



PROFESSIONALLY
PROTECTED

People, Property, Places:
Professionally Protected

THE VOICE OF THE **PROFESSIONAL SECURITY INDUSTRY**



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Introduction

Security is not the industry most people think it is. And being a security officer is more than just putting on a hi-vis vest. It's a role that covers a huge number of jobs, many in unique and unusual places – from retail to office buildings, stadiums to airports, power stations to festivals or museums.

From door supervision, to security personnel, CCTV surveillance, airport security, close protection, security systems installers, concierge services, each with their own working environment and hours, there's a job to suit everyone.

With so many varied roles to fill, security is an industry that's open to everyone and which is attracting people of all ages and from all backgrounds.



The UK security officer services market: at a glance



The UK's manned security market was worth £4.1 billion in 2021.



By 2026 it's expected to be £4.9 billion.



There are almost 300,000 security companies in the UK – with London and Manchester the cities with the largest share of security businesses. (1)



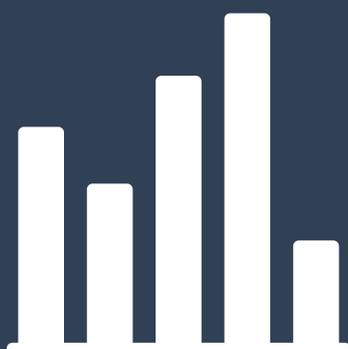
The UK has nearly 400,000 Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence holders. This is the compulsory security-officer licence that any individual or security-related business needs before they can undertake specific activities in the private security industry. (2)



These security officers come from 195 different nations.



One in 10 security officers are female. 65% work as door supervisors, with security guarding (12%) and public space surveillance CCTV (15%) the next most common roles.



SIA licence holders range in age from 18 to 97 years old, with 40 the median age.



25% of licence holders are under the age of 30, while 11% are over 60.



Around 62,000 new security officer roles are available in 2023.



A growth industry

Security is one of the UK's growth industries, driven by purpose-driven professionals at all levels in businesses involved in the manufacture, distribution and installation of electronic and physical security equipment, as well as security-officer services, close protection and consultancy.

According to **Mintel** there were over 11,000 businesses providing security-officer services in 2021. These range in size from global organisations to small and medium-sized enterprises.

The market for security officer services in the UK increased by 11% in 2021 reaching £4.1 billion. And it's a market that's expected to grow to £4.9 billion by 2026.

Demand for security-officer services is at an all-time high. BSIA members say a reduction in police numbers, rising criminality, the 'substantial' terror threat level and more incidents involving members of the public with mental health issues are driving this need for security officers.

Interest in private security-officer services has also increased following the Government's **Protect Duty** consultation. This will create a legal requirement for organisations to provide proportionate security measures when it comes into force in 2023. (3)

There are challenges. The industry anticipates losing almost 20,000 security officers from its workforce. A mix of retirement, Brexit and the fall-out from Covid-19 are contributing to this talent drain. It means that the UK's private security sector will need to recruit, train and license more than 62,000 officers over the next 12 months to keep up with demand.



Recruiting the next generation
of security officers

So, security is a growing business that urgently needs more people from all backgrounds.

It's also one that's changing, especially when it comes to security officer services. Being a security officer today is more than just wearing a hi-vis vest.

The next generation of security professionals will look very different to the last. The skills increasingly needed and the roles available are changing from the traditional security stereotype.





Professional

Today's security officers are highly trained professionals. Obtaining an SIA licence in order to work as a security officer means training in areas such as emergency first aid, public space surveillance, physical intervention techniques and conflict management.

Organisations like the BSIA's training arm **Skills for Security** offer apprenticeships and training programmes for those starting out, as well as Continuous Professional Development, all specifically designed to promote skills and professionalism within the industry.

This is not a minimum-wage career.

Increasingly clients engaging the services of private security officers recognise they are paying for quality – a Living Wage is, for the majority, a minimum.

Tech-savvy

Systems and technology have always played a big part in the security industry, and today's new recruits need to be comfortable with using the latest technology.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has long been used in systems for ANPR, automated event alerts and false alarm reduction. Now security professionals are increasingly using systems incorporating AI as a preventative tool to stop crime and incidents from happening in the first place.

Cloud-enabled remote video monitoring and security cameras, and other devices connected to networks, mean the security industry is now part of the Internet of Things (IoT) world – with a move to remote security and away from officers always attached to individual locations.

Multi-lens cameras and intelligent video analytics, biometric access control, motion sensors – all are used by security professionals to protect people, property and places, identify genuine threats, and filter out false alarms.

Purpose-driven and **people-oriented**

The security industry is a good fit for those who want to make a positive difference to the communities in which they live and work.

Post-pandemic there has been a trend for people to reconsider their priorities. One report from 2022 found that the main reason people gave for quitting their jobs was that they it were not in line with what mattered to them or they didn't feel fulfilled at work. (4)

Security can be an extremely fulfilling career. Protecting people, property and places is a rewarding role, not just in terms of pay. Making people feel safe, looking after property and buildings gives security officers a sense of achievement and offers a high level of job satisfaction.

Working as a security officer can mean being on the frontline with the public – for instance staffing airport security – or involve work behind the scenes, say as a CCTV operator.

Whatever the role, security suits people who like people and enjoy working in close-knit teams of professionals.

Ambitious and **career-focused**

Working as a security officer is a stepping stone to a range of opportunities in a growth industry.

Security officers can specialise in CCTV surveillance or security systems. Or progress into supervising a team and management roles.

Moving into Close Protection and then specialising as a security consultant is another route to a job that's highly skilled, well-paid and delivers high levels of job satisfaction.

Many business leaders, operations managers and HR directors in the sector started their careers as a Door Supervisor or Security Officer.



"THIS JOB HAS
TAUGHT ME
PATIENCE, EMPATHY,
RESILIENCE, AND
PROBLEM-SOLVING."

Diverse

The security industry already attracts people from a range of different backgrounds, and it wants to do that more and more.

As the role of security officers evolves, it continues to become more diverse, attracting younger people, and more women to become security officers in particular, people like 26-year old Marzena Jakubowicz.

Marzena Jakubowicz
Security Officer
Location: Battersea Power Station

"Many people think that a security job is just sitting in a chair and looking at a monitor, but it is much more interesting than that. Every day is different, you never know what awaits you. I am very happy that I get to work with people, I can help them and take care of their safety.

"I have been working in security for about four years. At first, I would only work at clubs on the weekends, but as time went on, I realised that I really enjoyed it and decided to work full time.

"This job has taught me patience, empathy, resilience, and problem-solving. Regardless of how small the matter is, you must always look for the most suitable solution for everyone involved.

"**Bidvest Noonan** offers a lot of courses for people who want to get even better at being an officer. This is incredibly valuable because the company actively invests in their staff, prioritising our personal and professional development. It means that we always have room to grow."

Everyday heroes

When called upon, security officers have made a huge difference to the lives of the public, as two recent recipients of the BSIA's outstanding award act highlight.

Richard Kwar and his team from **OCS Group** were the first on the scene during the failed terrorist attack on the Liverpool Women's Hospital in 2021. A taxi carrying a passenger arrived at the main entrance of the hospital where an explosive device carried by the passenger killed him and injured the driver.

The team were recognised with an Outstanding Act award by the BSIA at its **British Security Awards** for their quick actions during a dangerous and fast-paced situation: putting out the fire in the burning car and securing the area whilst everyone was moved to a place of safety. The response on site provided by Richard and the team was widely praised by the hospital trust and those involved on the day. Their diligence and training played an effective part in preserving the scene, and their outstanding actions to protect the lives of patients, visitors and staff demonstrated their star quality.

The 2021 recipient, David Rutwaza, from **G4S**, was recognised by the BSIA for three truly outstanding acts: protecting a PCSO from a hammer assault whilst sustaining serious injury to himself, defending and then delivering first aid to an OAP after a brutal gang attack whilst taking numerous blows in the process, and finally, for talking down a suicidal girl from a bridge and attending to her until her parents arrived.



Skills:

What does it take to become a security officer?



A career in security is not a one-size-fits-all. While the 'image' of a security officer has been one of low-skilled and sometimes sedentary work, the reality of the role moves at quite a different pace.

The work isn't just vital, security is a modern profession using cutting-edge systems and technologies to tackle emerging threats and keep people, property and places professionally protected.

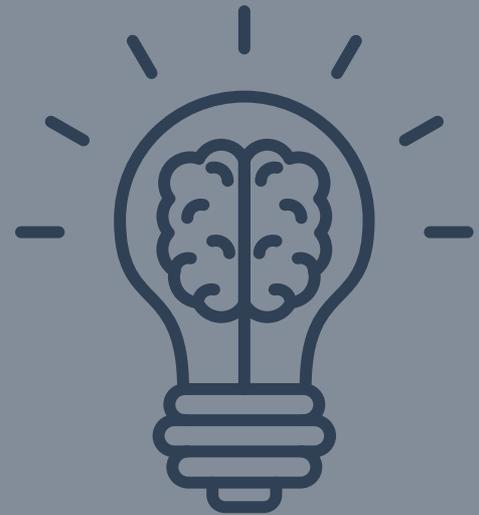
It's also an aspirational career, with plenty of opportunities and pathways for progression across organisations and industries. As physical and cyber security converge, a role in the sector will provide even more transferable skills to conquer any corner of the job market.

Security officers must have a good level of English, be over the age of 18, have the right to work in the UK – and have an SIA licence.

What are the additional skills required to forge a successful career in security?

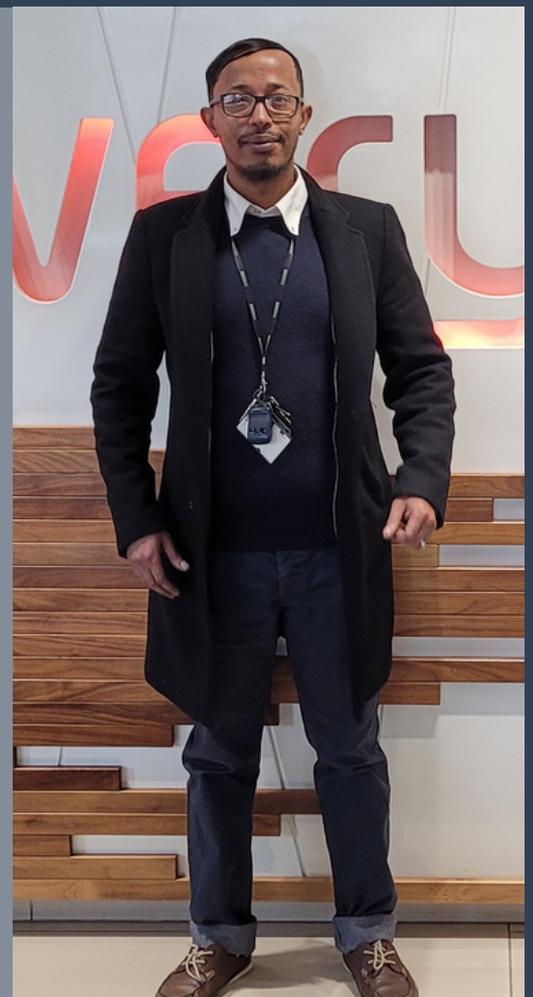
There are practical skills that are essential for the job that can be acquired through training with a company and as part of obtaining an SIA licence. Depending on the role, these might include:

- Emergency and work-place first aid
- First responder training
- Public space surveillance
- Physical intervention techniques
- Conflict resolution
- IT literacy and understanding and use of technology
- Advanced driving
- Animal handling
- Counter terrorism
- Close protection



Soft skills are more and more important too. BSIA members, who together represent 70% of the UK's private security industry, highlight the following as must-haves for today's security officers:

- Communication: Responding to challenging conversations with clarity and patience; being personable and approachable
- Critical thinking: Staying prepared, alert, and observant to your environment
- Time management: Organising and planning your time effectively
- Cooperation: Being helpful, trustworthy and motivated when working in a team
- Professionalism: Conducting yourself to the highest standards, staying calm in stressful situations



New legislation and technology is creating the need for more skilled, specialised and responsive security officers:

The Government's **Protect Duty** is planned anti-terror legislation that will push more businesses, venues and large public spaces to hire licensed security professionals. (3)

The rise of key technologies like IoT devices, facial recognition, smart video analytics and biometrics are making it easier to manage larger spaces more effectively. These tools are changing working practices on a mass scale, making digital training initiatives more common. (5)

The BSIA's training arm **Skills for Security** is working hard to improve the skills and standard of professionalism in the industry by providing access to high quality training and apprenticeships. (6)





Career progression: *Moving on and moving up*

Contrary to the image of a low-wage job, starting pay for a security officer is typically around £24,000 per year and can increase to £32,000 per year.

With the right mix of skills, experience and hard work, there are a whole range of career progression opportunities, whether that's moving into specialist surveillance, progressing to managing security teams or moving on to being responsible for the security of an entire business.

Others chose to move into close protection or on to providing specialist security consulting for major global corporations and governments.

Other security professionals move into head office roles bringing their valuable frontline experience into departments such as HR or Operations.



From working the door to **leading the board**

Iain McCallister | Chief Executive Officer

MAN Commercial Protection

Former boxer Iain began his career in security working on the doors of Liberty's, then Birmingham's glitziest and most popular nightclub. In 1993, he joined forces with his father, a retired West Midlands police officer, to start a personal security business looking after pop stars and bands. **MAN Commercial Protection** was born.

Over the years the business has worked with some of the biggest names in rock and pop – from **Oasis** to **The Rolling Stones**, **UB40** to **U2**. Iain's love of boxing has also seen the company build a relationship with promoter Frank Warren, and MAN Commercial fast became the preferred supplier for the promoter's events and boxing nights, including working with Mike Tyson in 2000. Most recently Iain's team provided security for Tyson Fury's WBC World Title bout against Dillian White in front of a sell-out 94,000 boxing fans at Wembley. (7)



"THERE IS A HUGE OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR SECTOR RIGHT NOW AS WE HAVE SEEN SUCH GROWTH IN THE PAST FEW YEARS"

Away from the glitz and glamour of the stage and ring, MAN Commercial Protection has grown into a business employing over 1,600 people with a turnover of £51 million. It has thrived thanks to Iain's drive and determination, by putting people at the heart of its operations, striving for complete client satisfaction, and by focusing on staff retention and employee engagement.

Iain is convinced that the security industry has something to offer everyone. "I truly believe that security is an excellent career path", he says. "It's great to see so many more females now than 30 years ago, and there are ample opportunities for career progression. MAN Commercial has numerous colleagues who started at the foot of the ladder with no experience who are now managers and directors.

"My best advice would be to do the hours required – security industry hours can be long – but give the job a chance, the opportunities are there. Many of our officers have gone on to work directly with our clients in loss-prevention or building-management roles after impressing so much on site. There is a huge opportunity for our sector right now as we have seen such growth in the past few years, during and since the pandemic."

Iain was the winner of this year's BSIA's **British Security Awards** Contribution to the Industry, recognising his dedication to a career in security, his outstanding leadership and flair, and his development into a leading industry ambassador.



"THE GREAT THING ABOUT WORKING IN THE SECURITY INDUSTRY IS THAT NO TWO DAYS ARE ALIKE"

Andras Szabo | Security Supervisor
Location: Battersea Power Station

"I started work as a security officer in December 2017 and my career has really progressed since I joined **Bidvest Noonan** in April 2021."

"I've always been keen to learn and take the initiative in developing new skills, so I asked my managers if I could spend time learning various aspects of the job. Being familiar with sign in procedures, control room and CCTV helped me make the step to become an area security supervisor."



"Now I manage around 20 security officers on a shift. I usually arrive at work early to discuss the previous shift and plan ahead. I always enjoy the handovers as they give me the opportunity to meet my colleagues and it gives us the time to discuss and share ideas.

After the handover, I prepare the daily rotation schedule before briefing my team. I am always ready when my officers turn up for their shifts, so I can welcome them and issue them with the equipment they need for the day. After the briefing, I visit the estate management and the trades on-site, as it is always good to keep a good relationship with the client and the retail businesses.

Dealing with a day-to-day security operation of a large-scale estate is busy and can be challenging at times, but it's also extremely rewarding and never boring.

My next career goal is to become an Operations Manager. I've already started working towards that, thanks to support and training from Bidvest Noonan."

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Security: a Career of Choice

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The British Security Industry Association (BSIA) is the trade association for the professional security industry in the UK. Our members are responsible for more than 70% of privately provided UK security products and services (by turnover) including the manufacture, distribution and installation of electronic and physical security equipment and the provision of security officer services and consultancy.

www.bsia.co.uk