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New Corporate Logo for Octaga

As will be fairly apparent to most readers, the News has had a bit of a makeover following the introduction of a new corporate logo for Octaga.

It had been the desire of Directors for a while to modernise, and move away from the rather austere grey and black colours of previous years.

After some consultations and experiments with new logo shapes, we thought that as clients and staff know the shape and style of our 'globe' logo so well, it needed to be given a new look rather than a replacement.

We are very pleased with the result and that we

have a crisper and corporate company badge which will serve us well for years to come.

As we move into the new decade, we face challenges, obstacles and opportunities different from those of our first ten years. From our formation until our tenth 'birthday' in April, the company was growing and maturing into a corporate entity.

Now we have become, thanks to leadership, management and all serving officers, a significant player in the security sector and the next few years will build upon this with various

internal and external initiatives, while remaining true to the flexible, tailored and quality driven service that has gotten us so far, is still our working style and remains our model for the future.

It is our belief that with a new website, new stationary, new logo and now new Octaga News, that we have a more fresh and approachable image whilst being very much a security company capable of delivering a very serious and quality service.

"The ascent of Octaga"



MD at Close Protection Conference

On the 26th May, our Managing Director and Chairman of the BSIA Close Protection Section, Dave Allison gave a speech at the "Future of Close Protection" forum at the Holiday Inn, Kensington. With speakers from the likes of Lockheed Martin, the SIA, the BSIA, Greymans and the Diplomatic and Royal Protection section of the Metropolitan Police, Dave was in very good company and the Octaga News is delighted to say that his lecture was very, very well received.

In the afternoon session, under "Professionalism and Training", Dave's speech was entitled, "What makes a good close protection operative (CPO)?" and discussed the risk CP training and CP work in Asia, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Iraq. look for when hiring CPO's and the need for CP providers to spot trends and adjust to changing requirements.



Dave Allison MySI

The conference focused upon what may be the future of licensing in the UK

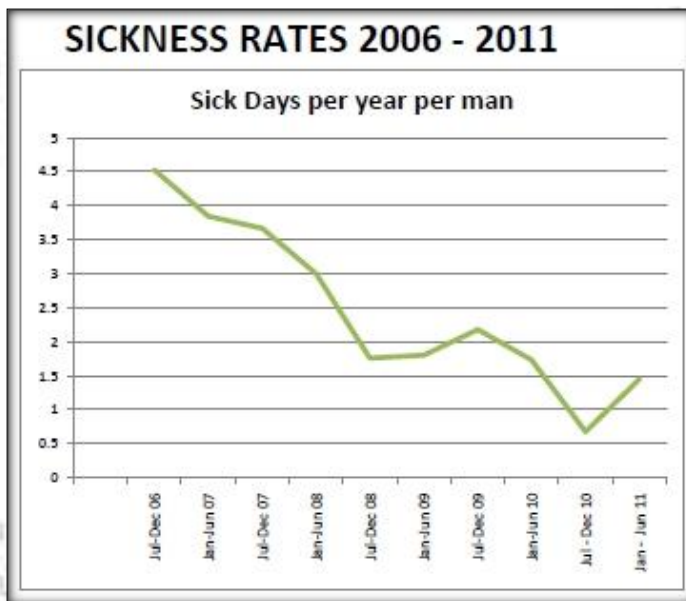
All Time Low Sick Rates

In collating statistics for our forthcoming Management Meeting, we compared sickness records for the last 5 years, which saw an all time low in the last half of 2010 of less than a day per year per man!!!

While there has been a small rise this year to date, it is still very low at 1.45 days. This truly is remarkable for the service sector, and while a cynic may say there are recessionary and inflationary factors at play, which there may well be; good management and officers commitment and loyalty must also surely play a massive part – especially as this downward trend in sick days started for us in early 2008 – well before the financial crisis!

Days per year per man	
Jul - Dec 10	0.675
Jan - Jun 11	1.450

The dramatic drop is clearly visible in the graph to the right, and in the first half of 2007, we lost 138½ shifts to sickness compared to just 58



in the first month of this year.

In fact, in the second half of 2010, despite extreme weather conditions we only lost 27 shifts – a rate of **0.675** days per year per man.

Sick rates are an indicator of so many things from staff morale and general health to management style and working conditions and when rates are low everyone is a winner: Officers do not lose pay, clients get a continuity of

service, teams are less stressed and managers have time to manage and develop rather than waste time plugging holes on rotas.

We can't be seen to encourage staff to work themselves to death – so if you're really, genuinely ill then please do take a rest!

However: Everyone is responsible for these low sick rates and each and every one of you has our sincere respect.

processed. This will provide a better service to you in the future, and make life less complicated and frustrating for all of us - but do bear with us while it is arranged.

Reminder of Screening and Vetting

It is essential that all NEW officers assist Suzie in their screening. Suzie has had many problems of late with officers who seem not to understand the gravity of not being screened, so to repeat: If you can't be screened – we can't employ you. Please cooperate, and

understand that it is not our HR dept being pedantic – the nature of the industry these days is that every new employer must screen you. We don't spend days doing this for fun – it's the law.

Booking on Reminders

May we remind all officers to send the book on email as soon as they have started their shift – as this can affect your pay. Thought that might get your attention. ☺

Regards
Emma Cowley
 Operations Manager

Editorial

In early May, I passed my five year service mark with Octaga and began to reflect upon where both the company and I have come.

I was lucky to have been promoted to HQ in time to be able to see the growth of the company into a medium sized corporate entity with a client list which makes us a serious player in the UK security market. I've had some strange and stimulating jobs and have been able to work closely with directors and management. More recently, despite poor health, I seem to have turned a corner and have stopped being ill, so to speak, and have begun to recover. So, all things considered, I've had an interesting time

At a company level, Octaga has survived the recession intact and has begun to grow again. More than just grow – we have evolved into a fully fledged corporate body. The training and staff development programme is coming to fruition thanks to Emma's organisational skill and flair for training delivery, and to see guys getting promoted internally as the company grows is evidence that we are together as a real "company", with a sense of team play that few outfits can aspire to.

This is a rather upbeat issue of the News; many seem to have a sense of optimism for the company, as we are making progress in several areas.

Lastly: 30th May saw the fourth birthday of the Octaga News! Maybe we'll do a special souvenir issue when we're five years old.

Regards, Dave

Facebook

As we continue to increase awareness of our corporate brand and services, Octaga now has a Facebook page. Here's a direct link:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Octaga-Security-Solutions/150062498400223>

The page is in a fledgling state at present but will grow as we have more news, pictures and events added. As ever, we welcome any comment or in this case advice from seasoned facebook users. Do write to us at:

octaganews@octaga.co.uk
But guys ... please don't go on facebook at work!

Messages from Operations Dept

A few reminders from Emma regarding some site procedures and general issues:

Uniform delays

We would like to apologise for the long delays on uniform requests this year.

We have had some considerable delays with our suppliers, which are currently all being dealt with.

Furthermore, we are in the process of changing suppliers and in future all officers will be able to order items online which will then be checked by Head Office before the order is

Octaga Sales Manager: Peter Lake



Peter Lake. Photo - Emma Cowley

We are delighted this month to welcome aboard our new Sales Manager, Peter Lake.

Peter has been involved in the manned guarding industry since 1980. Having started as a Security Officer he has worked his way up through various supervisory and management posts of two of the leading providers in the UK culminating in responsibility for the security operations of 3 major airports and an international airline.

Most recently Peter has been responsible for developing and managing the business of a medium size manned security guarding company operating in London and Northern Home Counties.

Peter joins Octaga as Regional Sales Manager with

the specific aims of raising the company profile within the security industry and increasing our market share through securing new contracts.

Speaking to the Octaga News, Peter said, "I am looking forward to working with the entire Octaga team and am confident that the quality of service and the reputation, built over ten years will enable development of business to be achieved in line with Directors expectations. Responsibility for Business Development is not solely mine, but shared by all of us and I very much look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next few weeks"

"Remember the difference between a boss and a leader; A boss says "Go!" A leader says "Let's go!"

E.M. Kelly



Security Solutions

"Your net worth to the world is usually determined by what remains after your bad habits are subtracted from your good ones"

Benjamin Franklin

"What makes a good CPO?" By Dave Allison

"It was with pleasure that I was given the opportunity to speak about what makes a good CPO (Close Protection Officer) including roles and responsibilities at the CP Forum in London on behalf of Quaynotes and of course Octaga.

The role of the CPO can be extremely varied and sometimes requires them to wear many hats. Often they have experience in an assortment of disciplines, from First Aid / Paramedic, Communications, Languages (possibly), Self Defence, Surveillance, Fast and Evasive Driving, Weapons (depending on the country and environment they will be operating in)

It is a misconception that someone is fully trained after attending one of these £500.00 courses and is fit to

work in a CP role. I believe the minimum should be three weeks in duration and the fee will depend on the company offering the training and the instructors they employ to deliver that training.

Anything from £3000.00 upwards is what I would expect a quality Training provider to be charging now but even after the course has been successfully completed, it will only be the beginning rung on a long ladder before one can reach their true potential and even then like most things in life, we never stop learning.

The back ground and experience of the Trainers must be authentic and the training must be such that it represents quality and be realistic to its aims and objectives.

Some of the qualities of the

CPO are in fact very similar to that of our SO's. Adaptive, resourceful, flexible, proactive, discreet when required and respectful. The perception the client has of us can be quickly turned in our favour or against us depending on how we utilise the above.

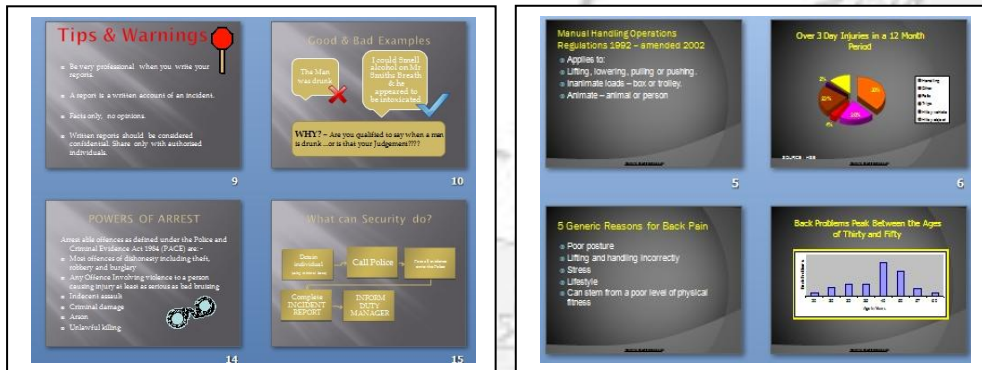
Lastly I would like to welcome Peter Lake and Gemma Alan on board and wish them the very best success with us."



Octaga Training and Development

In late May, Emma conducted another round of Manual Handling courses and Incident Report Writing training sessions, and thank you to all who attended these – held this time at Cheltenham Racecourse. Another round of these courses is scheduled to take place at Shepperton in mid July.

Feedback forms have been extremely encouraging, with all attendees rating the quality and relevance of the training as "Above Average" or Excellent". Comments such as "very interesting", "very practical and useful" and "presenter and discussions were excellent" instil us with confidence that we are moving in the right direction.



Our philosophy of the training and development of staff is as strong as ever – not least as in these days of tight budgets it is quality, calibre and education more than ever that keeps us working! Management and Directors are extremely pleased with the huge turnout for our training days, strengthening our already powerful faith in the quality and commitment of our officers.

Later this year, a new course of NVQ II (Security Operations) will begin and it is our wish that all staff should rise to this new level. The course is free and vocational (you are assessed on the job) and will be mandatory for many of our sites on a rolling program.

A Career Path with Octaga

This summer, we shall formally plan an official Octaga career development programme, linked closely to our internal and any external training.

Passionate about internal promotion, we wish to lay the foundations of a 'roadmap' to a senior position within the company; if you like, a 'how to get from the gatehouse to Ops Management' book.

As Octaga grows, there will be more and more opportunities for officers to follow in the footsteps of Wayne, Kevin, Alex and now Steve H and Dave M, but naturally we won't be in the position to be able to interview twenty, thirty or more people for one job – and will need a selection tool based on staff competence and commitment.

We mentioned in our response to the staff survey of 2009 that it was our wish to develop a timetable for training delivery that will set aside those who attend as the next junior managers or specialist officers.

The fallout from the financial crisis saw to it that we had these plans on hold for a while, but this summer, we shall publish a training matrix of official staff development where we can, as Dave said, "develop the supervisors, managers and specialists we need for [2011] and beyond."

Indeed, early responses to the staff survey (see page 6) indicate that development, training and promotional prospects would be the overriding factors in an

officer deciding to stay with Octaga for the long term.

The basic thinking at present is that once an officer has completed (and passed!) a sufficient number of our training modules, and/or external courses, they will be 'upgraded' and those of, say a 'grade 2' may be considered for supervisors, 'grade 4' as Ops officers, 'grade 6' as managers etc; in effect, a proto sequential rank structure.

Details are yet to be finalised and Emma will write more on this in the next issue of the Octaga News – meanwhile, please send us any thoughts you have, either via the Staff Survey or the e-mail address on the back page.

Latest ad from Octaga website: Internal applicants welcome

Job Title:	Site Security Officer
Location:	Amersham, Bucks
Start date:	July 2011
Hours:	A mix of 12 and 8 hour shifts, averaging around 45 hrs per week
Wages:	£8.00 p/h
Requirement & Duties:	Very high calibre guard required for a sensitive site. <u>Must hold a UK passport or be a UK citizen and possess or be capable of SC clearance</u> and be able and willing to work outdoors. Full training will be provided for this efficient and friendly site, but candidates must speak fluent English and have first class communication and customer service skills.

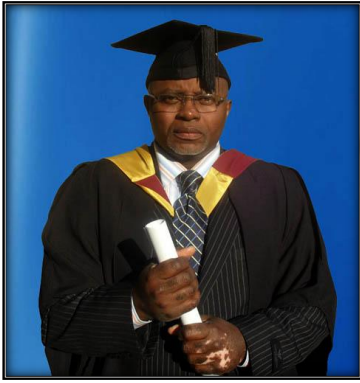
See all our vacancies at www.octaga.co.uk/vacancies



"Leaders create followers
Good leaders create lots
of followers ..."

"Great leaders don't
create followers, they
create more leaders".

Attrib
Tom Peters



Kalenda Poyo BSc, CIPD

We are very proud to announce the award of a degree to our Cheltenham Security Officer, Kelenda, and to extend to him our warmest and sincere congratulations.

He recently went to London to participate in the University graduation event

and with pleasure, we grant his request for a photo in the Octaga News.

Kelenda is a full time officer who started with us on 14th March and was awarded a BSc (Hons) in Professional Practice (Public Service Management) on

26th January from the City University, London.

Remarkably, Kelenda also is a CIPD in Personal and Professional Development, and such a qualified and hard working member of staff is a credit to the company, and certainly to himself.

"Good management is the art of making problems so interesting and their solutions so constructive that everyone wants to get to work and deal with them"

Paul Hawken



Southern Ops Support Officer: Alex S

Interviews are now complete for our Ops Support position in our Southern region, and as a thank you goes out to all who showed interest, congratulations go to our appointee, **Alex S.**

Many of you will know Alex as he joined Octaga in April 2008 as a security officer at Pinewood Studios, and it was only a month later when he was promoted to

Shift Supervisor with the combination of a vacant position and Emma's recognition of his potential.

Over the years he has completed a large number of events and has been the Team Leader many of them.

In the words of Ops Manager, Emma Cowley: "We believe Alex will fit in

easily to this new position as he has been assisting the Operations Department for many months. I'm sure you will all congratulate Alex with successfully obtaining this new position and it is fantastic to see officers grow within the company."

Alex will be joining the Operations team within the next few months.

Staff Movements

Congratulations to **Stephen H** who has been promoted to Shift Supervisor at PW. Steve has been with us for several years now and worked at AP and OU on permanent staff as well as having played a support role with shifts at PS, SS and events.

Welcome aboard to **Christopher C** who joins us at PW, **Shaihid I** who joins AP and likewise, **Anthony W** has started full time at Shepperton Studios and **Chris C** and **Deborah H** at Pinewood.

Our best wishes for the future go to **Charlie P** who recently resigned from GC to take up his personal training as a full time career, and to **Dave H**, who left us in early June.

Commendations

April 11

Narendra C

In a glowing citation from his manager, Wayne; Narendra gets a well deserved prize after helping a visitor to Pinewood with first aid.

"Narendra was on duty on the entrance booth booking in a visitor on site, when the visitors' baby which had been eating started to choke. Narendra acted quickly in coming to the aid of the mother applying first aid taps to the back of the child, releasing the blocked food. All was well with Baby and a very Thankful Mother."

This is the sort of calm action under pressure that is a credit to the individual officer and enhances the very reputation of the company.

Well done Narendra!

May 11

Chris P

In another personal mail from his manager, Chris is our man of the month for May.

"Since moving onto days at Shepperton Studios, Chris has really stepped up to the plate" says Chris L, "He has massively improved his knowledge in the office and has helped me out no end - being able to take control of our reception. His attitude has improved 100% and he is now able to run the office without input from myself. He has also been taking overtime which is a big help. All in all the last few months have been made a lot easier with his help."

Thank you very much Chris, our best wishes and congratulations to you

New Arrivals

We'd like to offer our hearty congratulations to **Dave B**, **Steve H** and **Ashley L** for the recent new additions to their families, and with them a warm welcome to the latest citizens of this great nation of ours.

Of course we understand that the gentlemen in question were only actually involved in the design phase of these 'projects' and our congratulations must really be extended to the workforces who contributed to manufacture.

So congratulations too, ladies and we wish you and your families all the health and happiness for the future.

And Finally

Renewed presence and new client at OR

We are pleased to announce that we have entered into a partnership with new clients at OR, which commenced on the 3rd May.

As part of the long term development Plans, a UK's leading provider of construction services, have taken over the site for the next phase of construction and renovation. Our officers remain in service and our working closely with

construction supervisors, Octaga continue to provide the service on a 24/7 basis.

The construction company has a security division and is actually itself an ACS company, yet once they had inducted our staff and met Emma and the team they were keen for us to remain as subcontractors for them.

This is mainly due to the calibre of our staff, our long term presence in the area and the quality of our management,

quality system local knowledge and staff development.

We'd like to extend our thanks to our new business partners, as they have improved facilities onsite for our security teams, our managers and officers have a good relationship with their site supervisors.

We look forward to full and productive partnership at OR – and of course to the continued presence on OR of all of our Octaga team.

Survey Reminder

Just a reminder to you all that our 2011 staff survey closes at the end of June, and if you'd like your voice heard then do fill it in. Only one session can be conducted from any one IP address to help prevent multiple responses from any one individual, so if the PC at work takes you to the Survey Monkey front page instead of the survey, it has been used already. Do log on at home though and complete the survey; your opinion matters to us.

– It really does literally take about 4 minutes. <http://www.octaga.co.uk/staff-survey/>

Chess Club + Sudoku

Thanks to all of you who had a go at last issues chess position; from a real game too;

One of my own from the 1st game of the Final of Hagley & Dist Champs 2003

With the black king penned in, if I could just shift the h6 pawn and do something about that g6 square, it would have been goodnight Vienna for my opponent. The way to win quickly was;

- 1. Qg6+ Bxg6**
Pens in the king
- 2. Ng5+ hxg5**
Opens that h column
- 3. Hxg6#**

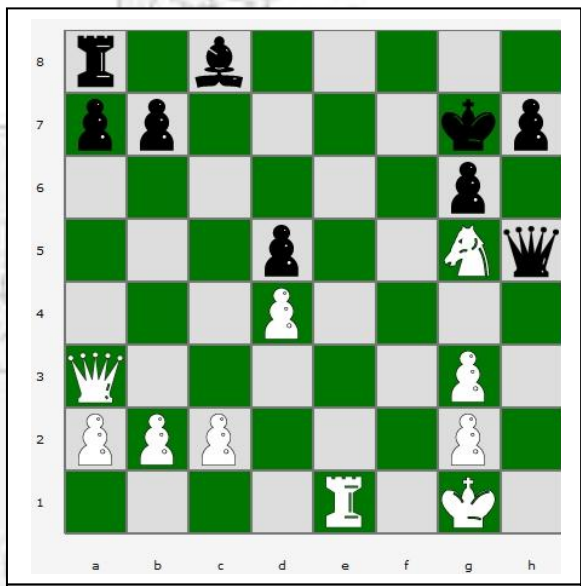
In case you're wondering; after a ten hour day at work, three pints and nearly 1 ½ hours into our chess game in the evening, I didn't see it at the time either ☹

On the right is an easier one this time – and with a clue!

Three moves for white – all with the Queen - will force checkmate on the Black King. There is a more brutal solution, but here Black was a real player again and ran forward, hoping for a White mistake.

A hard Sudoku this issue though to compensate!

Good luck all.



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	3	6			9	5	
	9	8	2		3		
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See us at:
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All Readers:
Deadline for submissions for next edition: **20th August**

Managers:
Deadline for monthly award citations: **31st August**

Opinions expressed herein are those of individual writers and as such may not reflect the views, strategy and policy of the Octaga Group

Cooking up Trouble for Al Qaida

03 Jun 11 Source: **Guardian Unlimited via Security Oracle**

Whitehall sources have revealed that British intelligence officers successfully sabotaged the launch of the first English language website set up by an al-Qaida affiliate. The officers, understood to be based at GCHQ in Cheltenham, attacked an online jihadist magazine in English called 'Inspire' - and posted a recipe for cup cakes! How very British ... old chap.

Next Time:

- Staff Survey Results
- Further Detail on Staff Training from Emma