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Octaga rated among Industry's Best! ...

We have great cause for celebration this edition after being awarded our highest ever score by the SIA's Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) which puts us in the top 7% of ACS companies.

During our five year ACS review, Octaga has received its highest score at 96 points - officially placing us among the top performers in the industry in terms of Best Practice, Client Care & Service, Staff Development & Welfare and British Standards. Moreover, representatives of the 'pacesetters' group of top ACS performers have advised us that we are performing at a top 7% score!

The auditor was extremely impressed with the high level of service provided, customer focus and duty of care to staff, and out of 670 companies achieving ACS accreditation, Octaga is now a member of the top 50!

Examination of the auditor's report reveals high levels of customer satisfaction from Octaga's clients and a very high approval rating for management in its internal surveys of staff. "We are a

service industry company," says Director, Tracey Allison, "and our relationships with clients and staff are crucial. Our security officers and engineers are Octaga, and good client relations, a quality service and high staff morale are what we value."

Says Managing Director, Dave Allison; "By giving a quality, reliable service and being attuned to opportunity, we have come out of this recession stronger than before. And to now have national accreditations for both Security Guards and Electronic Security puts us right up there with industry leaders."

A short note went out to our clients before this superb news appeared in our own Newsletter and the wider press, regarding this impressive audit result. We are extremely proud of this accreditation and as their strategic security partners felt that they should be aware of our status before wider publication.

This by no means detracts from the sense of pride and gratitude we would like to share with all staff - not least those directly

involved with the auditor and who impressed him with their intelligence, professionalism and loyalty. Cliff, Steve, George, Ashley, Godsén - thank you so much. Credit must also go to Emma and Dave - the driving forces behind the introduction of Logosoft® and Emma's datasheets which keep track of staff development better than ever before. And to all staff, everywhere - "thank you" and well done! Because of the efforts of all of us, we are now, officially, better than 93% of the best security companies out there. We are pretty much at the top of our profession on many fronts and we should all be very proud.

Director Tracey Allison adds, "Octaga is ten years old this month and this has been a great 'birthday present' for us and a real boost to staff morale."

For some background reading and further information on the SIA and ACS go to

<http://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/Pages/acs-scores.aspx>

... and joins ACS Elite!

You may have noticed a new logo to the left bar of this issues cover - that of the ACS Pacesetters group, of which Octaga is proud to announce our membership.

Pacesetters are an association of security companies who have scored sufficient audit points to place them in the top 15% of ACS awardees. It has been a bone of contention for a while now that ACS, whilst having made an impact on quality of service in our sector, draws no distinction between the qualities of its members, widespread though they are. In fact, someone who scores zero points

(a bare pass) and a company scoring over 120 are only entitled to display the same badge. With this in mind, the Pacesetters group formed around only those companies scoring more than 74 points - in other words the top 15% of ACS companies, or top 3% in overall UK security outfits.

We are very pleased to have been accepted into this elite group, having exceeded its minimum standard by an impressive 22 points!

On the subject of 'Pacesetters' and the SIA, Dave Allison says, "I think various sectors, and much of

the public have had about enough of the 'Target Culture' of late. The ACS logo can be worn by anyone getting more than 0 pts though, and Pacesetters is a great idea. It's a shame the SIA don't name the top 10% of performers too - something I have contacted them about."

For more information, and to see our own page in the top security companies in the UK, go to;

http://acspacesetters.co.uk/webapp_1193737/Octaga_Security_Services_Ltd

Editorial

There is a lot of interesting stuff going on at Octaga at the moment; from the Logosoft system to Emma's structured training programs and the European inquiry and consultation, in which it was a pleasure to have been personally involved – and thanks to DA and Emma for asking me into the tent here.

But the dominating news has to be our audit result. Tracey and I went for 97 points in our self assessment, having faith in new systems and styles managers have developed these last 12 months. To drop only one point from a self assessment is almost unheard of, and for it to happen to us and at this level is outstanding.

This is a superb result, and Emma and Dave B must take credit for the vast majority of these extra points that rate Octaga higher than many of the industry 'leaders'.

You know, you can be a poor coach of a good team and still get some results – or a good coach of a crap team and salvage something. But only good coaches of good teams end up at the top of their professions.

I've seen this company grow from a staff of 30 to over 150, turnover nearly treble and staff development, culture and management improve almost incredibly. It's been great to have been associated with this growth into a structured and corporate entity, and when I begin to feel better, there is more I'd like to do to become more involved.

I've not seen many of you for a while, in fact there are some officers I have never met due to me being quite ill for some time now- a situation that may persist for a while yet after a recent and rather uncomfortable downturn.

I'd like to say "Hi" to Cliff and Godsen – nice to see you guys getting a mention in News articles again. Nothing less than you deserve.

Lastly, thanks again to Dave Allison, Tracey Allison, Emma, Dave B and Jim for their favours to me of late, and for their support, flexibility and faith, even though I myself have thought at times that the end was nigh.

Hopefully within a couple of months I will be able to get out a bit more – in the meantime, take care guys.

Regards
Dave W

Appearance in Professional Security Magazine

On the day of our 96 point audit result, a press release was issued and accepted by, among others, 'Professional Security' magazine, one of the leading legal and technical journals in our industry.

It is a source of not only pride but optimism, that now we are

Staff Survey

Our latest staff opinion survey is now online and accessible via <http://www.octaga.co.uk/staff-survey/>

Or, you'll find the link to our survey monkey micro site in the small menu on the right hand side of our website, where you can also see press releases and issues of the Octaga News.

Please take five minutes to

performing with the very best we have exposure at this level.

We have made it into a journal where only those of some gravitas or significant achievement appear.

We do sincerely hope, and will do all we can, to continue at

complete the survey when you can, as we do truly value your opinions and management base many decisions regarding training and development around what you tell us you need.

We had an impressive 'turnout' in our last paper survey, and now this a chance for absolutely all of you to get involved.

this new level.

The hard work and professionalism of many has seen to it that we have been placed in a bigger pond; and we have taken our first strokes in swimming there!

Client Survey?

It is an idea of ours that a short survey for clients and customers also be online. Naturally, it would take a much simpler form than the regular KPI evaluations and be more of a conduit for general feedback, which could then be forwarded to relevant staff.

Please use the e-mail address on the back page to tell us what you think and what questions etc you would like asked.

New Logosoft Rostering and Management System Active and a great success thus far

As we have now completed the 'testing phase' of our new management software, it is envisioned that shortly we shall turn over to it fully and dispense with much paperwork and manual procedure.

Logosoft® has been seen as a great success by managers and directors and after much data entry and a trial period we shall shortly be in a position to pay officers from its records as well as the current rota planning, alerts etc.

Other facets of the software include a booking on procedure

which will be looked into in the near future in addition to complete integration with patrol software and devices.



To have such information handled by one system allows managers time to think strategically and put more effort into staff welfare and security matters than ever before.

HR/Personnel and Payroll too will access the comprehensive staff base and allow an increased level of accuracy in all matters relating to staff from vetting to weekly pay.

As each new module proves its worth, we shall test the next to move forward to an ever more corporate and efficient system.

Thank you for all your cooperation thus far in running two systems alongside each other. Soon the effort will have been worth it.

Cheltenham Festival and Aintree

As far as the Gold Cup itself was concerned, Dave W was off form this year only getting two of the first three, though Tracey Allison backed the winner – in more ways than one, as once again our team excelled themselves in deportment and performance, gaining commendations from our client and guests.

Over the four days of the festival, Dave Barrett headed a team which welcomed two new members, Maria G and Martin W. Four operatives were deployed on Asset Protection in the cash offices, while Emma and Chris F led a team of officers on roaming patrols and searching duties.

Extra night patrols were provided by Stewart E and James H, with Ben, Jayne and Kalenda operating site security. Says Dave, "This is the second

year we have conducted such an operation at the racecourse and our staff advised the client and altered the procedure slightly. Last year we had 8 people on the ground day and night, this year we had 10, I have to say that I observed excellent teamwork from all concerned and good communications between the client and Octaga security

Octaga Cameras reduce Fraud

Temporary Octaga CCTV devices were installed for crime prevention, with a resounding success. This technical solution helped us make a huge impact on loss of stock and valuables.

Obviously we cannot go into too much detail about the

Job as it was a specialist operation, working closely with the client using intelligence gathering techniques throughout the festival, to keep crime to a minimum.

Our Clients were very impressed and pleased with the operation, which led us on to a similar operation at Aintree for the Grand National which has now been completed.

My thanks to the entire team involved in both events. Together, we have accomplished something.



The Gold Cup

"A jump jockey has to throw his heart over the fence - and then go over and catch it"

Dick Francis
Jockey and Writer

European Inquiry and Consultation

In late February and March, we were invited to perform an initial enquiry into stock shrinkage at three significant manufacturing sites in Europe.

The well known multinational concerned, to whom our Director, Dave Allison is security consultant, was impressed with Mr. Allison's initial report and recommendations, made with the invaluable input of our Engineering Dept due to the CCTV nature of the operation - so much so that a fuller report into general security measures was commissioned and even a review of assignment instructions and staff training across three large premises.

This second phase of consultation was conducted by Operations Manager, Emma Cowley, who spent four days abroad before drafting a report of her findings together with suggested assignment instructions based upon our own rigorous adherence to NSI Guarding Gold.

Both reports and findings were well received by our client and such inquiries by skilled industry professionals reinforces Octaga's position as a multi skilled corporate entity, capable of executing high level consultations at not only UK but international premises.



We have great pride in our past performances and present clients in respect of consultative work, which not only puts us in good company alongside industry leaders but proves once again how Octaga can offer a truly comprehensive service to a client.

From Consultations through CCTV, Inquires, Alarms, Intelligence, Guarding, Events Security and Close Protection – one company, with one client manager can provide all a client requires – Octaga.

It is the reputation we

have built [and continue to build!] though that permits us into specialist markets and only clients impressed with a whole company will ask for such operations.

While Dave and Emma will rightfully take the credit for this job then – any such success is a win for us all.



News Shorts

Technical

Our engineers remain busy, with an install of an Alarm and CCTV system underway at premises in France and several maintenance contracts taken on of late.

Danny and John are also busy with their ongoing and much appreciated work with the studios group.

Graham meanwhile has undertaken the TAVCOM training course, qualifying him as an Alarm Install Engineer.

News Exposure

As well as an article in Professional Security Magazine, we have also appeared in our local Hereford Times business pages with a quarter page write-up.

Such a prominent piece on the front of the business section is superb exposure for us and we thank Newsquest/Hereford for their feature.

BSIA

As chairman of the British Security Industry Association's Close Protection Section, our MD, Dave Allison will address BSIA members and guests at a conference later this month.

A transcript of his speech and presentation, which concerns the qualities and competencies of an effective CPO, will be available on our website shortly after and will feature in the next edition of the Octaga News.

ACS Pacesetters

As newcomers to the elite pacesetters club, and due to our extremely high score, we are the features company on the organisations website for the month of May.

New Logo

A new logo is currently being designed and approved for Octaga.

Final images will be ready shortly, which will give us a little colour and brightness to our insignia, whilst maintaining a professional and 'security conscious' image – not unlike the recent re-vamp of our website.

It will feature here next edition.

"Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first."

Mark Twain

"Success is dependent upon the glands - sweat glands"

Zig Ziglar

Uniform Challenge: Results

Emma and Dave have completed their evaluations of officers in the 'winter edition' of our uniform challenge, and we can announce the winner for our Northern Section as **Ben R**, while the Southern Prize goes to **Anthony S**.

We are always impressed with how well our officers are turned out and it is a pleasure to give prizes to the best dressed. Of course there is far more to our jobs than just looks; but impressions do count! We do get treated according to how we are perceived, so it's best to look professional and smart at all times.

Congratulations, Anthony and Ben, and stand by for the summer uniform challenge soon.

Operations Support Officer

As you are aware by now, interviews will shortly be held for the post of OSO for our Southern region.

To complement Kevin's work with our northern operations, the new officer shall be based at Pinewood and take a very active role in operational staffing levels, site visits and junior management of operations, including acting as T/L for studios and southern events and providing cover for managers leave.

Spending approximately 2 days a week in the office,

our new appointee will be a vital lieutenant for Emma, and work alongside Wayne, Danny and Chris.

It is remarkable that after an internal memorandum, we have no need to advertise this post externally, as ten internal candidates have applied. Sometimes it may be necessary to bring people in to the company from the outside should specialist skills or unique experience be required. But this really is the only circumstance where it ought to be necessary.

It has always been our philosophy to develop staff and promote internally wherever possible.

To have ten of you stand for an internal promotion gives us faith that our Training, Development and Quality culture is working and that officers believe in it.

Though only one of you can 'win' this job, we'd like to thank all of you in advance for your applications. Prepare well for your interviews – and the very best wishes for the day.

Out of hour's number

Listen up chaps. There have been two instances recently of inappropriate use of the out of hours, **emergency** manager's mobile number. One was asking to be put on the events mailing list while another officer asked how many holiday days they may take in one go!!!

These are not issues that couldn't have waited until office hours, and such trivial use of this number must stop. **The out of hour's number is for serious incidents and staff shortages about which you must talk to a Manager urgently.**

Do not clog up this number with trivia! Someone may need to speak with a manager urgently and in future; action may be taken against those who use the Out of Hours number inappropriately.

Messages from Directors



Octaga MD, Dave Allison

We wanted to create a company that was seen as being different to the industry standard, or what had become the norm. A company that could be relied on to provide a total package in Security Solutions and that prided itself on the work it carried out.

The Guards had to be better trained and looked upon as an asset instead of just another number. They were to have self discipline, loyalty, integrity and be resourceful. The Technical Team was to go above and beyond their normal duty of care and attention to detail.

Looking back over the ten years and to where we are today, I can say with confidence we have achieved exactly that.

This would not be without the commitment that so many of you, the Security Officers show and the dedication of the Managers that put into practice our ethos each day.

Looking forward, I see Octaga continue in its growth and being the preferred supplier in Security Services to not only our existing clients but also to the new opportunities out in the market place today. May we all continue to work well together and prove to our clients and competitors, it can be done better.

Happy 10 years, here's to the next.

Thank you all

Dave Allison, Msyl
Managing Director

Octaga is celebrating 10years in business! Wow were has the 10 years gone? They say that times fly's when you are having fun, and we really have, it's been really exciting and very challenging building up this business.

Octaga is a strong company with its ethos and loyal staff, I am extremely proud of all our staff who work within our operations, offices and especially all our officers on the ground. When designing a business tree, I believe that our officers and core staff should be at the top of the tree structure as without them there is no business!

Octaga has had a very successful 10 years in business increasing turnover and contracts year on year, when I think back of where we started, David and I in a small office in our house with one contract, one security officer on the ground working 5.5hrs per day Monday to Friday, ten years later we have 16 contracts with 135 officers on the ground! Our passion for creating a successful and professional business has been rewarded with NSI Gold, ACS, SAFE Contractor, BSIA, NSI Silver and now Pacesetters.

Octaga has been scored in the top 10% of security companies in the UK, which makes me extremely proud and feel that all the hard work was worth it. We will not stop here; we have a strong team within Octaga who are loyal and committed to take us through the next 10 years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their continued commitment and I very much look forward to the next 10years!

Regards

Tracey Allison
Director

Uniform Challenge



Southern Winner: Anthony



Northern Winner: Ben

Staff Page

Dave H

We are pleased to announce that Dave started a new position with Octaga from Tuesday April 5th. This new role is a support/sales position in the technical department. Dave will support the engineers on all the administration, purchase orders, returns, and audits for NSI and selling our technical services to new and existing clients. We are delighted that Dave has chosen further his career with Octaga and have faith in his extensive experience and technical/electronic skills.

Vacancy from Octaga website: Internal applicants welcome

Job Title:	Shift Security Supervisor
Location:	Amersham/Chalfont (PW)
Start date:	May 2011
Hours:	42 p/w 4 on 4 off, plus overtime
Wages:	£8.75 p/h (equiv; £19,162 p/a basic)
Requirement & Duties:	To act as team leader on a high profile and sensitive corporate site, supervising other staff and working with client and local management. At least 1 years corporate security experience essential. Must be able and willing to work outdoors. Good customer service and communication skills required. Full training provided. Fluent English essential.

For other opportunities see: www.octaga.co.uk/vacancies

Colin Lunt

Our thoughts and deepest sympathy must go to Colin's family, as he sadly died on the 22nd February 2011.

Colin worked as a security officer at Cheltenham for many years and was TUPE'd across to Octaga when we won the racecourse contract in September 2009.

Despite illness, Colin was a dedicated worker and his site and local knowledge were invaluable.

Colin will be sadly missed by all at Octaga.

Screening and Vetting

We've had a couple of issues lately with trying to get guys screened within 8 weeks, and it seems that people just do not see the importance of it.

So for re-iteration; in order to comply with British Standard 7858:2006, we must be able to complete a check on your history within 8 weeks, be they with previous employers, colleges, DSS offices or military sources. We operate in a licensable and regulated sector and as a company guard some sensitive sites. Therefore, please cooperate with Personnel when they ask for references, work history etc – if we can't verify where you've been – **we cannot employ you.**

Commendations

January 11

Alex S

Over the past few months Alex has gone above and beyond his position as Shift Supervisor at PS, assisting the operations department with filling shifts at various sites and events by phoning other Octaga employees when people have gone sick or have had a problem and needed a shift change. Alex has been increasingly proactive in his role and has even assisted our HR Department with the Screening and Vetting of Octaga Officers. We have seen Alex grow into a professional Security officer over the

past few years and he is certainly an excellent representative for Octaga.

February 11

Michael B

Michael has only been with Octaga for 6 months, yet since he has moved to permanent days at SS he has become the much needed support for the Site Security Manager, Michael is extremely proactive in his role and has certainly put his print on the team. A bright future is before him at Octaga. Thank you, Michael for your industrious and professional attitude

March 11

Graham T

Graham's first day for us was 18th November 2010, and he has already shown commitment to Octaga. Although part time, Graham will always help us out where he can and has travelled to sites at the drop of a hat. Graham is very positive and his communication skills are excellent, also he has done an excellent job in organising paperwork at his site. Graham worked at HO overnight recently and the client commented on how alert he was throughout the night. Graham is a pleasure to work with, well done!

End of Tax Year P60's

For the first time this year HMRC are permitting companies to send employees P60s electronically, and we would like to email P60s to all those staff who currently receive their wage slips by this method. Those who still receive paper wage slips in the post will be sent paper P60s as before. Nothing else has changed, the P60s will be sent to staff by 31 May as usual, whichever method is used.

Could we also take the opportunity to ask if there is anyone out there currently receiving a paper wage slip who would be prepared and able to have it sent by email instead? If so please email pay@octaga.co.uk with details of the email address you would like us to use.

And Finally ...

All correspondence to:

Octaga News

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E-MAIL:
octaganews@octaga.co.uk

Website
See us at:
www.octaga.co.uk

Statements herein are the opinions only of the writers and may not accurately represent those of Octaga Security Services, its Staff or Directors.

Next Issue planned:
Late June 2011

Managers; Deadline for citation proposals for monthly awards; 10 June

All Officers; Deadline for submissions, letters, articles etc; - 15 June

Next Issue:

- Southern Operations Support Officer appointment
- A full introduction to our new Sales Manager
- Audit results for our Technical Dept
- New Octaga Logo

Sales Manager Appointed

During early May, we shall have on board a Sales Manager at Octaga, who will be responsible for developing new business and existing client liaison.

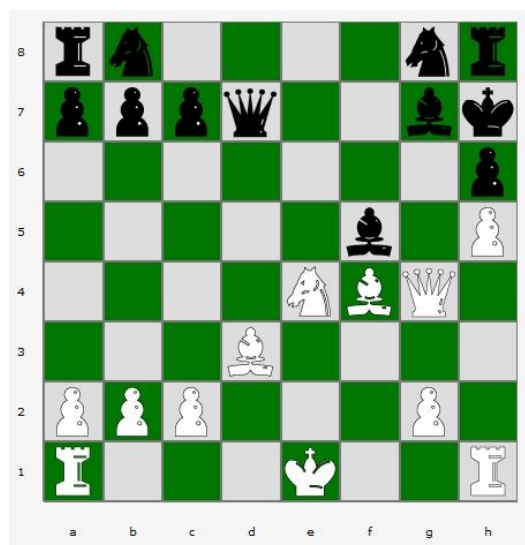
This valuable new role will enable a more corporate and departmental structure for Octaga and will form the next phase in our growth and development.

Upon appointment, our SM will visit sites and guards as part of a thorough induction into the company and many of you will have met him by the publication date of the next Newsletter.

Next issue will see a full introduction to the man himself, who we trust will be welcomed aboard by all of us.



Chess Club



Sudoku

Quite a hard puzzle this time, as we had one or two reports of last time being a little easy.

If you'd like more of these, just let us know.

Chess Club

Thanks to all who had a go at last issues puzzle. Unfortunately, blocking the Black Queen leaves white in a mess, with a long castled king, only one rook in support and a collapsed queenside pawn structure - and with black having breathing space to castle short and into a stronger position or consolidate the centre.

An instant assault on the black king is the way for white to win the game:

1. Qd8+! Kxd8
2. Ba5+. Kc8 (or e8)
(This is a double check from bishop and rook, so the King has to move)
3. Rd8++

Here is another mate in three; complex at first glance but winnable. The black king is rather boxed in - can you force open a channel to give a checkmate with the h1 rook?

	1	5		7			6
3	8		1				4
		9	5				
			8			7	
	2			6			9
		6			4		
					8	6	
5					9		7 1
	6			1		3	8