractor network ensures nationwide coverage.



Secom Guardall's, Marek Pulawski

"We consider ourselves the leaders in what we do," says Marek, referring to the company's unique knowledge of the logistical aspects of managing major clients.

More recently, Secom Guardall has diversified into new client sectors, such as factories and storages. "We also specialise in things not normally available on the market," comments Marek. One such area is in remote applications, where the company provides non-wired security solutions to remote agricultural and construction projects.

Completed only in August of last year, Secom Guardall operates the only currently certified A1 monitoring centre in New Zealand – the highest grade possible. "It took us six months to build it," recalls

Marek, who managed the project. The centre represents a stunning upgrade from the company's previous B Grade centre, which had outgrown its lodgings.

Having started his career as a telecommunications electronic engineer in Poland, Marek became a technical adviser prior to moving to New Zealand almost 15 years ago. Since then he had worked for a range of well-known companies within the security industry both here and in Australia. Since joining Secom Guardall, he has worked from the bottom up before finding his calling in project design and management.

According to Marek, his own career trajectory is not dissimilar to that of any other of his Secom Guardall colleagues.

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With the company's senior management each having had 25 to 40 years in the industry, they have all commenced their careers, as Marek puts it, "on the tools". Back-to-front knowledge at all levels means several layers of quality checking. He explains, "You don't find that a job is finished and all of a sudden someone says 'Oops, I missed something!'"

In terms of work process and communications efficiency, Marek sees positive parallels between his employer and a military organisation. Their technicians' technical product knowledge is such that they could work on units with their eyes closed, which, he recalls rather dryly, "was impressive to some customers."

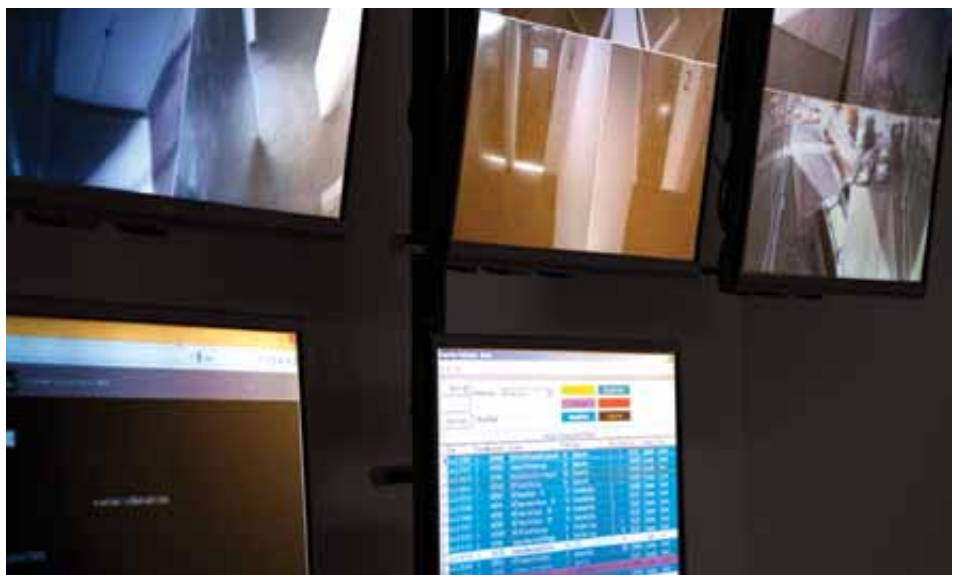
Marek observes that there are many security companies in the marketplace who are struggling with information technology, commenting that they "don't have adequate competency and knowledge of the IP systems they're using and trying to explain to their customers." By contrast, he comments that Secom Guardall is the only provider around that can service most IP protocols. He is quick to point out that Secom Guardall's technicians "know the system in such a way that nobody else can deliver."

And it is this depth of knowledge that is keeping Secom Guardall at the very forefront of what it does.

Secom Guardall's state-of-the-art monitoring centre

For Project Manager, Marek Pulawski, the building of Secom Guardall's A1 monitoring centre was a labour of love. The impenetrable result of painstaking research and design, the centre combines audaciously big out-of-the-box thinking with attention to the most minute of details.

I was fortunate enough to be afforded a rare – and heavily escorted – opportunity to visit the monitoring centre to see for myself how it feels to spend time in a state-of-the-art room with no windows and all the security features that money can buy.



And it is this depth of knowledge that is keeping Secom Guardall at the very forefront of what it does

The centre is encased in steel caging and protected on all sides by composite walls attached with a special epoxy, which are able to withstand the force of a car ramming it at 60 km per hour. A cage was even constructed around the centre's sewerage pipe at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars. All security, automation, IT and programming aspects of the project were completed in-house.

An Inner Range system manages access to the centre, building intelligence and power control. Once inside, each of the

steel doors in and out of the centre's only mantrap access weighs a massive 250kg. "You can bomb it, you can attack it, you can force it, but you can't get in," explains Marek, "it's pretty much a bomb shelter."

Feeling about as secure as one could possibly be, Secom Guardall's operators inside the centre get their ticket only after an extensive process of background checking, verification and vetting.

Its server room is fully fire proof with full power backup, and fibre-based communications supported by a range of ISPs. "Everything is doubled so that we have two of everything in case of failures." A dead man system monitors physical movement within the centre, raising alarm if it senses no movement within a programmed timeframe.

The centre is fully automated, including automated air conditioning and temperature control, air extraction, email and computer shut down responses to bomb, fire, riot and holdup incidents. "We removed people from the decision chain," he explains; "a machine is not going to think twice."

"If something happens, we need to get back to operating within five minutes." And if this is not possible, data is automatically redirected to one of Secom Guardall's A1 monitoring centres in Australia to ensure operational continuity. Redirection can also be initiated "at the touch of a button" on a mobile phone from anywhere outside the centre. "This is the luxury of having built it in 2014," explains Marek, "because any earlier and the technology wouldn't have been available."

It's this type of big thinking and attention to the smallest contingent details that allows Secom Guardall to take fail-safe to a new level.



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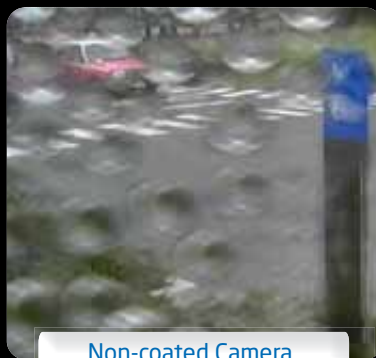
Visibility is maintained due to droplet prevention coating.

Advanced coating technology

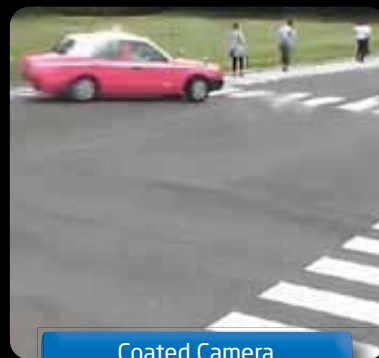
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Coated Camera

If you train, you can gain

With 1,690 trainees completing their mandatory training in the 2014 calendar year, Lance Riesterer, GM Specialist Trades and Business, The Skills Organisation, says the start of a new year is a good time to note other benefits to upskilling security staff.

“Apart from the latest mandatory requirements business attitudes are changing when it comes to hiring private security. Awareness of training and certification levels is affecting the type of guards being requested. Consumers want to know they are getting top quality, trained staff and they want to see proof of this.

“Upskilling your team will increase your responsiveness to tenders. By having the ability to offer quality, skilled and certified staff you set yourself apart from other contenders for business.



“You’re also offering your staff something tangible they can keep throughout their careers as proof of their skills,” he says.

Andy Gollings, CEO – Red Badge Group agrees with the benefits of investing in staff training.

“You can’t deliver quality service unless you have an engaged team. Having the team trained, giving them a pathway in this career, helping them to gain competencies and certified qualifications – it’s key for them becoming invested in what they do for a career.

“When our team is interested and happy in what they are doing, they demonstrate this out on the job. Our focus at Red Badge is to find ways of engaging with crowds attending a variety of events ranging from younger crowds attending New Year’s Eve festivals from Wanaka to Gisborne (such as Mt Maunganui New Year’s Eve) to international cricket supporters to summer concert goers attending the Rolling Stones, Foo Fighters or the Eagles.

“For example at the Mt Maunganui New Year’s Eve event our team worked with local contractors and event organisers and the result was a decrease in the number of major incidents from previous years.

“For me, this is where the training benefits business. The Red Badge team can adapt to any event environment, and has an ability to connect with our customers ensuring a great experience for everyone involved.”

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Electronic Surveillance – out of sight, out of mind... but still in earshot

Following the spectacular mass surveillance revelations in the lead up to last year's national elections - and the failure of these revelations to gain traction – the issue of internet and electronic surveillance appears to have fallen off our collective radar. But while the election may now be a distant pre-festive season memory, the reality is that the threats to our privacy and livelihoods posed by illicit surveillance haven't gone away.

New Zealand Security Magazine recently caught up with three experts from across the electronic surveillance space, to get an update on the surveillance threat landscape.

Our experts include Dr John Farnsworth, Internet Surveillance Specialist from the University of Otago's Department Media, Film and Communication; Private Investigator Daniel Toresen, Director of specialist corporate investigations firm Thompson & Toresen; and Des Hope, TSCM Specialist and Managing Director at Auckland-based Pacific Sunrise Limited.

NZSM: Should New Zealanders be concerned about their privacy and illicit surveillance?

The Academic: According to Dr Farnsworth, New Zealanders need to be deeply concerned about their privacy and

their rights. "We are at the beginning, not the end, of a surveillance society with tools so extensive it's hard for most of us to grasp," he warns. "This is not simply in terms of state surveillance – the GCSB and other bodies – but with corporate bodies. And this is not just within New Zealand but globally."

We have reason to be particularly concerned, he warns, with our links to the Five Eyes network. "This invites foreign intrusion because our government feeds and has access to global surveillance data," he says, clarifying that 'foreign' surveillance also includes corporate and commercial surveillance.

The Professionals: Des Hope agrees with his academic colleague on this point. "If you're going global," he cautions, "you can be sure that the foreign party will target you."

"Overseas governments, such as the US and China, use information for geopolitical reasons and for the advancement of their countries' businesses, he observes, citing Langley and the Pudong surveillance centre as prominent examples. "There are unscrupulous people about," he continues, "and to think that they are not operating in New Zealand is to put your head in the sand."

Unsurprisingly, Daniel Torsen's views are not wildly inconsistent. He sees real

risk in overseas parties, including card swipers, anonymous and issues motivated individuals/groups, such as animal activists, gaining information. "Imagine if someone got into your emails?" he asks. "Things said in private becoming public can be devastating for a company." Compounding the risk, he adds, is that "people aren't deleting things anymore," so the amount of information on offer to attackers are greater than ever.

NZSM: How conscious are New Zealanders of illicit surveillance? Are we now more or less aware than in the past?

The Academic: Most individuals, it appears, have little idea of how information is collected about them, says Dr Farnsworth, whether via Facebook, Google or someone else, and even less an idea of what uses their information is put to.

One reason for this is that people have little idea of just how powerful algorithms are in detecting patterns of usage and identifying how individuals and consumers behave. "This is why, for example, when we surf the internet, we keep hitting advertisements related to previous searches we've made on Amazon or other sites." And, he says, we are always seduced into believing this is either beneficial or harmless.



Dr John Farnsworth, Internet Surveillance Specialist from the University of Otago



Daniel Toresen, Private Investigator



Des Hope, Managing Director of Auckland-based Pacific Sunrise Limited

The Professionals: In Daniel's view, there is low interest among the public on what the Government is doing in terms of electronic surveillance. People tend to assume that Wellington is "doing the right thing", and they tend to glaze over when confronted with the topic. But, he warns, privacy is being eroded rapidly, and people are increasingly accepting and lax in relation to it. "People are more aware, but less interested, as it's hard to keep up with the increasing technological complexity of the issue."

Des is in agreement with his counterparts on this issue. People understand that surveillance exists, he says, "but they seem to think in the main that it's something that happens in North America and Europe but not here."

There is a natural inclination, he suggests, to assume that businesses wouldn't engage in that sort of activity, but the fact remains that some are drawn to the potential gains of being a "fly on the wall". Although a company's senior management would likely avoid the temptation, there may be rogue elements within an organisation that wouldn't. Such information may make its way up the management chain with the caveat "You don't want to know where this information comes from, but..."

NZSM: How has surveillance technology and/or the threat environment changed over the past 12 months?

The Academic: According to Dr Farnsworth, the landscape is continually changing, and in ways that are not commonly revealed. "Existing technologies such as Xkeyscore continue to threaten our security whilst, at the same time, we have little idea about what new forms of surveillance have been developed." Edward Snowden's data releases have given us startling insights into "how much has been developed about which no one had any idea."

"There has been, and will be, no guarantee internationally that this has changed or that new surveillance mechanisms have stopped being developed," he says. On the contrary, he points out that there is extensive evidence that new, subtler recognition and simulation software is becoming available.

The Professionals: Des points to the major changes that have occurred in the last five years in terms of the surveillance of mobile phones. "Up until 18 months

ago, the only people who could tap into them were service providers or government," he says, but this has changed. Now anyone can download software into the operating system of another person's phone 'as they speak'. "I can then call your phone and use it to make calls, track you to within three metres (in a city), enliven the microphone and hear anything within an eight metre radius of the phone."

And the scary part is that such software remains undetectable to service providers and to most forensics.

NZSM: What are the main reasons why New Zealand businesses are seeking TSCM (Technical Surveillance Counter-Measures) examinations?

This was a question for our electronic surveillance professionals.

According to Daniel, it's a case of weighing up the likelihood of eavesdropping against the potential harm that can come of it. Electronic listening devices, he says, are quite rare to find in boardrooms or businesses, and the chances of such surveillance occurring are negligible. While some companies have protocols dictated by overseas headquarters that require TSCM checks, others get it done as a precaution.

Des likens TSCM work to insurance: "You wouldn't go and buy a Mercedes without a cover note or insurance on it. The chance of sideswiping is minimal, but it does happen."

According to Des, the big turn off to potential TSCM customers in New Zealand is price. "But you are paying for experience and very, very sophisticated equipment," he states. "There is a hell of a lot of loose talk out there and TSCM eliminates one area."

NZSM: How do you see the landscape evolving over the next 12 months?

The Academic: According to Dr Farnsworth, there will be more local disputes around privacy and surveillance, and indeed a necessity for it. "There needs to be more political scrutiny and accountability," he says, "...but there will be more, largely invisible, surveillance unless brave journalists such as Nicky Hager, bring this to light."

The Professionals: Systems are built by people, Daniel reminds us, "and as such it will be impossible to prevent people hacking into systems." Email breaches will continue, and damage to companies will continue to range from embarrassment to large sums of money being stolen. He also points to the increasing sophistication of cyber crime, and the fact that chasing essentially nomadic cyber criminals across multiple international jurisdictions will continue to be a near impossible endeavour.

He offers a few simple tips. "Have your network looked at by a computer security professional to ensure there are no gaping holes in your security," he advises, and "ensure staff are security aware and have been briefed on good password security habits." Following basic security precautions, such as having passwords regularly changed and having good protocols around that, can make all the difference.

We'll see more and more cell phone attacks, according to Des Hope, and the means of attack will become easier and more sophisticated. Tele-controlled eavesdropping devices that can be turned on and off remotely, such a GSM bugs, have been around for about three years, but are becoming increasingly affordable.

"People are just damned careless in the handling of information and documentation," observes Des. Again, simple security measures like following clean desk policies and ensuring that contractors are supervised at all times in the workplace can protect against privileged information being reproduced or removed.

Despite the issue of surveillance being relegated to the political scrap heap during 2014's national elections, our expert panel is in agreement that we should be taking the issue far more seriously than we do. We do not fear, it seems, what we can't see, and in terms of surveillance it really does appear that we have developed an unnatural state of non-fear in relation to the unknown.

For a nation that is characteristically skeptical about a whole range of things, it is strange that our individual and collective survival instincts fail to register either mass government or targeted commercial electronic surveillance as a threat.

A little skepticism is surely not a bad thing.

[Look out for the Medianz issue on surveillance coming out this month. It includes a long piece by Nicky Hager and a variety of pieces by local and international experts on privacy, surveillance, copyright, government and corporate surveillance. <https://medianz.otago.ac.nz/medianz/>]

Cyber-attacks set to affect business in 2015

As recent high profile events have shown, one of the major areas of security concern today for both business and the individual is the cyber threat.

Recent research commissioned by Vodafone has identified that 56 percent of New Zealand businesses experience IT security attacks at least once a year. Yet nearly half of all companies surveyed (45 percent) felt their business did not have adequate tools and policies in place to prevent or mitigate cyber threats.

The research found that primary industries (construction, trades services, agriculture, forestry and fisheries) have the poorest understanding of cyber security threats and are the least prepared.

Vodafone's Head of Security, Colin James says: "The statistics are pretty alarming across the board but for the primary industries, it's particularly concerning when you consider the huge importance of the sector to the New Zealand economy."

Globally, Vodafone sees around 65 billion cyber-attack indicators against its own infrastructure per month, but James says the company is also seeing a marked increase in the number of attacks within New Zealand.

"Geographical isolation isn't a safety net against threats. Gone are the days when all you needed was a firewall or virus scan to secure your company's private data. Threats are becoming more sinister and advanced in their capability; the players are the same, but the tools they have access to have evolved astronomically."

Rapid increases in mobility also mean businesses must now grapple with securing information outside of the business environment. 83 percent of lost smart-phones in 2014 resulted in compromised business data, but despite these statistics, six out of ten companies have no plans to increase their investment in IT security.

"Business leaders and IT managers need to re-evaluate where information is sitting these days; who has access to it and what security policies they have in place to protect against and prevent attack," adds James.

The future for true cyber security lies with the vigilance of IT decision-makers (to ensure their systems are capable), and network providers to build more intelligent infrastructure capable of acting on threats to protect not only an individual user, but the overall integrity of the network.

James continues: "We need to ensure information is protected, regardless of where it resides. Intelligent networks operate by understanding what devices are connected to it, who is using those devices, who and what they're communicating with and what they're talking about."

Vodafone
research
describes
understanding
of cyber threats
by businesses
as alarming

"Without this intricate knowledge, businesses run the risk of creating chinks in their armour and opening themselves up for attack."

Another global survey of more than 3,400 members of leading IT and audit association ISACA shows that close to half (46 percent) of respondents expect their organisation to face a cyber-attack in 2015. Locally, in Australasia, respondents feel that attack is even more likely with 61 percent expecting a cyber-attack this year. This is concerning, since less than half of ANZ IT professionals (43 percent)

say they are prepared, likely due to a global shortage of skilled cyber-security personnel.

Alarming, more than 85 percent of Australian and New Zealand members surveyed believe there is a shortage of skilled cyber-security professionals, and similarly 85 percent of ISACA's local survey respondents whose businesses will be hiring cyber-security professionals in 2015 say it will be difficult to find skilled candidates.

"Data breaches at a series of well-known retailers in 2014 made the issue of data security highly visible to consumers and highlighted the struggles that companies face in keeping data safe. Given the latest news this week of a large Australian travel insurance company being hacked, we expect the problem is set to increase. Local companies and government entities must be prepared to address issue of cyber-security head on and ensure their organisations are ready to respond swiftly if attacked," stated Garry Barnes, ISACA international vice president and governance advisory practice lead at Vital Interacts, based in Sydney.

"ISACA supports increased discussion and activity to address escalating high-profile cyber-attacks on organisations worldwide," said Robert E Stroud, CGEIT, CRISC, international president of ISACA and vice president of strategy and innovation at CA Technologies. "As government leaders call for action, we hope they take a clear and straightforward approach, working in close coordination with industry. Cyber-security is everyone's business, and creating a workforce trained to prevent and respond to today's sophisticated attacks is a critical priority."

Globally, ISACA's survey shows that more than three-quarters of respondents support US President Barack Obama's proposed 30 Day Breach Notification Law as discussed in the State of the Union Address.

Finding and retaining skilled cyber-security employees is a key challenge, with only 43 percent of ANZ IT professionals

stating they feel the organisation would be prepared to fend off a sophisticated attack. When asked about hiring entry-level cyber-security candidates, 53 percent said it is difficult to identify who has an adequate level of skills and knowledge.

“As the world grapples simultaneously with escalating cyber-attacks and a growing skills shortage, ISACA believes that it is absolutely essential to develop and train a robust cyber-security workforce. That is why we launched the Cyber-security Nexus (CSX) in 2014. We take very seriously our role in addressing the skills gap through skills-based credentials, training, guidance and mentoring programs,” said Barnes.

When recruiting skilled staff, companies must have a realistic understanding of what they can do well and what they cannot in cyber-security. CIOs, CISOs and security leaders must revisit the organisational structure and skills of their security teams and IT staffs that have any responsibility for securing information assets. This analysis involves a deep review of what currently are or can be core competencies for the organisation, and where they might need help from outsiders.

Barnes added that the cyber-security plan also needs to be taken off the shelf and reassessed and updated for an organisation and its professionals to be adequately prepared. Security practitioners need to understand the relationship between their organisation, its people, its IT assets and the kinds of adversaries and threats they are facing. It is only through this analysis can the right cyber-security program be designed and implemented where budget, skills, intensity and performance all are balanced at the appropriate levels.

In late 2014, ISACA launched the Cyber-security Fundamentals Certificate, designed for university students and recent graduates, entry-level security professionals and those seeking a career change. The certificate addresses the global skills shortage by helping organisations quickly identify candidates with a foundational level of cyber-security knowledge, while helping the most qualified job seekers distinguish themselves. The association has more than 200 chapters worldwide.

For businesses cyber security is one of the many areas of risk that should be overseen by the board of directors, but is often misunderstood. Directors are not expected to be experts in this area so often rely upon management and external parties for information and advice. In saying this, this is not an excuse for complacency.

At a minimum a board should have a high-level understanding of the company's cyber risks, the management of these risks and the company's cyber incident response plan. Boards must be clear on the information they require to understand what is needed to make decisions.

Directors need to re-evaluate risks against the threat vector. Organisations that had previously completed risk assessments that minimised or discounted cyber risk should revisit these assessments against current cyber threat trends. Organisations need to accelerate this process and not wait for evidence of a breach, they need to pre-empt an inevitable breach investigation.

Directors should also understand how companies run their process for identifying and mitigating the most current risks. Management should also be able to explain to the board how it selects, manages and monitors third parties and their access to data.

As part of reporting, boards should be provided with meaningful, data-driven metrics that demonstrate both performance and effectiveness of a cyber-response plan. This means performance changes can be correlated with key events to gain an understanding about the impact of technology investments, headcount and policy decisions



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Great Aspirations: No smokescreens in Xtralis growth

According to figures in the latest IHS Technology report, The World Market for Fire Detection and Suppression Products, Xtralis has recorded the largest market share growth in the global fire detector market for the 8th year running. New Zealand Security Magazine sat down with Dr Peter Meilke, Xtralis' VP Applications Engineering, Solutions and Competition, to look behind the figures and get a sense of what's in store for the fastest moving player in the industry.

Between 2006 and 2013, Xtralis rose from 7th to 4th largest supplier of fire detectors globally with a 6.3% global market share, up from 5% in 2006. Xtralis continues to enjoy a significant lead in the aspirating smoke detection (ASD) category with an estimated 61.3% market share, up over 15% from 2006. And this doesn't include China, where Xtralis believes its market share to exceed 80% from sales of its VESDA, ICAM, and FMST ASD products.

"ASD is the fastest growing segment in the fire detector market by a mile," says Peter. The market, he explains, is currently characterised by the fact that "competition is entering, which is healthy, because our share is growing; and the market itself is growing."

Diversification-driven growth

"In 2000, the market was constituted by one segment, telcos and data centres," Peter explains. With the inherent risk of having all their eggs in one basket, Xtralis diversified, growing awareness in other markets, such as cold storage, heritage



and government, and other areas. More recently, general office, hospital, retail and hospitality have been identified as new areas for growth.

"We recognised at the time that our dependence on that sole segment was a risk," Peter continues. So Xtralis took a very deliberate strategic decision to diversify and drive ASD awareness into new markets. That effort over the last decade or so has paid off.

According to Peter, the market growth reflects the fact that ASD is being recognised for its now widely lauded attributes beyond just sensitivity, such as flexibility, robustness, ease of maintenance, immunity to false alarms,

and its ability to fit into business processes. The capex of ASD is also highly attractive, driven by the big savings derived by nuisance alarm immunity and ease of maintenance.

Open-area Smoke Imaging Detection

Beyond ASD, the beam detector market has been another sector of impressive growth. Peter points out that Xtralis' OSID (Open-area Smoke Imaging Detection) growth rate is "multiples" of the beam market generally.

"OSID is taking market share at a ferocious rate, in part because in many cases, beam detectors are the detectors of last resort, purchased by businesses in



order to meet compliance requirements.” But beams are not reliable, he explains, “because of issues with nuisance alarms caused by a range of environmental factors, such as building movement, spiders, birds, advertising banners, etc.”

“The beam detector market is a bit smaller than what it could be if it was more reliable, and that’s where OSID comes in.”

The standout advantage of OSID is that it’s almost completely immune to nuisance alarm sources, and this is attracting businesses that would otherwise prefer to have nothing over having a nuisance alarm-riddled product. “As such, we’re taking a share from the other competition in that space, which is nothing”, says Peter. “Nothing is where you argue loudly and long enough with the local authority to say the nuisance alarm problem is going to be greater than the risk of having nothing. And when you’re competing with nothing, the nothing market is quite large.”

Eliminating nuisance alarms

The problematic prevalence of nuisance alarms has emerged as a major issue in fire safety. According to Peter, there are a couple of factors driving nuisance alarms and moves to minimise them.

Firstly, some jurisdictions, such as the US, remain suppression (most commonly sprinklers) rather than detection driven, but this is changing. When people have to install detectors they are cost conscious and this leads to deployment of the cheapest and those most likely to produce nuisance alarms.

Secondly, the dilution of public resources resulting from the prevalence of nuisance alarms is causing a movement towards minimising them. “Fire chiefs

are saying that the risk of non-response is outweighed by the restoration of the effectiveness of the capability we have,” Peter explains. Authorities are saying they are so diluted attending nuisance alarms, “that the cost of response and response capability is going up and coming down respectively.”

ASD, by contrast, provides very early warning, which means time to react and multiple levels of alarms, which significantly reduces the possibility of nuisance alarms. “So before you declare an alarm and have trucks and firemen turning up”, says Peter, “you can actually declare a local alarm and allow investigation and mitigation of any threat if it proves to be true.”

More than just smoke detection

Another big area of growth for Xtralis has been in its ECO products, which are extensions to the VESDA and ICAM ASD systems. VESDA ECO and ICAM ECO can be used to detect smoke as well as hazardous or combustible gases that pose unseen threats. “These systems give you ability to do more with your installed system,” Peter explains. Adding gas detection to smoke detection, for example, provides additional information, such as access to environmental monitoring budgets, multiplying the utility of the system.

Similarly, the VESDA-E Analytics module adds additional functionality to the system at or after installation “Our dust trace analytics,” says Peter, “means that your occasionally grudge purchase of a fire system can now at least provide you with some valued added information in terms of environmental monitoring and air quality assessment.”

Pinpointing the location of smoke

According to Peter, the other big growth area for Xtralis will be VESDA-E VEA. “What this product provides is “addressability”, which is something that eludes other aspirating systems.” Addressability is the ability to provide information on exactly where the fire is, which is particularly applicable to segments such as healthcare, aged care, residential occupancies, office buildings and hotels, which require positional accuracy.

In large open spaces or even small spaces with high criticality, users of traditional spot detectors have two options, suggests Peter, “you can either use more product or don’t care about the exact location of the smoke.” The other key consideration, Peter explains, is that smoke goes where the wind blows, “so it’s a pretty big call to suggest that you can look at which spot detector went into alarm and then determine exactly where the smoke is coming from.” The ability of the VESDA-E VEA in overcoming these problems has underpinned its success.

Just the beginning

Having moved from being the 7th largest supplier of fire detectors in the world to the 4th, Xtralis is now only behind the likes of big players Honeywell, Siemens

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and UTC. But, according to Peter, this is no reason for taking a breath and lowering the intensity. “We will continue to exploit the data rich capability of VESDA, he asserts, “and will introduce ASD to new markets.”

One market where Xtralis has found particularly impressive success is China, where VESDA is the market-leading brand. Additionally, Xtralis’ acquisition of FMST, has given it a range of detectors

made exclusively for the China market and for the specific requirements of Chinese codes. Xtralis calculates its market share in China to be in excess of 80%.

“Our strategic decisions in the past have been vindicated in that ASD is now the highest growth component of the smoke detection area,” observes Peter. ASD has gone, as he explains, from being a niche product to a truly mainstream one. “We started with a neophyte technology, and

innovation combined with understanding market needs and application needs which has been our driving force.”

So, with what appears to be a winning long-term formula, what next for Xtralis and its innovative ways? “We always have technologies in progress but don’t always herald their approach,” offered Peter, playing his cards close to his chest. And without giving anything away, he hinted, “Some of these are disruptive.”

Xtralis & City of London Police Innovate to put Additional Eyes on the Street

Live Video Feeds at Vehicle and Officer Levels Provide Real-Time Situational Awareness

Xtralis today announced they are working in cooperation with the London City Police in exploring technology solutions that will allow live transmission of video and audio from central monitoring locations of police vehicles and officer-worn vests so that tactical decisions can be made more quickly and efficiently to respond to threats around London.

Traditionally, police officers have used radios to verbally relay situational intelligence. With the new Xtralis technology available, police central stations can view live video and audio at the incident scene to better assess situations and more efficiently deploy appropriate assistance.

“Xtralis approached the City of London Police to understand how we operate and how they could help our mission. Xtralis was quick to demonstrate a promising solution that could provide us live video and audio feeds from vehicles and officer-worn vests direct to our central monitoring stations,” commented Adrian Leppard, Commissioner of the City of London Police. “Having more eyes on developing situations allows for better decisions and quicker & more efficient response, so we’re happy to explore and work with Xtralis to perfect these solutions for the City of London,” added Commissioner Leppard.



“Technology can be the officer’s best friend,” said City of London Police Commissioner. “The general public, and the police officers they serve, benefit when there are many eyes on a potential situation or actual crime. Xtralis live monitoring solutions can in a remote location help to assist officers at an incident scene and provide appropriate assistance as needed. We’re happy to explore further with Xtralis to advance these solutions, as they will put more eyes on the street,” commented the Commissioner.

“We’re honoured that the City of London is working with Xtralis to partner

on exploring the advanced technology solutions for live monitoring of police response and protection,” commented Samir Samhouri CEO and Chairman for Xtralis. “The Dubai Police and Spanish National Police have already adopted our live streaming video technology, and we are proud of that. But, London is a city of global significance. We have a real opportunity here to partner with the best to deliver the best in safety & security,” added Mr. Samhouri.

To learn more about Xtralis solutions for first responders, visit www.xtralis.com/CC.

C4 Employment Plus

The introduction of mandatory training for those holding certificates of approval has created barriers to entry into security employment for many.

In a sector that is experiencing rapid growth and increased requirements for guard numbers, companies are struggling to find staff to fill vacant positions. Traditionally Work and Income NZ clients have often filled these positions but mandatory training requirements have now made this more difficult. Coupled with this is the fact that Work and Income clients who have never worked in the industry are often unprepared for the realities of security work leading to poor retention rates and increased turnover. In conjunction with Work and Income NZ, C4 Group have developed the C4 Employment Plus programme consisting of an initial 3 day course preparing potential security staff to enter the industry with Certificates of Approval, First Aid, Fire and the mandatory training modules. As C4 uses an integrated assessment model, evidence is also collected towards other unit standards within the National Certificate in Security Level 2 programme.

The industry response to this programme nationally has been overwhelming with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place with most of the major companies as well as with many smaller companies. As part of the MOU employers must commit to registering the new recruits on a Training Agreement with the Skills Organisation (Skills) and releasing the guards for a further 2 days of face to face training over the following three months. The full Level 2 qualification is achieved within a 5 month time-frame and in conjunction with Skills, C4 will be able to assist trainees to complete their NCEA Level 2 and also provide literacy and numeracy support to those requiring the same. The initial programme is free to employers.

C4 sees the ongoing support for graduates of this programme as the key to improving retention as well as providing a pathway for individuals to progress within the industry. We have opened up the programme to anyone who is considering a career in security and classes nationally are advertised on our website.

C4 acknowledges the support of Work and Income NZ, the PSPLA and the Skills Organisation as well as all of the companies and trainees who have embraced this programme. We see this as an exciting innovation which will support the sector by addressing specific needs of both companies and those looking to work within the security industry.



For further information regarding this programme please go to our website www.c4group.co.nz or phone us on 09 5891815.



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Security and performance:

AVG presses fast forward on remote control

Last December, AVG Technologies' Regional Spokesperson and Security Advisor, Michael McKinnon, made his first trip to New Zealand to share his insight into what is shaping up for AVG in 2015. With some smart new consumer offerings to secure our interconnected lives and SME solutions tackling the cloud and the internet of things, it's shaping up to be a big year for the online security company.

Founded in Amsterdam almost 25 years ago, AVG has over 188 million active users of its internet security, performance optimization, personal privacy and identity protection products and services.

Their extensive work in cyber security specialising in children and teenagers is well known, with the Digital Diaries series delivering insightful research into the real world effects of technology on



Michael McKinnon, Regional Spokesperson and Security Advisor, AVG Technologies

childhood. They also boast the number one anti virus app in the Google Play store for android.

Consumer side: the PC is not dead

Debunking the nihilism around the future of desktop computing, Michael's first task in addressing his Auckland audience was to pronounce the PC 'alive and well'. According to him, there's been no shift away from desktop to mobile devices, but rather a shift from desktop to mobile and tablet and the myriad devices that we now plug into.

"It's not that people aren't using their PCs anymore," he explains, "if anything they're holding onto their PCs for longer and their short term spend has been diverted to these other devices." When we need to sit down and get traditional work done with a keyboard and reasonably sized monitor, the desktop computer is what we invariably still turn to.

This view of our use of computing as increasingly diversified across a range of devices seems to have informed a new AVG offering due to be released this month. Launched at the Mobile World Congress this year in the US, AVG Zen promises a more holistic approach to managing security and data.

"You've got your PC, you've got your tablet and your mobile," explains Michael, "and AVG Zen provides a platform for managing security across all your devices." Zen will feature, among other things, a mobile app that you can use to monitor your PC's security.

And they've taken it one step further. "Not all of us are tech savvy, and not all of us are security savvy," says Michael. Take one's grandparents – or for that matter parents – for instance. With AVG's new product, "Grandma's PC can be connected to your Zen network so you can then manage what's happening on her

PC; so if a virus pops up on her PC it will notify you and you can resolve it.”

“So what we’re modeling is what is really happening,” he continues. “There are so many people in society who are disadvantaged when it comes to technological knowledge and the ability to keep themselves secure, and it means we’re often relying on someone else to do this for us.”

While the above reflects AVG’s impressive pedigree in relation to security, they’ve also put a good deal of work into adding value to Android users in relation to performance.

“One of the real killers has been battery life, with apps that are running in the background,” says Michael. In a recent report, AVS collected information from over one million android devices globally and identified the top draining apps in different regions. Those draining most power, it found, tend to be social media apps. “Apps such as Facebook and Instagram are using most of the resources on mobile devices,” he observes, both in terms of the space that these apps take up, as well as battery use.

Business side: the rise of Managed Service Providers

According to Michael, we are witnessing an evolution in how IT services, such as systems integrators, outsourced systems administrators, are working. Software and services are increasingly subscription based and requiring ongoing involvement. “Everything is connecting to the internet,” he explains, “so you need skills and abilities in an organisation to service that, and that’s why we’re seeing [the growth of outsourced] Managed Service Providers (MSPs).”

Michael notes that MSPs in the US are now being asked to monitor newly networked services such as elevators and CCTV systems. “Elevator companies just want to provide equipment,” he observes, “Elevator networks now talk to networks so managed service providers can now manage them.”

And, unsurprisingly, given the proliferation of devices that are now networked and can therefore now be managed by them, MSP businesses are starting to specialise within certain industries, such as healthcare and banking, where specialist knowledge is increasingly needed.

Released in October last year, AVG’s Managed Workplace provides a remote monitoring and management tool for MSPs. It’s a platform that scales from SMEs up to large organisations, and it’s now into its ninth version.

“What we’re providing to our MSPs,” Michael continues, “is a platform that essentially allows them to stay in their offices and work remotely to manage their client’s networks.” This not only saves on transport costs and time, but MSPs can also be more responsive when something breaks. Remote control also means that MSPs can now do three things at once, and be double and triple billing their time.

“What we’ve started to see in the more mature Managed Service Providers is that we’re moving into automation,” he adds. Through automated and responsive scripting, for example, less system administrators are now needed per server. “We’re building networks now that are almost running themselves.”

Also released in October through AVG’s partnership with Centrify, is a single sign on enterprise technology, which sits under

AVG’s CloudCare brand. This technology provides a solution to the bind businesses find themselves in when an employee signs up to a whole range of cloud service offerings to store documents, such as Dropbox, and then leaves the company.

“What Centrify have done,” explains Michael, “is partner with over 2,500 cloud providers to provide the functionality to sign on so you can link an employee’s log in details with their active directory login, so when they leave you can turn it off.” Makes sense. It can also detect malicious behaviour and block the compromised login straight away.

According to Michael, “Partners can deploy these [solutions] into their customer environments over the network and manage it from a cloud interface.” Mobile apps can then deliver notifications of problems straight to the technician in real time.

AVG CloudCare also provides the functionality to allow businesses to flexibly filter things like access to social media. It can, for example, block Facebook to most staff while allowing access to the few (such as marketing staff) who need it. Or instead of blanket blocking, it can allow access to social media at certain times, such as during lunchtime. It also boasts online backup and remote modules.

These are exciting prospects, and clear examples of how cloud computing and the internet of things are evolving and being harnessed to deliver productivity and security dividends. AVG’s research-based approach to understanding the evolving relationship between technology and the people that use it appears to be providing not only insightful visions of the future but also the solutions to make it a more secure, productive place.



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Proof of professionalism essential for fire industry

The days when you could walk off the street and get on-the-job training within the fire industry are rapidly receding as building owners, clients and councils insist on proof of qualifications and competence.

Recently appointed Competenz Fire Protection Account Manager, John Stevenson, says local authorities are increasingly asking for people with level 3 or 4 qualifications and refusing to recognise independently qualified persons (IQPs) unless they have these.

"A lot of guys who have been doing it for years are realising they need to upskill and that there are benefits from having qualifications," says Stevenson.

Separating out fire protection from being lumped in with the engineering trades within Competenz has been a big step forward in redefining what the industry has to offer. "This has been needed for an awfully long time."

Qualifications for the fire industry cover the full range of sprinkler, fire alarm and passive systems, special hazards systems, gas flood systems, phone systems, deluge systems and passive fire protection.

"Imagine you're applying for a job with a fire alarm company and the boss asks what qualifications you have. If you don't have any and Jo Bloggs comes along with a level 4, who are you going to hire?"

Stevenson says the fact that regulations, standards and legislation relating to fire protection are in the process of being revised and updated is an opportunity to upskill the entire industry.

"MBIE are making some very good changes, and I think we'll find over the next 12 to 18 months, the directions will become more positive and much easier to follow and understand."

Aversion to youth

Stevenson concedes the industry is not attracting the right kind of people, particularly young trainees, despite the growing opportunities, something he suggests will require industry buy-in and a change of attitude.

"What's needed are committed people, prepared to work reasonably hard, because they are extremely well paid. Most alarm technicians are on \$35 - \$40 an hour; most

sprinkler fitters are earning at least \$30 an hour. The guys who are just doing the monthly testing on the fire alarms, are on \$20 to \$25 an hour.

To date fire protection has been a relatively mature person's industry, with the average age of trainees over 25-years, partly because of the element of risk involved and an industry reluctance to employ smart school leavers.

"We're talking about people's lives here...if someone installs a piece of sprinkler pipe in the wrong area or the wrong size with the wrong sprinkler head, it can be disastrous."

The aversion to school leavers can also be attributed to an entrenched perception that they might not put in the hard yards. Perhaps, suggests Stevenson, that attitude needs to change and the industry has expected too much from young people for too long?

"Instead of easing them into it gently, they're just pushing them straight into the coal face and expecting them to produce the same results as someone who's been doing it for 10 or 15 years."



Competenz new Fire Protection Account Manager, John Stevenson

Passive gets priority

A prime example of growing industry inter-dependence is the recent shift requiring all trades to demonstrate knowledge of passive fire protection and including this as a unit standard in trade certificates.

Competenz Fire Protection Training Manager, John Stevenson, says it's essential to raise awareness that passive fire systems are not only a legitimate but essential part of the systems that make up a building.

The trades "have to understand you can't go smacking a sprinkler head with a hammer, because it usually causes problems...and it's probably not a good idea to use a saw underneath a smoke detector...and if you bash a hole in a fire wall you have to patch it up again."

He admits to a careless past when he

was "out there on the tools, bashing a hole in a wall to run a cable through." As a former volunteer fireman he soon came to realise what was at stake.

The careless attitude, he says, is definitely changing and part of his role is to ensure tradies and those seeking fire industry qualifications understand that passive systems need to be worked on in an approved manner "not just simply spraying something into a hole, or slapping something over it."

He says manufacturers provide installation instructions to achieve a specific fire rating, so builders or electricians or plumbers needing to penetrate them with cables and pipes can know "how to build a frame, block it out and place a collar on it."

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More cohesive fire training

The current harmonising of regulations, codes and standards will make fire industry skills and qualification even more transferable and valuable, says John Stevenson, who became Competenz Fire Protection Training Manager in June 2014.

Initially, says Stevenson, some qualifications were looked on “as a little suspect” but the industry is maturing and they’re now more respected and robust, with external training essential to complement in-house company training.

“The training for some companies can be a bit of a mismatch and with others you might not get any training so this is what we’re addressing.”

Things have changed a lot since Stevenson walked in off the street in 1991 to learn on the job with Wormalds. He’s a graduate of the Institution of Fire Engineers, has full fire alarm industry qualifications and passive qualifications, which he helped write.

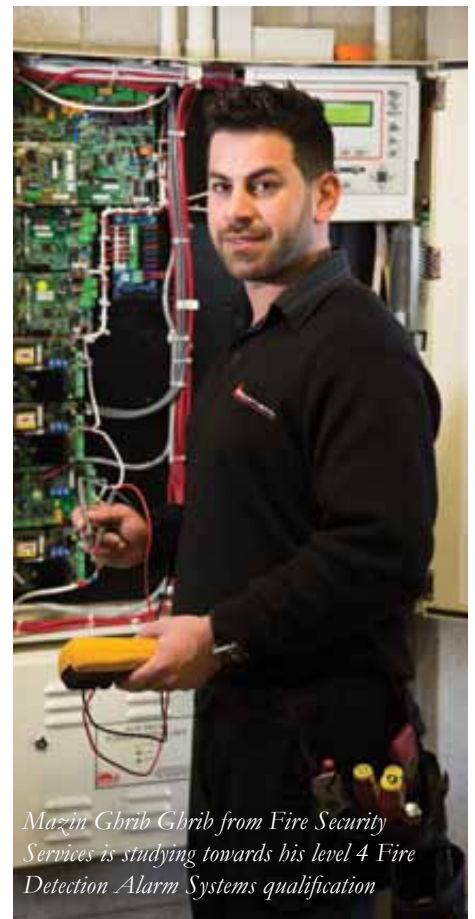
At Competenz, he’s responsible for signing up trainees, marking units for on-the-job and off-job assessments, overseeing support and off-job correspondence from training partner, Firetech.

He says on-job and in-house assessments results in great cost saving not only for trainees but the companies that they work for.

On-the-job assessments are generally for nearly qualified tradespeople into year four of their apprenticeships.

“I’m just asking them why they’ve done it that way, could it have been done differently, pointing out where they’ve done well or where they might be missing some vital component and then explaining what they need to do.”

A hands-on ‘Got A Trade’ level apprenticeship or cadetship can lead to level 4 and 5 qualifications and on to university degrees, for example the University of Canterbury, which can facilitate engineering Masters and PhDs for fire engineers.



Mazin Ghrif Ghrif from Fire Security Services is studying towards his level 4 Fire Detection Alarm Systems qualification

Another obstacle to employing youth is they’re not legally allowed into licenced or casino premises. “You turn up with an 18 year old, and you can’t get them on site.”

A prime example would be casinos where young tradespeople can work in the back of house but not on the gaming floor or the bar areas, where you have to be at least 20-years old.

Stevenson says the legislation includes tradespeople and those who might be there to check fire alarm or smoke detectors. “There’s a bit of a mismatch that needs to be sorted out...It’s not a big issue but it is an issue.”

While Stevenson has been tasked within Competenz to help establish fire industry apprenticeships under the Apprenticeship New Zealand (ANZ) training scheme, he’s found that difficult as many employers would rather take people on for 90 days to see if they’re up to it first.

He suggests the current apprenticeship model isn’t a good match for the fire industry. “You get a young guy in there and an employer will pay him \$15 or \$16 an hour while everyone else is earning \$20 - \$40 without qualifications.”

That sort of inequity will take some time to sort out. “It’s not something you can just suddenly legislate and it’s going to be hunky dory. You have to talk to people, sell the idea and get companies on board then life becomes a lot easier.”

Career path confusion

Despite the growing relevance of the industry reflected in new and revised qualifications and a growing number of situations vacant, fire protection hasn’t done itself any favours in the way it is marketed.

Is the description ‘Fire Alarm Industry’ as enticing as it could be? Stevenson says that’s a challenge he hasn’t given much thought to even though a career path may have an electrical or mechanical focus as the baseline, perhaps installing alarm systems, fire alarm, smoke or sprinkler detection componentry.

And there are other branches of expertise including compliance, consultancy, hazardous goods, inspection, testing training and as Stevenson reiterates, it’s all well paid work.

There are so many different types of systems and fire alarm panel manufacturers used by major players including Wormald, Argus or Chubb who each have their own way of doing things.

“If I got a job with Chubb for example they might throw me a laptop and ask me to go and programme an FP4000, make changes to an AFP2800 and then re-programme this EST3?” With the right industry training, he says, the answers should be “Yeah, not a problem”.

He says its similar to the security industry. “People don’t realise how

complex most systems actually are. A fire alarm isn’t simply a box hanging on the wall, it may involve sprinkler and smoke detection systems, complicated electronics and an awful lot of programming.”

And fire alarm systems can be tied in with building management systems. A prime example is Auckland Casino which has their building management system tied in totally to their fire alarm system and their security system.”

Qualifications are being revamped to reflect this breadth. “FPANZ in particular is trying to get stuck into this... we’re also looking at things like TROQ targeted reviews and developing new qualifications from that,” says Stevenson.

Stevenson says working for an ITO as an account manager has made him more aware of the growing desire for further advancement.

After completing fire detection alarms level 4, many want to go further. “When they start talking about a level 5, I have to tell them there isn’t one yet, although I’ve got a test case underway to make sure it’s achievable.”

Level 5 currently includes management qualifications and a large fire protection component of fire alarm inspection and sprinkler systems through Wintec. Stevenson is hoping to sign up candidates once he’s assessed the feedback from the first student.

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Supercharging the fire industry engine

By Keith Newman

The 40-year old New Zealand Fire Protection Association (NZFPA) is re-inventing itself as a more representative body to inform and shape the wider industry and ensure its concerns are heard at the highest levels.

Rebranding and structural changes began in May 2014 with efforts to broaden membership, ramp up training and qualifications, and achieve closer engagement with related industry groups and Government decision makers.

New Chief Executive Keith Blind admits the NZFPA had lost focus, revenue and membership under previous leadership and without strong industry engagement had become “a little bit insular and too comfortable”.

A refresh was needed to get the not for profit fire safety, education and training body back into the industry driver's seat. To remain relevant it had to change its profile, pick up its game and take a stronger advocacy role.

The restructuring comes at a time of significant change in the fire industry including the proposed new Fire Service Act and a swathe of regulatory shifts that will impact on codes, standards and training.



Keith Blind, the new CEO of FPANZ

Unless FPANZ has a stronger voice within the MBIE process and closer links with industry groups are forged, the fire industry perspective may not be reflected in a cohesive way.

Blind says these changes present a growing opportunity for closer relationships between the fire protection and related industries.

A good start has been FPANZ, the Fire Engineers NZ and the Society of Fire Protection Engineers collaborating for the past four years on an annual industry conference where the latest research and industry knowledge and equipment is showcased.

FPANZ membership currently includes 200 companies, including the NZ Fire Service “a huge industry partner” and another 3,500 practitioners or individuals working in fire-related areas. A broader outreach to related industry sectors is expected to swell those numbers.

FPANZ carefully vets its membership with strict standards and codes of conduct to ensure work practices are of the highest quality. This is part of an ongoing campaign to affirm that membership equates to appropriate training, qualifications, accreditation and competence.

Blind says fire protection is a growth industry, currently driven through Christchurch recovery work and new construction work in Auckland, with a number of significant and technically challenging projects for the fire protection industry, including the new Waterview tunnel.

While there's little growth in the residential space, he predicts that's about to change as home fire safety systems become more widespread. As part of that evolution he sees a closer liaison with the security industry as home automation and security systems interconnect with fire protection.

“I think home automation generally will go through a significant uplift as technology becomes better and the price structure comes down...and there's greater integration with fire systems.”

Cross-sector alliances

A major catalyst for cross sector alliances, he says, will be managing Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) regulatory design revisions, and how they impact on standards and other areas of compliance. MBIE is seeking feedback from various industries but until recently there was limited input from the fire protection industry, with only fire engineers and consultants having a say.





After canvassing FPANZ members, Blind says it was obvious greater involvement was necessary, as simplifying Building Code documents, for example, impacted on fire protection work, requiring adjustments to standards, education and training programmes

To have any kind of influence in how things shape up for the future, Blind says FPANZ members and special interest groups (SIGs) need to be at the centre, advising.

FPANZ voiced its concerns to the MBIE panel and as a result now has an

MBIE member on its council. "That gives us the opportunity to at least educate and encourage communication between the two different parties."

At the last review meeting with MBIE the NZ Fire Service was in attendance along with all of FPANZ special interest groups (SIGs) and its sprinkler certifier.

FPANZ is currently surveying its membership and from early 2015 will conduct even more specific consultation on the issues deemed most important. "That's driving a lot of us to think about how we design and install, test, commission and maintain systems," says Blind.

The other key aspect is in the wider construction community where there's been a lot of work done in seismic design with a specific focus on mechanical, fire, heating, ventilation and refrigeration.

Cracking the new codes

While MBIE is already engaged in educating and providing information on what to look for in each industry sector, "a lot of work still has to be done in codes of practice."

For example, FPANZ' SIGs and MBIE are currently liaising with the Ceiling and Wall Association of New Zealand, mechanical and refrigeration people and others to ensure they're on the same page.

Unless FPANZ has a stronger voice within the MBIE process and closer links with industry groups are forged, he believes the fire industry perspective may not be reflected in a cohesive way.

Tweaks and changes to legislation or codes in one area of the building industry can have a flow on effect into other areas. "Unless there's a wider understanding of these interactions things can get confusing," says Blind.

"We're looking through all sorts of documentation and reviewing it for consistency of approach, and the best

way to make sure that seismic restraints and design are catered for within codes of practice to meet legislative requirements."

The consulting process is "very complex and could take some time" and will require closer links between collective groups and associations discussing common issues including rethinking aspects of design.

"For some of our people it'll be business as usual but for others they'll go through significant changes to make sure they're keeping up," says Blind.

While there's a mountain of work going on, a hold has been placed on all development work being done by Standards NZ until MBIE's reviews are completed.

Industry voice essential

FPANZ continues to push for greater involvement and at the conclusion of the MBIE review process will submit its own proposals. "We need to re-engage, to make sure that we're getting those standards updated and be more reflective on what's going on in the wider industry including engineering."

It wants its voice heard in relation to passive fire protection, sprinkler protection, electrical and alarms protection systems. "The whole gambit around standards that cover the range of areas people in the fire protection industry look after."

However, he says the industry has to be patient with the review process as its going to be at least mid-year before the first feedback is available and training can be arranged to support any changes.

"Whatever happens in terms of design changes to the Building Code, will obviously take time to get transported into education and uplifting all those consultants and engineers in the wider community to adapt to it."

Another industry concern is the drawn out process of updating the Fire Services Act 1975 to align with the work the NZ Fire Service actually does.

"That will have flow on effects for fire evacuation consultants and how the Fire Service is seen as an emergency response provider, not just a fire fighting mechanism. A whole variety of things will change."

Blind's advice is to view 2015 as a time of "consolidation of legislation, training and futureproofing the industry by bringing new people into it" and working closer with industry groups, where there's previously been little collaboration.



Retraining bottlenecks likely

The ongoing regulation review process of the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) could swamp unprepared industry training organisations over the next two years with a groundswell of revised or new qualifications.

Fire Protection Association (FPANZ) CEO Keith Blind says there's likely to be a lot of pressure on Independent training organisations (ITOS) and the NZQA to review, register and approve up to 1800 qualifications quickly enough to meet industry group needs.

MBIE is looking to simplify regulations to make compliance easier, particularly in relation to how different industries operate and interact with each other. That's likely to impact codes of practice, regulatory and compliance requirements and ultimately training and qualifications content.

Unless there's an informed and coordinated approach huge bottlenecks could occur with skilled people waiting for on-the-job or off-site training, to sit new exams or attend refresher courses.

FPANZ, which now has its own specialist training manager within Competenz, says its working on the best way to achieve changes which will then need to be passed on to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). "It's a lot of work which is being supported by industry," says Blind.

The existing fire protection qualification framework will continue until revisions and the new qualifications FPANZ wants to introduce are lodged with NZQA.

He believes it could be 18 to 24 months, before its new training qualifications framework is released. "We're reviewing the units of learning to ensure that they reflect on-job and off-job requirements and making sure any literature and training material is up-to-date."

Like any industry, he says, you have to provide what's relevant for the market, and then Government may add its own requirements.

"The Government may want to introduce changes that will reflect on some elements; they're looking at removing funding for Level 2 training at

the moment, but that doesn't affect the fire industry at this point because our qualifications are level 3 and up."

Integrated Certifiers Group

An agreement to have all inspectors and certifiers in fire protection represented by a single nationwide group is seen as a major step toward achieving a more seamless approach to industry issues.

The Fire Protection Association (FPANZ) was instrumental in creating the Inspection/Certifiers Group embracing all inspection businesses across the country to bring greater clarity to issues facing the industry.

The group is operating under the chairmanship of Jason Godsmark who works within the AON Group and has over 25 years' industry experience.

Although fire protection is essentially a self-regulating industry there are measures in place through the Industry Sprinkler systems certifier (SSC), and the various inspectorate groups that help promote consistency.

Everything still has to be compliant with Ministry of Business, Industry and

Employment (MBIE) requirements and existing law with changes to industry standards reflected through training.

FPANZ Chief Executive Keith Blind says the group will promote feedback across various industry players about how they are performing, consistency of workmanship, and how codes and standards are applied.

This he says will help practitioners create value by "getting things right first time to save time and money."

Blind says the industry should be concentrating on these things as part of the various internal review processes. "Most of these contractors are rolling through a quality assurance programme for compliance with the SSC, and some elements of standards. Our role is to continue to improve this."

He says sharing a consistent auditing process is important along with an opportunity to debate changes and what is happening in the industry to achieve consistency. "Like any sort of inspectorate, there may be different ways of interpreting rules or codes to get an outcome."

Reconnecting the dots

The Fire Protection Association (FPANZ) wants to become a more engaging and collaborative training and advocacy organisation with sufficient horsepower to drive the industry forward.

Helping to get the industry body back on track after a period of lost focus is new CEO, Keith Blind, formerly the Vice President of Wormald Tyco New Zealand with 25-years' experience including positions on the FPANZ board, associated industry bodies and council.

He returned from working in Australia last year as a CEO within the Norfolk group and was asked to conduct a strategic review of the structure and goals of FPANZ.

The refreshed set of objectives

includes a stronger focus on continued professional development through FPANZ own industry training capabilities and associated providers, to establish closer ties with Government and related industries and ultimately to host a more embracing all-of-industry event combined with a new membership structure and associated benefits.

The shape of the organisation will ultimately be influenced by a closer relationship the Fire Protection Association of Australia, a return to its roots, as it was originally formed in February 1975 as a branch of that organisation.

Blind believes both groups have much to offer each other, as they face similar issues and can only benefit through greater collaboration.

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MBIE regulatory rework admits systemic failures

by Keith Newman

As a range of regulatory adjustments and reforms roll through Parliament over the next 18 months the fire protection industry will be forced to interact more closely with other trades groups and stakeholders.

The new Health and Safety Act will have priority in the 2015 Parliamentary schedule and while long awaited changes to the 40-year old Fire Service Act are likely to languish until further reviews are completed, the impact will be significant.

A raft of changes proposed by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to clarify regulatory responsibility, standards and compliance across industry sectors will affect all industry sectors.

In a December briefing to Business New Zealand stakeholders, MBIE admitted it had failed in many of its tasks and needed to undertake a complete review of regulatory systems design.

The admission that the design of MBIE's regulatory framework may be causing more problems than it solves, including growing complexity and cross-sector confusion, has resulted in an ongoing review.

MBIE was formed on 1 July 2012, when new legislation brought together the

Department of Building and Housing, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Department of Labour and the Ministry of Science and Innovation into a single ministry.

MBIE has oversight of 16 regulatory systems and 15 Crown entities and its review will have a direct or indirect impact on the installation of passive and active fire protection systems, codes of practice, standards, training and compliance-related issues.

Regulatory roulette

Cabinet wants more specific expectations around how different agencies discharge their regulatory obligations. That's resulted in the State Services Commission and MBIE rethinking the term "regulatory excellence" and seeking "an evidence-based way" to view risks and outcomes.

MBIE admitted its regulatory frameworks don't look at systems as a whole or always make right decisions. In some cases the New Zealand context isn't adequately taken into account in the design.

There are disconnects between policy and operations with compliance and intervention strategies either missing or inadequate. Business intelligence and information flows are poor — even if risks are identified in systems they're often not addressed.

MBIE's "set and forget regulatory regimes" meant much of the rationale, "intervention logic" and how this was expected to work was often lost. "We don't identify or address issues that emerge over time." This led to system failures and large reform which was "disruptive and costly", said the report.

The admission that the design of MBIE's regulatory framework may be causing more problems than it solves, including growing complexity and cross-sector confusion, has resulted in an ongoing review.

A number of those systemic failures had provided learning opportunities to sort things out, with the December briefing encouraging greater partnership between policy and operations to achieve performance outcomes.

The building industry for example would move toward a draft regulatory narrative reflected in building information models (BIMs) or digital representations of planning, design, construction and management

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Immigration, Building Performance and Work Health and Safety would be systematically assessed over “the medium term”, and “charters” covering off requirements trialled.

Guidelines developed

A guide to using different regulatory instruments and “regulatory excellence” support projects have been developed with the first draft of Regulatory Systems Bills underway.

MBIE’s new approach will treat its regulatory systems as ‘living’ and flexible with inbuilt mechanisms to identify issues and opportunities rather than an immovable framework.

In assessing regulatory systems for each industry sector MBIE will identify and agree on the scope with a panel conducting interviews and workshops with people at all levels.

This industry consultation will map both good and bad experiences against “good regulatory practice guidance” so governance groups and system owners can develop an action plan

to be communicated to the relevant Government ministers, participants and stakeholders.

The Health and Safety Reform Bill now before Parliament borrows extensively from the Australian framework and will have a major impact on a range of sectors, including the fire industry.

It also arises from an admission that existing workplace health and safety regulatory framework “is too complicated, not comprehensive, suffers from inconsistent implementation, is insufficiently underpinned by guidance, and its compliance and enforcement tools are not flexible enough”.

Briefing documents suggest some provisions were perceived to be relatively weak compared to overseas jurisdictions, particularly in respect to worker participation.

For example there was a lack of tailored regulation for major hazard facilities “that store and process large quantities of dangerous substances and that have the potential to cause a major accident”.

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nZSecurity Magazine

FLIR thermal imaging cameras help prevent fires in waste plants

FLIR A315/A615 cameras combined with intelligent Waste Bunker Monitor software offers smart waste monitoring solution

Waste management is a key industry in most industrially developed countries throughout the world and is currently undergoing significant modernization and an increase in the use of waste energy. The whole cycle for the storage of waste, through sorting and recycling, up to the effective conversion to electricity in some cases, carries a high risk of fire, causing possible hazard for both personnel and the environment. To counter this, the company Workswell has developed a complete thermal imaging solution, called Waste Bunker Monitor, designed for the continuous inspection of solid waste using FLIR Systems' thermal imaging cameras.

Workswell is a Czech technology development and trading company. Its main activities include solutions delivery in non-contact temperature measurement in many industries such as glassworks, foundries, cement plants, municipal waste incinerators and thermal power plants.

Waste management

The amount of waste worldwide continues to increase. Currently in the Czech Republic, 75% of the municipal waste is stored in landfills. Approximately 400,000 tons of that waste is thermally processed in municipal waste incinerators, amounting to a total heat supply of about 2.3 million Gigajoules and a gross electricity production of about 18,000 Megawatt Hours. The advantage of thermal treatment of waste is, in addition



"We have found that the FLIR A315 or FLIR A615 cameras with a resolution of 320x240 or 640x480 are the best fit for our system." Jan Kovář, Workswell

to energy gains, the dramatic reduction in waste volume (approximately 10% to 15% of the original weight). The ZEVO plant at Malešice has been operational since 1998 and takes care of the transformation of waste into thermal and electric energy. The acquired energy is used as heating of domestic water and residential buildings.

Fires are a genuine threat in waste plants, and this is also true for ZEVO Malešice. The most common causes of such fires are spontaneous chemical combustion of waste; heat from vehicles that collect the municipal waste; and fire or devastating explosion due to the increased concentration of methane released from the waste during the decay process. In order to reduce the risk of fires, the ZEVO Malešice plant decided to invest in the Waste Bunker Monitor system from Workswell.



Waste fires are a genuine threat in waste incineration plants and this is also true for ZEVO Malešice

The waste at the ZEVO Malešice plant is imported into a storage tank, used for the homogenization of materials and to ensure sufficient reserve of waste so that the plant can be operated continuously. In this case, Workswell opted for two FLIR A615 cameras with a resolution of 640x480 pixels and with an 80° lens. These cameras monitor the storage tank for hot spots that indicate the possibility of a fire starting.

The Waste Bunker Monitor system from Workswell combines the non-contact measurement technology from FLIR Systems with proprietary software which presents plant operators with the critical areas that have an increased risk of fire. "The whole system is scalable and can consist of several thermal imaging cameras with high spatial resolution and with thermal sensitivity greater than



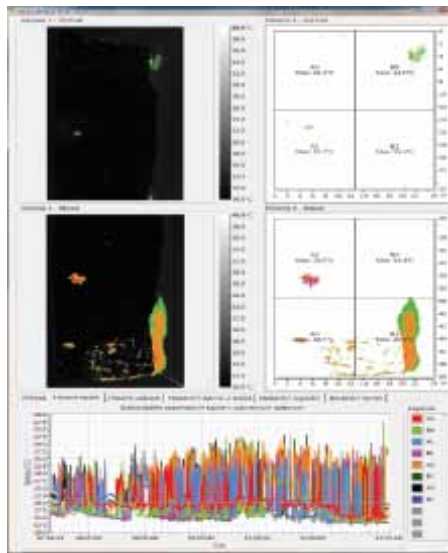
Two FLIR A615 cameras, installed in a protective housing, monitor the storage tank for hotspots that indicate the possibility of a fire starting

0.05°C,” comments Jan Kovář, Managing Director at Workswell. “We have found that the FLIR A315 or FLIR A615 cameras are the best fit for our system. We always determine the number of cameras, their resolution and visual field of view in function of the smallest detectable temperature difference.”

Control room monitoring

The monitored area is divided into zones in which the temperatures are evaluated several times per second. Consequently, the automatic system reports any area with an increased surface temperature to the crane operators.

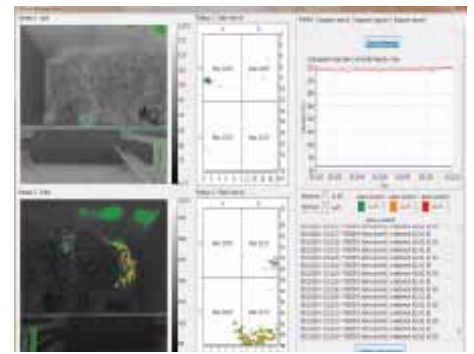
At the head of the thermal imaging system is a control and visualization software that displays the images and temperatures coming from the FLIR thermal cameras. The software also provides operator visual and audio alerts whenever the temperature exceeds a



Operators can also see a graph with the maximum temperature value evolution of the several different sectors

certain value. Next to the thermal image, the software presents operators with an area map, divided into sectors making it easier for operators to pinpoint the exact location of a hotspot.

“Luckily, we haven’t witnessed any fires yet at the ZEVO Malešice plant,” says Jan Kovář of Workswell. “But we are very confident that the system and the thermal imaging cameras from FLIR will do a good job. We performed several tests before the actual deployment of the system and the results were much better than we expected. Next to that, the thermal cameras are very affordable, and thus they contribute to the overall cost-effectiveness of the Waste Bunker Monitor system.



At the head of the thermal imaging system is a control and visualization software that displays the images coming from the FLIR thermal cameras and other information about temperatures

About thermal imaging

Thermal imaging is the use of cameras constructed with specialty sensors that “see” thermal energy emitted from an object. Thermal, or infrared energy, is light that is not visible to the human eye because its wavelength is too long to be detected. It’s the part of the electromagnetic spectrum that we perceive as heat. Infrared allows us to see what our eyes cannot. Thermal imaging cameras produce images of invisible infrared or “heat” radiation. Based on temperature differences between objects, thermal imaging produces a clear image. It is an excellent tool for predictive maintenance, building inspections, research & development and automation applications. It can see in total darkness, in the darkest of nights, through fog, in the far distance, through smoke. It is also used for security and surveillance, maritime, automotive, firefighting and many other applications.



About FLIR Systems:

As the global leader in infrared technology for the past 50 years, the FLIR name is synonymous with thermal IR imaging. FLIR designs, manufactures, and supports thermal IR cameras and systems for a wide range industrial, scientific, government, and commercial markets – and the company has more than 100,000 systems in use worldwide. With research centers and sales offices located in more than 60 countries, FLIR is the recognized world leader in thermal imaging.

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Qualifying a fire and rescue future

Keith Newman finds the NZ Fire Service is well advanced in training its people to cope with risks and roles that go well beyond the outdated legislation that's supposed to frame its capabilities

Rather than simply being a fire and rescue service, the NZ Fire Service could be described as a training organisation that sometimes engages in fire and rescue, suggests its Director of Training, Max Hood.

By comparison, relatively little time is spent putting out fires and engaging in other active operations compared to keeping volunteer and career firefighters fit for purpose through training, up-skilling and ensuring qualifications are current.



Max Hood,
NZ Fire Service Director of Training

"We're there as sort of an insurance cover in case something goes wrong," says the former head of training for the London Fire Service who emigrated to New Zealand to take the top fire service role in March 2013.

The one-time career fireman accepted his new posting in time to assist with a major review of the NZ Fire Service and had a pivotal part to play in rejigging the training regime for 21st century challenges.

The NZ Fire Services Commission agreed on the new training strategy in January 2014 as part of Vision 2020, which attempts to clarify the role of the NZ Fire Service leadership, management style, training and safety to cope with the swathe of changes ahead.

"There's a wide-ranging programme of work to support that; obviously as a people organisation, training's got a key role in helping get us there," says Hood.

Learning curve ahead

The training agenda is influenced by the proposed revision of the Fire Services Act (1974), the new Health and Safety Act currently before Parliament and a wide ranging regulatory review by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to simplify the current tangle of codes, standards and compliance issues across a range of industries.

There are some areas where the service needs to redouble its efforts so it doesn't lose sight of the basic skills of fire-fighting, using breathing apparatus, and making sure our commanders are effective.

NZ Fire Service, Director of Training, Max Hood

Hood and others in the NZ Fire Service have regular sessions around the draft 'Worksafe' legislation, and are fairly advanced in how they will respond. Proposed changes are "broadly similar" to those he's dealt with in the UK and closely aligned to Australian regulations.

If the safety culture with its procedures, training and equipment is right, Hood says that'll achieve a safe working environment for everybody and compliance will be a natural outcome.

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There are some areas where the service needs to “redouble its efforts” so it doesn’t lose sight of the basic skills of fire-fighting, using breathing apparatus, and “making sure our commanders are effective.”

To that end a huge investment is being made in training. “We’ve increased the number of trainers, we’ve got an absolute world-class training centre in Rotorua and we’re increasing the throughput of people that go there.”

This includes all executive officers, station officers and senior station officers being required to undertake a week long incident management course through until 2016.

More trainers needed

Hood admits there are issues finding full time trainers for the Rotorua Fire Service Training Centre, as most live in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch or Timaru. “Asking them to relocate to Rotorua for 2-3 years is a big ask but we’re looking to try and make that more attractive.”

Currently the NZFS has about 30 trainers although that number can be increased to around 300 from stations around the country who can be called on to do occasional training. He says, employment in this area offers a good development opportunity “that will stand trainers in good stead for the rest of their career.”

There’s likely to be expanded use of Rotorua facilities through a closer working relationship with the Fire Protection Association (NZFPA), the Institution of Fire Engineers and others as there’s a shared ethos of encouraging prevention and ensuring the built environment is safer.

“We’re spending a year making sure we’ve got the right ingredients in those courses and preparing people for the fire service of the future.”

This would embrace the fact that FPANZ members, including building and evacuation consultants, provide the Fire Service with information which ties back to compliance and approval of evacuation schemes.

Meanwhile fire investigators are being sent to complete advanced diplomas in Canberra so their credentials have greater standing when they appear in court, prepare reports or give other evidence.

And an internal review programme, which has been in place since 2007, continues to look at qualified fire-fighter, senior fire-fighter and other training programmes for new recruits as they move through the ranks.

It’s also planned to extend assessment for incident command, “so that we’ve got some assurance our incident commanders have received the right training and can put their skills into practice.”

Increased professionalism

Hood says ongoing efforts to bring regulations and standards into line are part of an international trend toward professionalism and can only assist in ensuring the right buildings are built and active and passive fire safety solutions are working and to the right standard.

“Inevitably operational procedures change over the years so they need an update. We’re also establishing an online learning programme with interactive tools which will change the way we deliver these programmes.”

During 2015, he says the NZFS will be conducting a full review and redesign of those programmes. “We’re spending a year making sure we’ve got the right ingredients in those courses and preparing people for the fire service of the future.”



All the training is based on standards as part of national qualifications within the NZQA framework with ongoing assessments.

Hood says safety and managing risk is an absolute centrepiece. “We’ve got a responsibility to make sure that all of our people, whether they’re volunteer or career fire-fighters, are trained for the risks that we send them to deal with.”

He argues that the Fire Service has been in the safety game for years; “that’s our business,” whether its fighting fires, attending motor vehicle accidents, medical response calls or extreme weather events. “We’re probably our busiest actually when it rains a lot and when it’s windy.”

Unfamiliar territory

It’s the responsibility of people in the average workplace to manage safety and put all the controls and mechanisms in place. “However, our workplace potentially is everywhere and anywhere,” which requires the skills to regularly deal with risk in unfamiliar territory.

That means having the right personal protective equipment, procedures, supervision and the ability to adapt.

“It’s a foreign workplace, inasmuch as it’s somebody else’s factory, somebody else’s home or the roadway and something’s already gone wrong. Our job is about managing that risk.”

With 80 percent of the workforce made up of volunteers there’s been increasing pressure to make volunteering easier, with more certainty about training times and pressure on employers.

Hood says New Zealand’s volunteers are “hugely professional and very committed,” but there’s only so much time they can give. That means the NZ Fire Service has to be more flexible in how it delivers training, including reducing the need to travel.

“Rather than just designing the best training courses, we need to make sure they can do some things at home with online training modules rather than dragging volunteers away all the time.”

That’s a sensitive issue in parts of the country where people are doing shift work, or involved in agriculture when particular times of the year are very busy. “We’re just trying to get a better understanding of some of those dynamics, to arrange training to suit.”

Prepared for all-risks

While it’s outgrown the 40-year old legislation it has been operating under, the NZ Fire Service believes it’s well prepared for the non-fire tasks it’s expected to handle.

In fact Hood says the NZ Fire Service is already operating “a sort of all-risk, all-hazard environment.”

Regardless there’s ongoing frustration that the legislation needs to catch up. “We’re working hard with the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) to understand what things might look like if legislation is changed.”

Hood says there are fairly flexible models now in volunteer brigades that enable people to focus on medical response, support roles, community safety work and other areas. “They don’t have to be riding the truck and I think that will continue over time.”

Ideally he’d like better support for local training with individual stations and brigades having good access to first class resources so they can deliver training on an as needs basis.

He’d also like to see a full complement of trainers across the country with a queue of people waiting to join their ranks. “It should be a high point in somebody’s career, being a trainer for two to three years and then moving on and up in a ‘virtuous circle.’”

Hood says current changes set the scene for two or three exciting years ahead not just for training but for the future of the NZ Fire Service. “We’ve got a clear direction going forward, we’ve got some great people and we’ve got settled industrial relations for the first time in ages.”

Integrated service easier

Max Hood initially joined the fire service in London so he didn't have to sit behind a desk but 30-years later that's exactly where he spends much of his time, as Director of Training for the NZ Fire Service.

Hood, who joined London Fire Brigade in the early 1980's, has a background in fire safety and operations having worked through the ranks to assistant commissioner, where one of his roles was head of training and organisational development.

In 2006 he was seconded to the British Government to undertake an operational assessment of all fire and rescue services in England and in 2008 became chief fire officer of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

Hood reckons training in New Zealand is comparable to the UK in its operational procedures but it's much easier to implement change here because it's a single national service.

England remains fragmented with 46 fire services, the largest being London. "It makes an awful lot of sense to be bigger and national, it certainly saves on negotiating across all the different services to change things which presents challenges particularly around training."

He says the kit and equipment used are similar, the main difference is the larger rural component and focus on natural hazards including earthquakes, rather than on built up environments and the threat of terrorism.

Plenty of applicants

While most of New Zealand's 440 fire stations are adequately staffed, he says the challenge is to ensure there's adequate training for all staff. Currently there are more applicants for career fire fighter positions than there are vacancies and in most communities there are sufficient volunteers.

"We do have certain stations and brigades where it's proving to be difficult...maybe those communities are reducing in size and we're fishing in a small pond anyway."

He says the majority of brigades are in good health, with applicants across a wide spread of ages and skills, but concedes more work needs to be done to attract women and other ethnicities, including Maori, into the NZ Fire Service.

"We've got work to do...we need a workforce that reflects the society we're working in for all sorts of reasons," including making it easier to educate the public and reduce the incidence of fire.



The number of women and the mix of ethnicities are actually better in the volunteer sector than in career fire fighters. "We need to welcome whoever has the raw ingredients."

So why does he do it? The sense of satisfaction, when "you know you've made a difference and people come away from a course with more confidence, improved skills and are better at what they do."

While the London Fire Service is fully professional, there are volunteers in the rest of the UK and more rural areas where they have "retained fire-fighters" paid 10% of a fire fighters wages on top of their normal occupation.



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