

# OpSec Newsletter

## We Were There: International Security Expo (ISE) 2023

### Article: Unmasking Impersonation Fraud - Protecting Your Business in the Age of Deception

In today's fast moving digital world, the art of deception has taken on new forms, and businesses in the physical security space are no exception to the rise of impersonation fraud.

### Special Projects Group Receive Highfield Qualification Centre Status for Course Delivery

Special projects Group receive the official notice that they now hold fully Approved Centre Status with Highfield Qualifications. An exciting step in the provision of enhanced training courses.



Special Projects Group



**Highfield**

Qualifications

Approved Centre



IPSA



ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT





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# Special Projects Group at the International Security Expo.

## 2023 OLYMPIA LONDON

The International Security Expo (ISE) 2023 was held at the Olympia, London on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September. This is the go-to event to attend to meet with a vast array of Security Consultancy, Training & Services Companies, as well as key Organisations, Awarding Bodies, and Tech.

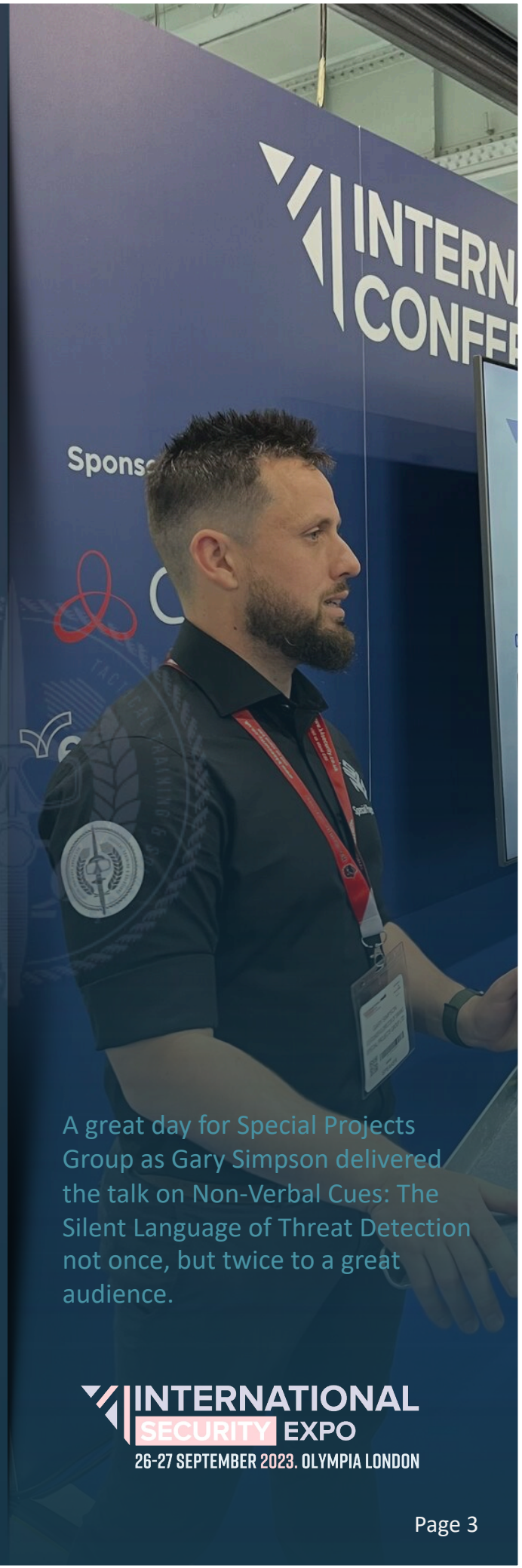
One of our reasons for attending this year was one of our Directors, and a Co-Founder of the company was giving a talk on the second day on a rather unknown subject. This was Non-Verbal Cues: The Silent Language of Threat Detection.

As fate would have it, not only did Gary deliver the talk to a full crowd but was asked later in the day to deliver it a second time to fill in for another Body language expert who had been called away. Naturally, he delivered, and it went as good as the first-time round.

During our visit, we met with numerous sector experts within the Security Industry, including Satia from IPSA, William Dill, a leading expert in the field of People Trafficking, and Port Security, Colin Bell, also a former Royal Marine, Stephen 'Dan' Ackroyd, another former Royal Marine, yes – there's a pattern developing here, and many other great people.



Special Projects Group



A great day for Special Projects Group as Gary Simpson delivered the talk on Non-Verbal Cues: The Silent Language of Threat Detection not once, but twice to a great audience.

**INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY EXPO**  
26-27 SEPTEMBER 2023. OLYMPIA LONDON



## Human Trafficking Awareness – An Article By Invisible Traffick

How to build awareness, help combat organised crime and discover the benefits which both Private and Public Sector Bodies can achieve from collaboration.

“... Human Trafficking has been defined within the Palermo Protocol as: *The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation ...*”

This crime is very real and is destroying lives of individuals of all ages and nationalities, communities, as well as presenting a threat to national security.

As reported by Anti Human Trafficking Charities and NGO's this crime is estimated that 50 million people are trapped in modern day slavery worldwide.

These organisations also state that it is believed that 12,000 victims of Human Trafficking have been identified in the UK.

However, as these reports continue this figure is believed to be vastly underestimated with the figure believed to be closer to 130,000 victims with a global profit of \$150 billion a year.

Our mission is to combat Modern Day Slavery both locally and internationally. We are committed to making the invisible, visible by raising awareness of human trafficking in all its forms.

*Invisible Traffick*



Special Projects Group



The International Labour Organisation in 2022 reported that:

*“... Human Trafficking is the fastest growing international organised crime, second largest criminal industry in the world, second only to drug trafficking ...”*

Forms of human trafficking consist of the following:

- Forced Labour
- Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic Servitude
- Forced Criminality
- Organ Harvesting

Although some reports have stated that the most common victims of human trafficking are females, human trafficking is not a discriminatory crime as it includes victims from a wide range of nationalities, involving men women and children.

The following model (on the next page) breaks down the activity of human trafficking.

It also illustrates the weakness and potential target areas where we all can target within our day-to-day activities with the aim of rescuing victims, protecting our staff, our premises, our communities, as well as helping to protect National Security.



## THREE CORE ELEMENTS

ACT



MEANS



PURPOSE

The trafficker must do one of the following to the people

Using one or more of these methods

For exploitation

Recruit  
Transport  
Transfer  
Harbour  
Receive

Threat or Use of Force  
Coercion  
Fraud  
Deception  
Abuse of position of  
Vulnerability giving  
payments or benefits  
Abduction

Potential weakness

**TRAFFICKING**

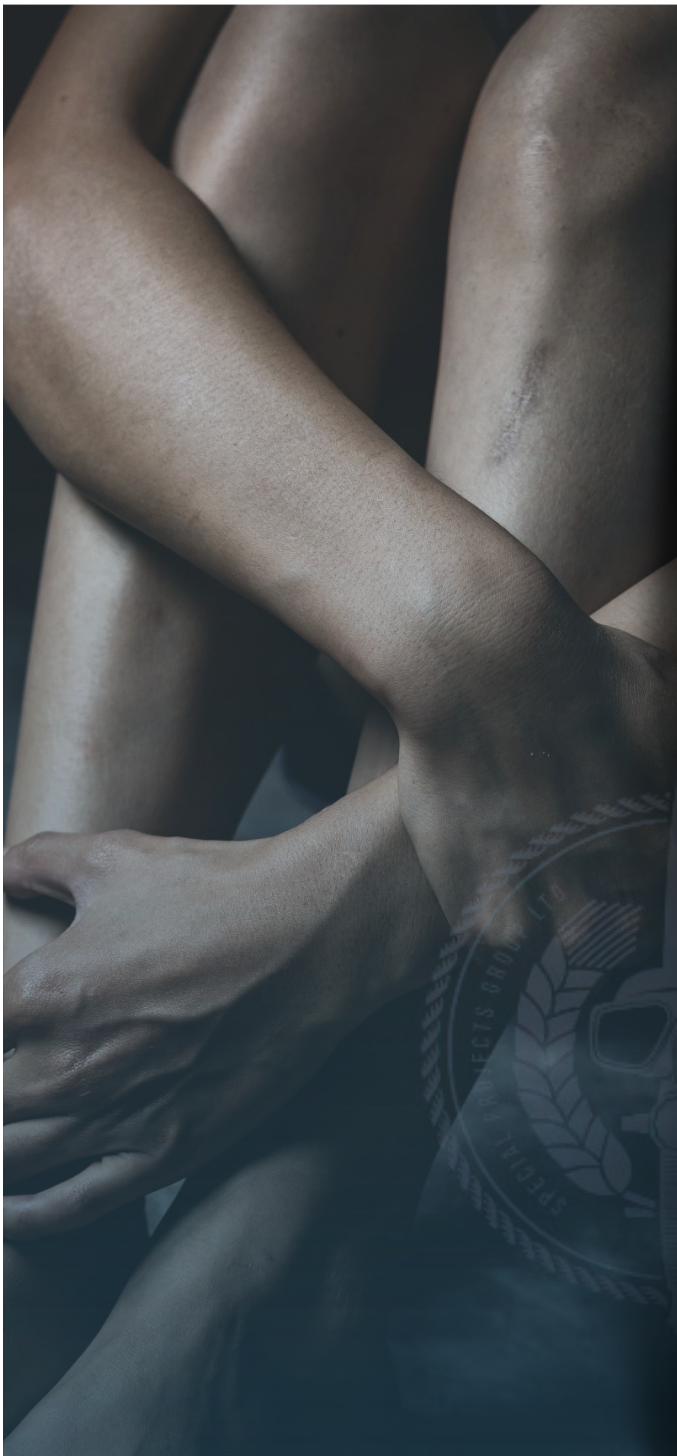
The acts of transport, transfer, harbour and receipt requires the act of moving victims, and this requires transportation networks including airports, seaports, lorries, freight containers, trains, buses, taxis etc. All these types of transport require transport hubs as well and organisation and resources.

When the setup of transport hubs are examined, including airports and seaports of all sizes, the commonality which exists are that of frontline staff supported by private security being present, waiting rooms and CCTV monitoring operational activities for the security of staff.

These areas, especially the larger locations, will also have police presence on site if not nearby. Hence this provides the opportunity and highlights the importance of awareness training to all customer facing staff including security teams and check-in staff.







Our main focus is education, and we have several projects running to educate children and young people on trafficking and exploitation and help to keep them safe.

*Invisible Traffick*



Special Projects Group

Awareness training can be very effective when introduced correctly, as a real-life case study which the author was involved in illustrates.

2019 in a small regional UK Port, security officers raised a couple of observations to the Security Manager of Police having stopped some customers on the suspicions of human trafficking.

From these observations, the Security Manager identified Invisible Traffick, a local Anti-Human Trafficking Charity who was engaged to tailor training to all security and frontline staff on the tell-tale signs of human trafficking victims.

The results produced were evident within the first three months of with security personnel and frontline staff raising 8 observations directly to police, who confirmed that these led to 8 arrests including mobile phones and laptops being seized.

Police also confirmed later that two of these arrests interrupted two international chains of organised crime groups.

The training consisted of informing attendees of the practical visual and behavioural indicators which are common among victims being trafficked.

During the planning for this training the Invisible Traffick visited the Port to tailor training specific to customer / freight check-in procedures.

Also due to the proactive leadership on site, the Port Police agreed their officers would attend to become more familiar with port staff as well as to emphasis to all staff that if they suspect anything, that they should not hesitate to contact them directly.

Example of the content of this training and the tell-tale indicators were as follows:

- Visual Appearance: Inappropriate dress code for travelling (summer clothing in the middle of winter), lack of luggage, disorientation, lack of knowledge regarding travel arrangements.
- Behaviour: appearing frightened, reluctant to make eye contact.
- Physical Signs: Looking ill or frail, potentially due to lack of food, sleep or both
- Controlling Companion: Someone continually speaking on behalf of another person or persons
- People arriving and paying by cash for out of office hours sailings and travelling with little or no luggage.
- People having males on mobile phone speaking for them.

At this location is an ISPS certificated site, was being audited twice a year by the Department for Transport and had several years without any security breaches or any major non-conformances.





However, once the security team looked beyond the regulatory checks and searches in line with required procedures, had received relevant training which was never issued before and started applying relevant training, the training started to produce results.

Security teams and frontline staff became more motivated with security and safety culture being enhanced. Since then, the security teams and frontline staff continue to raise concerns with successful arrests / victims being rescued and teams being recognised for the proactive response to rescuing victims, protecting customers, staff, location and assets.

Training was then recorded onto the company training schedule to be carried out to all staff every two years, with Port Police and other relevant policing agencies staff invited. From these early findings, the following benefits were identified both by the Harbour Authority as well as by the Policing Agencies.

<b>Benefits for Harbour Authority</b>	<b>Benefits for Police and Policing Agencies</b>
Empowered employees	Increase reliable source of intelligence
Enhanced security and safety culture	Early identification of criminal trends and patterns.
Increase if hazard and security observations raised by staff	Enhance situational awareness.
Reduction in staff accidents	Increased arrest / success rates
Reduction in security team absenteeism	Increased collaboration and co-operation with port activities.
Enhanced proactive relations between company and Policing Agencies	Enhanced collaboration and communication with other agencies on site.
Improved security deterrent capability	
Increase in quality of performance as detailed in security audits.	
Embedded Police and Policing Agencies within Emergency plans and enhanced company resilience	





As a result of this training, which was attributed to the empowerment of staff and enhancing security culture, the Port was also accredited for a number of other incidents over a two-year period which staff reported to the authorities including:

- £200,000 pounds of drugs being discovered by port security and raised to local Police,
- 4.6 tonnes of illegal food, originating outside the EU being discovered by port security through normal ISPS vehicle screening and raise with the relevant authorities,
- 2 vulnerable people being identified as wanting to travel but police notified,
- 1 male allegedly acting suspicious, notified to Port Police who confirmed later that he was wanted by Interpol.
- The recording and notifying authorities of a total of 375 puppies being transported to GB over a two-year span, 60+ puppies seized and names, addresses and details of individuals recorded for further investigation with regards to puppy smuggling.

The majority of the above have been confirmed by the authorities that this incident very well would have passed under the radars of the authorities.

However, these successes are not just down the work of Invisible Traffick and the port security team members / frontline staff, they are also attributed to the proactive on the ground support of the Port Police at this location.





The Port involved in this real-life case study is considered a small regional port, it is not a Dover, Hull, Teesport or any other major UK Port, however it does illustrate that organised crime groups will seek for reliable routes in and out of the UK with minimal security awareness shown on site.

Hopefully, this article has illustrated that all transit hubs are a critical element for the criminals of Human Trafficking.

Awareness training, when implemented correctly, with frontline staff have and can make the difference in rescuing victims and interrupting this international crime.

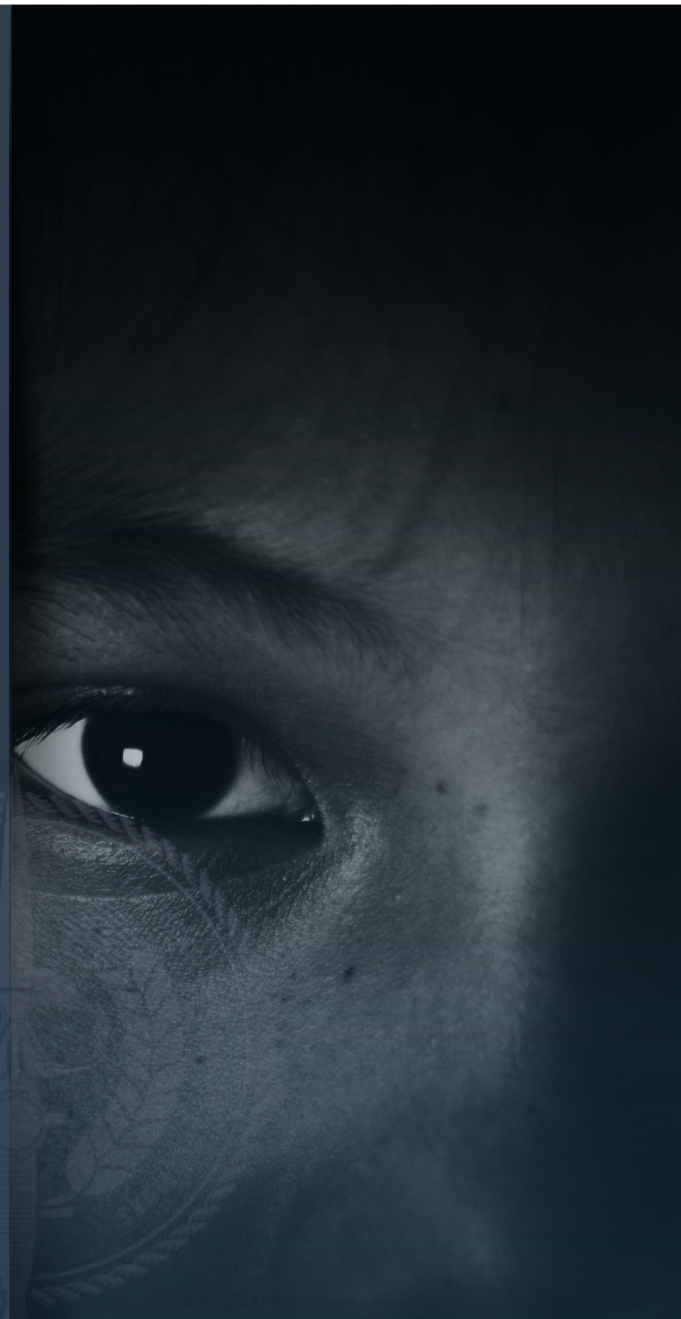
To close, the Author would just like to say well done the port security teams and a large thank you to the work of Invisible Traffick, who build awareness not just within industry but within community groups as well.

**INVISIBLE  
TRAFFICK**

<https://invisibletraffick.org>



Special Projects Group



**STOP  
HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING**



# Highfield

Qualifications<sup>®</sup>

Approved Centre

## Special Projects Group Ltd. Achieve Highfield Qualifications Approved Centre Status

We are very proud to announce that Special Projects Group Ltd. are now an officially Approved Centre under Highfield Qualifications. The purpose behind gaining this Approval is to enable the Company to provide fully Approved Courses in the following areas:

- Highfield Approved, SIA Close Protection Operator and the 10-day International Close Protection Operator Courses.
- Highfield Approved, SPG Hostile Environment Close Protection Operator (HECPO) Team Member & Team Leader Courses.
- Highfield Approved, SPG Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) for Team Members and Team Leaders Courses.

Contact us today either through our website, or by emailing us at the following address: [enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org](mailto:enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org).



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## Article: Unmasking Impersonation Fraud - Protecting Your Business in the Age of Deception

In today's fast moving digital world, the art of deception has taken on new forms, and businesses in the physical security space are no exception to the rise of impersonation fraud.

As we delve into the shadows of this ever-evolving threat, this brief article aims to illuminate the tactics used by impersonators while providing you with actionable advice to better safeguard your organisation.

Impersonation fraud is on a rapid increase especially in a world where digital interactions prevail in most business conversations. Impersonators have significantly honed their techniques to exploit this trust.

Whether that be through phishing emails, phone calls, or in-person encounters, fraudsters are continually crafting convincing personas to infiltrate organisations or by pretending to be reputable companies thereby influencing the mind of the decision maker.

According to UK finance there were 45,367 cases of this type of fraud in 2022, with losses totalling £177.6m affecting businesses across all sectors, including the security industry.

Understanding the modus operandi of impersonators is the first line of defence. Impersonation fraud encompasses a spectrum of tactics, from social engineering to identity theft.



Phishing emails laden with malware, fraudulent phone calls from seemingly legitimate sources, and even individuals masquerading as trusted employees or partners are all part of the impersonation toolkit.

Impersonators will prey on trust, exploiting human psychology to breach your security defences.

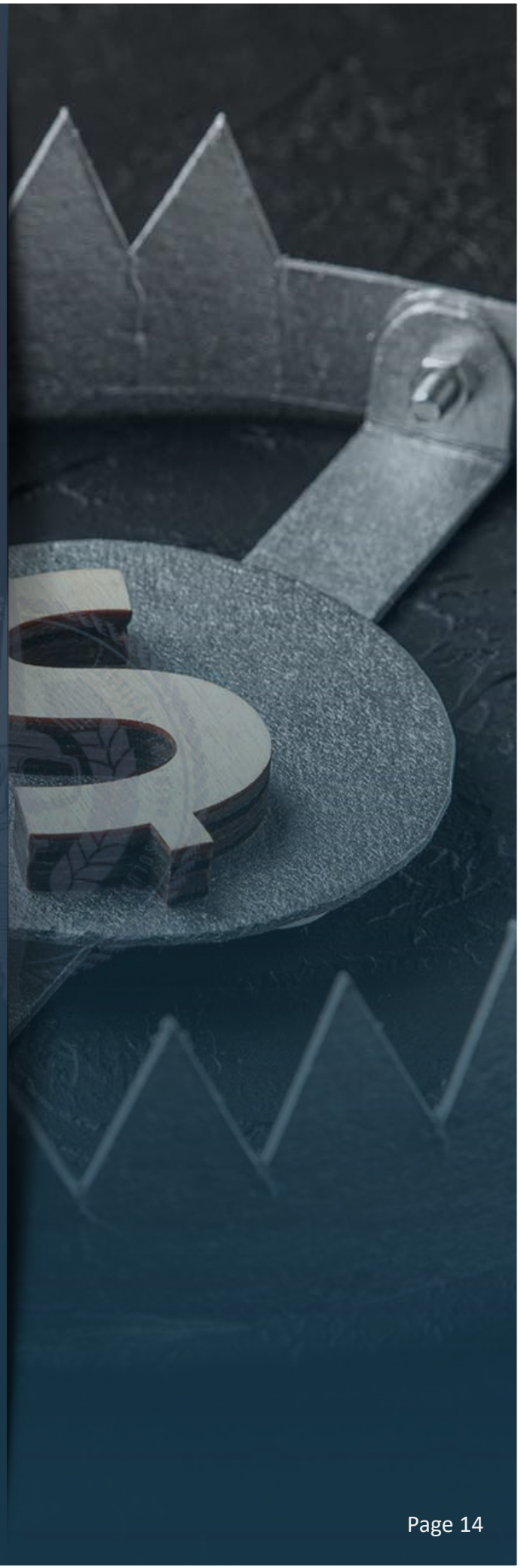
For businesses in the physical security sector, the consequences of falling victim to impersonation fraud can be devastating.

Imagine an imposter gaining unauthorised access to your secure facility or manipulating your security personnel with a fabricated identity.

These scenarios can lead to security breaches, data theft, and reputational damage. Impersonation fraud jeopardises not only your assets but also the safety and trust of your clients.

Identifying the warning signs of impersonation attempts is essential for pre-emptive action. Often, impersonators leverage emotional triggers, urgency, or authority to deceive employees.

Be on the lookout for discrepancies in communication, unusual behaviour, or inconsistencies in identity verification. Employee training and awareness programs are pivotal in fostering a culture of scepticism and vigilance against potential impersonators.







Preventing impersonation fraud requires a simple yet multi-faceted approach:

- **Employee Training:** Regularly educate your staff on the latest impersonation tactics and teach them to how to verify identities rigorously.
- **Identity Verification Protocols:** Implement strict verification processes, especially for access to secure areas or sensitive data and ensure staff follow these.
- **Technology Solutions:** Invest in advanced technologies like biometric authentication or secure communication channels, even basic technology tools such as two factor authentication and email filtering will help to prevent fraudulent attempts.

If you wanted to learn more, speak to one of our advisors to see how we can help your business.

[enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org](mailto:enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org)





## Form a Strategic Partnership with Special Projects Group Ltd.

Are you interested in becoming a Strategic Partner for Special Projects Group? We are looking to develop strong business relationships with proven, established companies within the Security Sector. We offer excellent commission rates, and partnerships on key projects.

Areas we are looking to collaborate right now are:

- Close Protection Services
- Security Consultancy
- Cyber Security Consultancy
- Insider Threat & Fraud Prevention

Contact us today either through our website, or by emailing us at the following address: [enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org](mailto:enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org).





## Online Courses Released on the Special Projects Group Website

Through our Strategic Partner, we now offer our customers three new courses.

The aim in the coming months is to develop many more courses in Partnership with this Strategic Partner, including a set of Close Protection related courses such as Residential Security Teams – Low to medium Threat Environments, and Residential Security Teams – High-Threat Environments, which are currently under development.

## Classroom-Based Courses Coming Soon to Special Projects Group.

Over the next three to four months, Special Projects Group will be releasing several classroom-based training courses, many fully Approved by Highfield Qualifications, and several in-house certificated.

Amongst these courses will be:

- Hostile Environment Awareness Training for Team Members & Team Leaders
- Non-Verbal Communications for the Security Environment
- SIA Close Protection Training Courses
- HECPO Training Courses



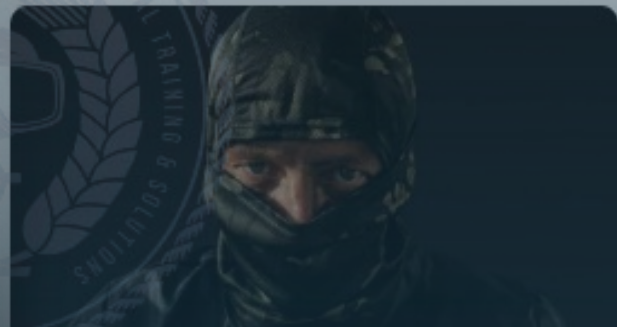
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# Highfield

Qualifications®

Approved Centre



## Lone Worker Security Awareness Training Course

100% Online CPD Accredited Personal  
To learn more about our current and future course releases, contact us using the information provided on Page 18. We're waiting to hear from you and to assist you reach your full potential.



## Contact Details

To contact Special Projects Group Ltd, you can email us at: [enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org](mailto:enquiries@SpecialProjectsGroup.org) and one of our Consultancy Team will respond within 24 hours.

You can also visit our company website at: <https://SpecialProjectsGroup.org> and use the form available through the contact page on the website.

If you wish to make a WhatsApp call, please use the following number: +44 (0)7584 353 932.

To keep informed about the various Security Consultancy Services and Training Services that we provide, as well as updates, tips, and much more, why not sign up to this FREE Newsletter. Simply go to our website at <https://SpecialProjectsGroup.org> and sign up.



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