

A message to the private security industry for Christmas 2021

As 2021 ends and much of the country slows down for a holiday break, it is a chance to reflect on the past year and some of its highlights, as well as consider the opportunities ahead for partnership and improvements to public safety in 2022.

This year the private security industry once again played a critical role in helping society deal with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. You protected the public in testing and vaccination centres, quarantine hotels and hospitals, as well as supermarkets, offices, and many other premises. Across the UK, security managers worked hard to keep their staff safe while still providing a service to their clients.

The year began with many venues closed and major events postponed or cancelled. Some security operatives left their existing roles for other jobs in security or left the security sector altogether. Then restrictions lifted and there was again a need for licensed, qualified security at festivals, gigs, and major sporting events.

We know that for some of you there has been illness, loss, and grief. We also know that despite this, we have received many reports of security operatives acting with kindness and bravery. On behalf of everyone at the SIA, thank you for your commitment and professionalism.

Please stay alert

In this festive season, many of you will be working and keeping the public safe in towns and cities across the UK, as you have continued to do in all weathers every day this year. As recent events in Essex and Liverpool remind us, threats of harm have not gone away. Vigilance throughout these winter months and the foreseeable future remains essential. The licensed security sector plays a critical part in preventing terrorist attacks and responding to them when they happen.

Public safety is paramount

Public protection remains the central focus of the SIA's role and work. In 2021 we updated the training required for four of the sectors we license. This included the two biggest sectors: door supervision and security guarding.

We launched free counter-terrorism e-learning courses for front line security operatives. We ran counter-terror exercises with the police, venues, and private security companies to test their response to terror-related incidents.

We also delivered a series of public safety campaigns on important issues such as preventing violence against women and girls.

Looking ahead to 2022

We will continue to deliver and improve our digital licensing services. At the same time, we are determined to increase our visibility across the UK and the impact of our compliance activities. You will hear more on how we deal with those who damage the public's trust in security through negligence, poor standards of behaviour, or wilful disregard of SIA regulation. You will also hear more examples of where the security sector has stepped up to protect the public.

At the SIA, we are proud to work with an industry that has risen to the challenges of this year and has demonstrated its commitment to protecting the public. Whatever the future holds, we share a dedication to quality and the pursuit of best practice in the security industry.

We wish you and your colleagues and families a safe and Happy Christmas as we see out this year and look ahead to 2022.