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CORPORATE SECURITY'S PROFESSIONAL PROJECT: AN EXAMINATION OF THE MODERN CONDITION OF CORPORATE SECURITY MANAGEMENT, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE OCCUPATION.

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'Corporate Security's Professional Project:
An examination of the modern condition of corporate security management and,
the potential for further professionalisation of the occupation.'

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Abstract.

There is a common perception among corporate security managers that their occupation is afforded less status and is rewarded less well than the other management functions within business. In response to similar conceptions of the need to raise the value and status of their work, other occupations have historically embarked on so-called 'professional projects' whereby they collectively attempt to harness their specialist skills and knowledge as a commodity, the value of which they seek to raise and maintain.

This small- scale qualitative study is intended to provide an insight into the analysis of corporate security managers and directors as to the health of their occupation and its standing in the modern corporate world. The study then examines the methods which other occupations have used to successfully improve the status of their practitioners and the value of their work. Finally, based on the analysis of the security managers and directors and the experience of other occupations, a broad strategy for corporate security's own professional project is proposed.

This study suggests that corporate security is currently enjoying divergent fortunes. The most successful security managers and directors enjoy parity of status with their peers from other functions and have taken on responsibilities far in excess of the traditional security department's remit. However, at the other end of the spectrum there are many security managers who are afforded an inferior status to that of managers from other functions. As a result, they struggle to attract significant responsibility or resources within their organisations. The research suggests that other management functions have historically faced similar problems in their development. These other functions have used strategies of occupational negotiation, boundary work, closure and monopolisation to overcome their problems. Together these measures have constituted professional projects. Based on the appetite for professionalisation among our security managers, and the success of professional projects in comparable occupations, this study concludes that security management should embark on a professional project of its own.

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1.1 Introduction

> "Key conclusion should be whether or not education and qualifications at
> this level will integrate security management into the business process at
> the same levels as other functional managers with comparable standards."
>
> (Hoare 2005: 2)

The terms of reference for this project as set out above are borne from a body of
thinking which takes for granted that corporate security in the UK significantly lags
behind the other mainstream business functions in term of how well its practitioners
are regarded by executives of the business and how closely its practitioners are
integrated into the general activity of the business.

However, as discussed in the literature review, this body of thinking has never been
substantiated by any academic research. The research conducted by Nalla and Moresh
(2002) into the state of corporate security in the US contradicted much of the
anecdotal pessimism and reported that corporate security as a business function was in
fact well regarded and influentially located in most corporations. The work of Nalla
and Moresh serves as an example of the dangers of 'perceived wisdom' being taken
for granted in the field of corporate security and with this in mind the first objective of
this research will be to try and add depth to the understanding of the current state of
corporate security by carrying out the first qualitative, academic study of the status of
the corporate security occupation ever undertaken in the UK.

Other discussions of 'professionalism' in the context of corporate security have, at
best, drawn upon simplistic dictionary definitions of what it means to be a
professional, a profession or to professionalise. In fact an extensive sociological body
of work exists in relation to the study of professions and professional privilege: why it
is sought and how it is obtained. It is the intention of this thesis to draw upon that
body of work in order to establish where corporate security currently stands in terms
of its aspiration to be regarded as a profession and what it must do in order to advance
its claim to 'proper' professional status

While the original terms of reference for the project allude only to professionalisation in terms of a qualification, even the most cursory of looks at other occupations, be they long established or still developing, reveal that they have not sought to address the task of raising their standards and the esteem in which they are held through qualifications alone. Larson (1977) was the first to describe the phenomena of 'professional projects' whereby occupations undertook a range of activities in an effort to achieve shelter from the general labour market and monopolise their field of work, obtaining privilege for themselves as practitioners, and lifting the status of their work above that of other occupations in the process. In an effort to offer some guidance for the launch or reinvigoration of corporate security's own 'professional project', the second phase of the research will entail conducting a detailed case study of a similar occupation, which is widely recognised as having successfully professionalised. The aim of this case study will be to analysis what strategies need to be pursued and what criteria need to be filled for a modern management function to achieve professional recognition.

In order to maintain the focus and manageability of this project it will concentrate on 'corporate security management' as opposed to security management more broadly. Wilson and Slater put forward a classical definition of corporate security as: "The safeguarding of assets, personnel and even profitability of the organisation against theft, fire, fraud, criminal damage and terrorist acts" (Wilson & Slater 1990), more recently Hill and Smith have defined it as: " A corporation's management of risk to their people, property, information and liability" (Hill and Smith, 1995)

1.2 Literature Search.

At the outset of the literature search I looked first to the *Security Journal* (Perpetuity Press) as the only peer-reviewed journal touching on the field of Security Management in any corporate or commercially-orientated sense. Similarly obvious sources of literature were the internationally recognized Security Management magazine and Security Management Today magazine (SMT); the most widely distributed publication aimed at UK security managers.

In addition to these sources the author found work originating from Cranfield University, such as the *Diogenes Papers* (Cranfield University 2000), were readily available. Examination of these sources returned a relatively small number of relevant articles and also suggested that there was a general dearth of work elsewhere "Security, as an academic discipline, is still in its infancy and literature is scarce." (Manunta 2000: 6).

In an effort to ensure that no literature relevant to the review was missed a systematic trawl through likely sources of information was organized. The search was organized around keywords and phrases. Deciding on the key words and phrases was somewhat problematic. As a relatively fledgling academic subject security has no single vocabulary (Garcia, 2000) and many of the terms deemed relevant to the search had other applications and the potential to generate large numbers of erroneous search returns.

Based on the terminology used in the existing literature and discussions with individuals knowledgeable in the field it was decided that the search would be based on four key phrases intended to capture material that may have been written or stored using a variety of headings. As table 1 demonstrates the different phrases and keywords were used in an effort to trap relevant material that may have approached the subject from a variety of perspectives. However, this approach had the inadvertent consequence of often generating lots of results irrelevant to the specific topic and frequently results entirely unconnected to the field of security. Thus, the ratio of results trapped to results actually deemed useful was fairly low.

It was decided to use these keywords and phrases to search the titles and abstracts of journal articles and book reviews contained within two large online social science databases, 'Swetswise E-journals' and 'EBSCO Host'. The decision to use these databases was based on their size and the availability of access to them.

The search of the two databases was configured to include an examination of article titles and article abstracts. In the case of book reviews the title of the book would be included within the article abstract. To maintain the manageability of the search process it was decided that searches which returned more than 300 results would be

Table 1.1: 'Search Terms. Rationale and Limitations'.

Search Term	Rationale	Limitations
"Private Security"	A broad term which theoretically takes in all security provided privately i.e. *'trends in the provision of private security.'*	Its use in literature is generally in relation to the security industry and security contractors; the provision of manned guards ect.
"Security Management"	Relates directly to the practice which is at the core of the research i.e. *'Assessing the development of Security Management.'*	Tends to generate large numbers of results containing technical information on the day-to-day work of security management.
"Business" *and* **"Security"**	Takes in literature that considers the topic from a business perspective i.e. *'what can security contribute to your business?'*	Traps a large number of results from economic literature on business securities. Searching with the AND operator generates extra erroneous results where words appear together but are unconnected within an abstract.
"Corporate Security"	Relates most specifically to the security field this research is interested in i.e. *'the continued growth in spending on Corporate Security'*	None.

excluded. Where searches returned less than 300 results the results were checked individually to see if they had relevance to the issue of corporate security and distinguished it from the security industry more broadly. Where these criteria were met articles were checked more closely to assess if they contained material relevant to the theme of development and professionalisation within corporate security and security management. The results of this search are detailed in table 1.2 below.

Given the limited number of relevant articles returned from the databases the search for material was extended to less obvious resources. The ISI Web of knowledge contains a Social Sciences Citation Index, expanded with cited references and allows the user to search journal titles and also citations within journal pieces for relevant material. The Index to Theses is a comprehensive listing of theses with abstracts accepted for higher degrees by universities in Great Britain and Ireland since 1716.

Table 1.2: 'Database Search Results.'

Search Term	Results	Included
Swetswise		
"Private Security"	151	0
"Security Management"	61	3
"Business" and "Security"	27	0
"Corporate Security"	1	1
EBSCO Host		
"Private Security"	1,323	N/A
"Security Management"	117	5
"Business" and "Security"	2,200	N/A
"Corporate Security"	16	6

These sources were searched using the same keywords and phrases used previously and the results were subject to the same criteria. The results of this second search are presented in table 1.3 below.

This further search effort unearthed 4 additional literature pieces judged to be of relevance to the project. These four pieces when added to the 14 found in the initial search and the material already in the author's possession formed the basis of the literature review. The literature took a variety of forms. A minority of it was in the form of peer-reviewed research articles and academic, theoretical pieces. Some came in the form of what one may call practitioner/ thinker literature written by senior practitioners in the field. This literature demonstrated understanding and depth of thought about the subject but was also clearly based on subjective notions of what was happening and what should be happening. The remainder of the material found came from magazines such as Security Management and Security Manager Today.

While these journalistic pieces were frequently based on assertion and opinion they nevertheless provided a valuable insight into what the current issues and debates within the security profession were.

Within the literature two key themes emerged. The first of these was a continued debate as to whether security management had yet filled the criteria necessary to be a 'profession'.

Table 1.3. 'ISI/ Index to Theses Search Results.'

Search Term	Results	Included
ISI Web of Knowledge		
"Private Security"	110	0
"Security Management"	105	1
"Business" and "Security"	413	NA
"Corporate Security"	9	0
Index to Theses		
"Private Security"	7	1
"Security Management"	54	2
"Business" and "Security"	20	0
"Corporate Security"	6	1

Secondly, and closely linked, was the question of what was required to achieve 'professional' status if it had not been achieved and what could be done to raise the levels of professionalism further if it had.

1.3 Literature Review.

1.3.1 Is Security Management a Profession?

While some writers in the field have taken the professional status of security managers for granted for the last 15 years (Hearnden 1989), for other contemporary writers the issue has been much less clear-cut. Manunta (1996) distinguishes between the 'bureaucratic' and 'pragmatic' interpretations of the term professional. In bureaucratic terms the title professional presupposes academic qualifications and demands enrolment in an institution that will have official recognition and govern its members in terms of ethics, standards and discipline. For Manunta, the pragmatic interpretation while grounded in the dictionary definition (i.e. 'paid occupation, esp. one that requires advanced education and training...') requires less stringency about institutional membership and formal restrictions placing greater emphasis instead on

the perception of "…intellectual and manual activity at its highest level…" (Manunta 1996: 8).

Manunta argues that the professional status of security managers can in the first instance be assessed through a comparison of its characteristics in terms of pay, education and training with those of other recognised professions such as architects and doctors. Writing almost 10 years ago he notes that security managers seriously lag behind on all fronts:

> "Those employed in the private sector tend to be mature, retired people with military or police background who are unlikely to have had education at university level. Most of them have little or no career prospects, and some on their own admission are in search of a 'warm, comfortable retreat'".
>
> (Manunta 1996: 235)

In his defence of the security management profession Simonsen, writing at the same time as Manunta, set out 5 elements which compose a profession:

- Specific standards and a code of ethics governing members.
- A body of knowledge, professional journals and historical perspective to act as guidance.
- A recognised association as a forum for discussion.
- A certification programme ensuring that members are competent.
- An educational discipline that prepares students in the specific functions and philosophies of the profession.

(Simonsen 1996).

Despite these challenging criteria to be met by professionals Simonsen was optimistic about the progress security management had made. Citing the proliferation of books, journals and magazines as evidence of a body of knowledge and the existence of the American Society for Industry Security (now simply ASIS) and The International Association of Hospital Security Supervisors as proof of recognised associations.

In summary, Simonsen concedes that as of 1996 the professionalisation of the field was not yet *fait accompli* but argued that the "pieces were in place…" and "…security should already be rightly regarded as a profession."(Simonsen 1996: 232)

In more recent literature the debate about security's professional status is one its doubters have been more willing to sustain. While the term 'professional' is used frequently (see Wyllie 2000; Garcia 2000; and Kovacich & Halibozek 2005) explicit defences of the term professional are less common. It appears that some writers on the topic of security management have grown weary of the debate feeling that its continued discussion only serves to undermine the would-be professionals cause.

> "Other professions do not behave the way security professionals do- we don't see doctors, lawyers, engineers, criminologists or financial managers arguing about whether or not they are professionals. They know, and more importantly, the general public knows, that they are."
>
> (Garcia 2000: 81)

As well as expressing frustration Garcia also indirectly subscribes to Manunta's pragmatic interpretation of the term professional.

> "Is security a profession? The mere fact that the question is still frequently debated in security journals may be proof that we have yet to arrive… The real question, then, is how can we achieve that objective?"
>
> (Axt 2002: 142)

Axt's point is instructive as to the general nature of the debate. Nothing is written with the obvious aim of undermining or detracting from security management. Those who express doubt about the readiness for professional status do not seek to detract from security but rather they write with hope of creating or maintaining momentum for progress in the right direction. According to Axt, it will not be for security practitioners themselves to deem when professionalisation has been accomplished: "…it is the beneficiaries and consumers of security services who will decide when security has become a profession." (Axt 2002: 142)

For some writers the status 'professional' is something of a destination and arriving there will be evidence that security management has achieved a level of sophistication currently associated with other more established professions. For others the term professional is simply a checkpoint that has been passed and an indication that security management is progressing but by no means an indication that security as a discipline may yet be considered the equal of, for instance, law or medicine.

When considered like this the question of whether security managers are considered as professionals is of less significance. On closer examination, the debate actually becomes one of when the term 'professional' is appropriate rather than the level of sophistication that security as a discipline has achieved. In terms of how far security management as a discipline has come, and perhaps more crucially, what is yet to be done, there is a significant degree of consensus within the literature.

1.3.2 Sociological Perspective

Interestingly, none of the literature pertaining to corporate security's 'professional question' draws on the substantial body of sociological literature surrounding the professions. As groups of individuals who have obtained significant privilege and autonomy in their work, professions have attracted much attention from sociologists since the beginning of the 20th century. Early work in the field tended to produce 'trait' models of professions which essentially comprised a list of attributes common to professions. Works such as that by Millerson (1964) are exemplary of this approach. Following a systematic study of a range of professions Millerson lists twenty-three 'essential elements' of a true profession. As an example of the lack of consensus which surrounded these early efforts to define a profession, no single item on Millerson's list was accepted by all of his contemporaries in the field. (Johnson 1972). However, those most frequently re-iterated included:

- Skills based on theoretical knowledge
- The provision of training and education
- Testing the competence of members
- Organisation
- Adherence to a professional code of conduct
- Altruistic service.

As the study of professions progressed these early 'trait' models of professions were criticised for various failings, not least their tendency to accept the professions own definitions of themselves. Gradually the creation of these trait models was replaced by the functionalist approach to the study of professionalisation. This shift was characterised by Everett Hughes who noted that in his studies he: "…passed from the

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false question 'Is this occupation a profession?' to the more fundamental one: '…what are the circumstances in which people in an occupation attempt to turn it into a profession and themselves into professional people?'". (Hughes 1971: 66)

The functionalist answer to this question has generally placed great emphasis on the selfless aspects of professional life. Parsons (1951) argued that professions were driven by altruistic motives of service and maintenance of standards. Subsequently in the functionalist vein Anderson has argued that:

> "…what makes a profession a profession is the sort of person who practices it… professional 'training' should be regarded not as knowledge inculcation but as the formation of a certain sort of person."
>
> (Anderson, 1988: 9)

However, since the 1960s, this functionalist perspective of the professions has been challenged by the interactionist school of thought. Interactionists interpret the rise of new professions as expressions of institutional self-interest. Rather than altruistic groups of citizens serving society, professions, in the worst case, are portrayed as greedy and cynical groups craving economic advantage and prestige through social stratification as part of a ruthless Darwinian social struggle. The tools employed in this struggle include the 'professional project' (Larson 1977) through which those possessing specialist and high value knowledge are accused of perpetuating and abusing a monopoly of that knowledge to accrue wealth and social standing.

While Larson's cynical interpretation of the motivations behind the desire to professionalise has since been tempered by other writers her underlying analysis that professional projects are about exchanging one order of scarce resources, knowledge and skills, for another, economic wealth and status, remains central to the contemporary understanding of professions.

1.3.3 The Status of Corporate Security.

While authors in the US note the scarcity of academic literature and research on the corporate security function (Nalla 2001), corporate security in America has in fact been the subject of much more observation than that in the UK. Notable among the US body of work is that by Nalla and Morash (2002). By surveying the corporate

security directors of Fortune 1000 companies in the US they examined the scope of the corporate security remit and its relationship with other business functions within the organisation. Interestingly, they found that corporate security was generally positioned very high in the organizational hierarchy and that it was generally closely integrated within businesses working frequently on a co-operative cross function basis. The study further revealed that corporate executives generally worked very closely with, and were very supportive of, the corporate security function.

By the authors own admission their findings of the healthy state of corporate security in the US defied much of the conceived wisdom on the subject. To date no similar study has been undertaken in the UK and the extent to which the findings can be transferred to the UK corporate environment is unclear. However, the results do emphasise the need to compliment the journalistic, opinion-pieces, which currently dominate the UK literature with some more academic work based on hard data.

One of the very few studies which exist in relation to corporate security specifically in the UK is the business security survey commissioned by the CBI (CBI, 2004). In the course of a more general study into the attitudes of business and their ratings of various threats the CBI study revealed a general consciousness of security at board level. 80percent of the businesses questioned had discussed security at board level, two in three had appointed a chief security officer (CSO) and one in five of these CSO's was a board member. This snapshot into the current status attached to security within business appears, similarly to the work of Nalla & Mahesh, to contradict some popular thinking on the subject and highlights an interesting area for further investigation.

1.3.4 Summary of Literature Conclusions.

On examining the literature it is apparent that there is a great deal of scope for further research into security management in the broadest sense and that corporate security more specifically, particularly in the UK, has been the subject of a minimal amount of research. Accordingly, gaps in the body of knowledge relating to the subject are numerous. Some of the areas in need of most urgent attention appear to revolve around the following aspects of the literature:

- While the CBI survey reveals that security presents concerns for UK business, no work exists which assesses how useful the corporate security function is considered as a means of addressing these concerns.

- While writers such as Wyllie (2000) argue that corporate security as a function is potentially of equal importance to a business as other functions such as human resources or finance, no work exists which examines the function's current standing in relation to these other disciplines.

- Despite the general appetite for further professionalisation in the field, no examination of what lessons can be learned for security from the professionalisation experiences of other functions has been carried out, and no review of the extensive sociological body of literature on the subject has ever been undertaken.

1.4 Research Questions and Aims.

1.4.1 Research Questions.

Based on the findings of the literature review the following research questions have been generated to guide the research.

- *What* is the current status of corporate security as a business function within the UK's largest businesses?
- *How* have other business disciplines previously sought to improve their levels of professionalism and status within business?
- Based on the opinions of security managers themselves and the experiences of other business functions *what* steps can corporate security take as a discipline to consolidate or improve its status?

1.4.2 Aims.

To date the opinion that corporate security management must undergo professionalisation to maintain or improve its status within business, although widely held and much rehearsed, has been based largely on the individual experiences of concerned practitioners and the observations of interested third parties. The first aim

of this research will be to add depth, through academic study, to the notion that corporate security as a function of business is considered poorly in relation to the other business functions. This will involve an investigation into whether a lag between corporate security and other business functions actually exists, why it exists, and what the practical ramifications of such a gap are.

Through an analysis of the development of established professions a further aim of this research is to determine how other disciplines have gone about the process of raising their standards. It is intended to examine what the drivers for professionalisation were, what devices have been used in the course of achieving it and how problems were overcome along the way. Through such examination this thesis will seek to derive lessons for the development of corporate security management.

2. Research Design.

2.1 Research Strategy

2.1.1 The Deductive Approach.

The deductive research strategy begins with a problem or idea which needs to be understood or explained. Rather than beginning with observations deductivists produce a possible answer to the question or an explanation for a problem:

> "The conjectured hypothesis are then criticized and tested. Some will be quickly eliminated. Others might prove more successful. These must then be subject to even more stringent criticism and testing. When a hypothesis that has successfully withstood a wide range of rigorous tests is eventually falsified, a new problem, hopefully far removed from the original solved problem, will have emerged and require new hypothesis of its own."
>
> (Chalmers 1982: 45)

According to Chalmers this is a process which continues indefinitely and as such a theory can never be said to be true. Rather, deductivists strive to prove that a current theory is superior to those it has followed in that it survived tests which they could not. Gray notes that the deductive approach lends itself much more easily to quantitative types of research. Prior to a hypothesis being tested its constituent concepts must be operationalised (made measurable) in such a way that they can be observed. This facilitates confirmation if they have occurred. (Gray 1994)

> "Through the creation of operational indicators, there is a tendency to measure and collect data only on what can actually be observed; hence, subjective and intangible evidence is usually ruled out."
>
> (Gray 1994: 6).

2.1.2 The inductive approach.

Through the inductive approach, plans are made for data collection, after which data are analyzed to see if any patterns emerge which suggest relationships between the variables. "From these observations it may be possible to construct generalizations, relationships and even theories." (Gray 1994: 8)

Induction has not been without its critics. Much of this criticism has centred on positivists who take an inductive approach claiming that they can set aside all

prejudice, prior assumptions and notions of common sense. This positivist approach raises the problem of when to stop observing?

> "No finite amount of observational evidence (and this is all we ever have) can finally establish the truth of a law which is held to apply to all times and places, and whose instances are therefore potentially infinite in number."
>
> (Keat & Urry 1975: 15)

Gray notes that in modern practice a pure inductive approach of the type criticized above is rarely employed and that it is quite acceptable to pursue an inductive strategy while acknowledging that the researchers own instincts will play a part in the work

> "…the very fact that an issue has been selected for research implies judgments about what is an important subject for research, and these choices are dependant on values and concepts."
>
> (Gray 1994: 8)

According to this thinking the duty of the researcher is not remove all bias and prejudice from the process but to accept that their own assumptions will inevitably play a part and to take precautions to ensure that they do not unduly bias the research.

> "To ensure a degree of reliability, the researcher often takes multiple cases or instances through, for example, multiplying observations rather than basing conclusions on just one case."
>
> (Gray 1994: 9)

Given the fact that that this will be an exploratory piece of work, that few theories exist on which it would be appropriate to base a hypothesis and the limitations of adopting a deductive approach in a qualitative study this research will progress with an inductive strategy. While taking the precautions outlined by Gray above, it will set about collecting data through interviews and case studies from which it is hoped it will be possible to extract attitudes to professionalisation in corporate security and approaches to professionalisation in other relevant disciplines.

2.2 Ontological and Epistemological Considerations: Two Conceptions of Social Reality.

> Ontology is the study of being, that is the nature of existence. While ontology embodies understanding *what is*, epistemology tries to understand *what it means to know*. Epistemology provides a philosophical background for deciding what kinds of knowledge are legitimate and adequate.
>
> <div align="right">(Gray, 2004:16)</div>

In 1989 Cohen and Manion wrote of the two competing views of the social sciences- the established, traditional view and the more recently emerging radical view. (Cohen and Manion 1989). The former view held that the social sciences were essentially the same as the natural sciences and therefore should be concerned with discovering universal laws determining human behaviour. The then radical and emerging view shared the traditional desire to explain and describe human behaviour but doubted the ability of traditional methods to accommodate the often irrational actions of people.

The differences of these competing views essentially stemmed from two different conceptions of social reality. Burrell and Morgan (1988) approach these two competing views by examining the implicit and explicit assumptions which underpin them:

Burrill and Morgan identify two ontological assumptions posing the question is social reality external to the individual- existing in a fashion which is objective and singular- or is it the product of the individual consciousness, subjective and multiple?

The second set of assumptions they identify are of an epistemological kind and concern knowledge. The two extreme epistemological positions variously contend that knowledge is something that can be acquired on one hand, or is something that must be personally experienced on the other. Cohen and Manion note that "How one aligns oneself in this particular debate profoundly affects how one will go about uncovering knowledge of social behaviour. (1989: 7) The view that knowledge is hard and singular will require the researcher to take on the role of an observer remaining separate from that which is being studied. Conversely, seeing knowledge as personal and subjective will lead the researcher to take on some involvement with that being studied which will render the traditional methodologies of natural science useless to

him. To subscribe to the former of these approaches is to be a *positivist*. A number of schools of thought have emerged which entail the thinking in the latter approach but as they have all emerged in response to positivism Cohen and Manion use the umbrella term *anti-positivist.*

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives.

Positivism.

Various writers outline a number of theoretical perspectives open to the researcher based on their philosophical inclinations. Of these positivism was first considered. For the positivist, science is an attempt to gain predictive and explanatory knowledge of the external world and statements only attain the rating of knowledge if they can be put to the test of empirical experience.

> Any attempt to go beyond this representation plunges science into the unverifiable claims of metaphysics and religion, which are at best unscientific, and at worst meaningless.
>
> (Keat & Urry, 1975 pp4).

Various aspects of positivism have been subject to "devastating criticism" (Blaikie 1993: 101). Of these criticisms contradiction of the positivists claim that a single objective reality can be perceived by human senses is particularly acute. Accepting that a single, unique, physical world exists the process of observing it surely involves conscious and sub-conscious interpretation. As expressed by Hanson "…there is more to seeing than meets the eye." (Hanson, 1958) Thus, positivism was rejected as a possible theoretical approach.

Interpretivism.

Gray (1994) suggests that of the various reactions to positivism interpretivism has been among the most influential. According to intrepretivist's human experience centres around interpretation of experiences rather than a physical, sensory apprehension of them "…social reality is not some 'thing' that may be interpreted in different ways; it is those interpretations." (Blaikie 1993: 96) This assertion of pure interpretivists that interpretation can account for everything and that nothing concrete is somewhat unconvincing. While interpretive processes surely have a significant role

to play in understanding what is happening around us Outwaite (1987) argues that it does not follow that they can account for all that exists or all that is known to exist.

Realism.

In seeking for a compromise between these two polar extremes the author was drawn to realism. Realism begins from the position that the picture science paints of the world is a true and accurate one. Thus, for the realist researcher objects of research such as culture, the organization and corporate planning all exist and act quite independently of the observer. From the realist standpoint knowledge is advanced through the process of theory building in which discoveries add to what is already known. However, although reality comprises entities, structures and events, realism concedes that observable facts may merely be illusions. Equally, realism accepts that there will be some phenomena which cannot be observed but which exist nonetheless (Chia, 2002). The realist acceptance that what is observed *de facto* may not tell the 'whole story' alongside its acknowledgment that the 'whole story' may entail things which cannot be observed fits which the worldview of the researcher and is deemed to be highly appropriate to the research in hand and thus will be the theoretical perspective from which the work will proceed.

2.4 Methodology.

The combination of different interpretations of the term methodology and the range of different methodologies presented by a range of writers under the different interpretations presents the researcher with a quite bewildering array of methodology options. Gray lists the most commonly employed methodologies as experimental and quasi experimental research; action Research; analytical Surveys; phenomenological research and heuristic inquiry. Each of Gray's outlines was examined in turn and all apart from phenomenology and action research were quickly eliminated as potential methodologies. Further examination of action research made clear that the researcher would not have a sufficiently close relationship with the phenomena under study nor adequate ability to implement change to legitimately adopt such an approach. Given the researchers choice of topic, ontological assumptions and aims for the research a phenomenological methodology as outlined by Gray and Denscombe was deemed the only appropriate methodology.

"… a phenomenological approach has proved useful for researchers in areas such as health, education and business who want to understanding the thinking of patients, pupils and employees… phenomenology is associated with humanistic research using qualitative methods-approaches that place emphasis on the individuals view and experience."

(Gray 1994: 8)

To the researchers mind this fitted entirely with the aims of the research. The researcher, while holding a limited working knowledge of corporate security, does not have the experience or qualifications to attempt to generate solutions to the problem. Rather this research offers the opportunity to make use of the resources, time and importantly the access to practitioners available to generate thick, textual accounts of how they view the current state of the discipline and how they feel things can be progressed. Denscombe's summation of phenomenological research confirmed its appropriateness for the researcher:

- Emphasizes inductive logic
- Seeks the opinions and subjective accounts and interpretations of participants
- Relies on qualitative analysis of data
- Is not so much concerned with generalizations to larger populations, but with contextual descriptive analysis.

(Denscombe 2003:)

2.4.1 Interviews.

Context.

This study was undertaken in an effort to add depth to the understanding of the current state of corporate security as a discipline and to examine if further professionalisation was required and if so how it should be pursued. As was highlighted at the end of the literature review existing literature reveals certain contradictions surrounding the security profession. Not least was the fact that while security as a topic is prominent in the boardrooms of the country's biggest businesses those responsible for security within industry are, if numerous articles and opinion pieces on the subject are to be believed, frustrated by business's unwillingness to

recognise their contribution or to incorporate them in a fashion which would allow them to contribute more fully.

A significant contributing factor to this apparent confusion appeared to be the way in which data on the subject had been gathered. As mentioned the article and opinion pieces which had appeared from practitioners were precisely that, opinion pieces or journalistic in nature and as such had not involved any real data collection. On the other hand the work commissioned by the CBI and carried out by MORI had been quantitative in nature relying on tick box surveys. While these had produced some interesting statistics- 80 percent of boardrooms have discussed security in the last year- such statistics often raised as many new questions as they had answered. Was this the first time they had discussed security? What did the discussion entail? Do they envisage security being discussed again in the near future? While the existing literature on the subject had its own merits it was clear that there was a need for a qualitative study which, while remaining academic and rigorous in nature, would be able to offer a richer more descriptive insight into corporate security.

The security managers and directors participating in the research have been divided into four categories of Communications, Finance, Services and Retail based on the sector in which they are employed. Ideas, opinions and quotes originating from the participants of research interviewed will be attributed by the individual's seniority and sector eg. *(Security Manager, Services)*. This system has the dual advantage of offering some context for the quote while preserving the anonymity of contributors.

Interviews vs. Questionnaires.

The first research question concerning the current state of corporate security as a discipline required the researcher to elicit the views of a number of corporate security practitioners. This presented a choice between the use of questionnaires or face to face interviews. After some thought the interview approach was selected on the grounds that it would offer a number of advantages. While questionnaires would have allowed the researcher to potentially get responses from a greater number of security managers it was unclear what the quality of these responses would be.

Preliminary Interviews.

On this point the 6 preliminary interviews which were conducted between October and December 2005 offered an important steer. The interviews were conducted on a fairly unstructured basis with senior security managers who had a direct interest in the project or who had been recommended as being authoritative on the subject. Given the lack of previous experience on the subject the interviews offered some useful indicators as to the key issues in corporate security and where I could access other useful information. The security managers involved were, on the whole, obviously very busy people being occasionally interrupted during our meetings and having to leave promptly for their next meeting once ours had finished. I suspected that, had they received a questionnaire requiring written answers from me, it may well have received only cursory attention (if any at all) and would certainly not have given me the opportunity to engage them more deeply on new issues or press them on inconsistencies which may occur in their answers.

The importance of a good rapport in the interview process became very apparent in these preliminary interviews. As the interviews wore on and the interviewer could demonstrate a genuine interest in the work of the security managers they became visibly more relaxed and invariably began to drift into small informal asides i.e. 'if your interested in that another good guy for you to speak to would be…'. The security managers obviously appreciated the interest taken in their work and their views. The effort to arrive at their workplace for a one to one meeting with them rather than sending a more anonymous questionnaire by post or email was presumably a factor in this. Keen not to lose any of this informal detail in the interviews proper, the decision was made to proceed with semi-structured interviews. This begged the next question, who should be interviewed?

In the early consultative phase of the research between October and December 2005 I had had a significant amount of contact with members of the Risk and Security Management Forum (RSMF) the lead sponsors of the research. The RSMF is a non-partisan, non- profit making organisation established in 1990. Operating under Chatham House rules the stated aim of the forum is to advance the effective management of risk as it relates to all areas of security. Outside the original terms of reference for the project, which they had played a key role in defining, RSMF

members at no time attempted to dictate how the research should be carried out but were extremely generous in their offers of help in terms of access and resources. I discussed the possibility of a number of dyadic interviews with security managers and the board member or senior manager who they reported to. The rational for this approach was that it would allow triangulation the security manager's assessment of where they stood in the business with a senior figure in the business who had a much less security centric outlook.

Access.
Such an approach would have required access to board members of some of the UK's largest firms for perhaps an hour or more to conduct a meaningful interview. Impressively and generously a number of RSMF members offered to arrange such access. However, the RSMF is select group of approximately 60 senior security figures which operates on a membership by invitation only basis. It is fair to say that RSMF members are, by definition, among the most successful corporate security figures in the country and it soon became clear that outside RSMF circles it would be much more difficult to arrange such high level access. As a security manager of a large food group frankly put it to me: 'Our reporting structure means I report directly to the CEO and to be honest I struggle to get 15 minutes with him once a month so you can imagine what chance I have of getting you in there.'

The dyadic approach was abandoned and it was decide instead to set about interviewing a larger sample of security managers from large organisations. While this approach lacked the intra-organisational triangulation of dyadic interviews it was decided that it was certainly valid to investigate where security managers themselves felt the discipline stood as a base on which further research may choose to build.

As this was a qualitative study carried out by a single researcher, the number of respondents who could be interviewed had to be limited to suit the time and resources available. It was decided that a sample of between 25-30 security managers would be appropriate. Once again the RSMF was extremely generous with its help and if all the offers of help were accepted it could potentially have accounted for all the interviews. While, with such a small sample, the results of this work could never claim to be fully representative a key objective was to elicit as broad a range of opinions and

circumstances as possible. As such an offer of help was accepted from the regional vice-president of ASIS International to put out an open letter on ASIS-net an internet resource used by ASIS members (the letter was a slightly amended version of that which appears in appendix A). With 33,000 members worldwide ASIS is the largest international organisation in the field of security. ASIS consists of members from all walks of the security industry and membership is not restricted by invitation and it was deemed acceptable that the majority of interviews should be conducted with respondents to this open letter.

Aware that of the estimated five to ten thousand security managers in the country bodies such as ASIS and RSMF accounted for less than two thousand a process of cold calling was also undertaken in an effort to reach managers who, for various reasons, did not naturally gravitate towards membership organisations. A time consuming and relatively unproductive process cold calling was conducted across all the companies in the FTSE 100 and 250 whose security managers were not accounted for in the previous categories (more will be said about cold calling and what it revealed in chapter three).

The interviews took place over the period of approximately one month from early February 2006 into the first week of March 2006. The interviews all took place at the interviewee's place of work and, while the greatest number took place in London, the geographical spread took in Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham, Brighton, Bristol, Reading, Newbury and Sandwich.

Before each interview the aim of the research and the specific aims of the interview were relayed to the interviewee via a set script (appendix B).A digital recorder was used with the permission of the security managers and under the proviso that that it could be turned off at any time should they wish. One security manager asked for the recorder to be switched off on two occasions while discussing topics he felt to be sensitive. For the most part the managers interviewed appeared to become oblivious to the recorder once the interview had begun. The interviews were conducted along the lines of the question schedule in appendix C although some flexibility was employed, for instance, if the interviewee sufficiently covered a question as part of an early answer then the question was omitted. Equally, if one of the interviewees'

responses naturally led on to a question further in the schedule then the order was changed appropriately. These interventions were undertaken mainly with the aim of conducting a 'conversation with a purpose' as recommended by various authors. (Burton 2000, Denscombe 2003).

The interviews generally lasted for a little over an hour although there was variation. Some went on longer -the longest lasting for almost two hours- and one lasted for only 25minutes. When asked at the end if they had any other comments on the topics covered or the conduct of the interview a number commented that they had enjoyed the experience:

> "Yes it was very good, quite relaxing really."

> "It is nice to talk about the work."

While a few seemed a little bemused that anybody would take an interest in the subject:

> "I'm glad to help. Although, I don't see what bloody good it'll do you."

One security manager commented that he felt the process had been a little 'stuffy'

> " …to be honest you'll get a lot more out of me if we had both just put our feet up on the desk and put the worlds to right over a cup of tea."

While this comment was taken on board and future behaviour modified slightly overall the response of those interviewed was positive and so the interview routine remained largely unchanged throughout.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Interviews as a Research Technique.
The interviewing and analysis process is clearly quite fraught. The answers recorded in the interview only provide a snapshot of the security manager's opinions at a particular time and clearly these views are liable to change and evolution. As Reiner notes:

> "The problem is that interviews (even in a longitudinal study) cannot trace the process of social interaction in which ideas develop… all that can be done is to reconstruct a plausible account of how present ideas and their relationship to other ideas *could* have developed… Thus no account can ever be considered final."
>
> (Reiner 1978: 17)

Even with this 'brief snapshot' there is ample opportunity for confusion. The answers offered will be affected by the respondents own interpretation of the question and those answers are further at the mercy of the researchers subjective translation of each meaning (Cain 1973).

If, as a quantitative researcher must, a researcher rejects the positivist ontology they acknowledge that their work will inevitably be affected by the fact that those involved cannot assume a common understanding of what is being asked:

> "Although we share one language and share in many ways one culture, we cannot assume that we understand precisely what another person means by a particular word."
>
> (Brown, 1982: 120)

Added to this problem of understanding is the problem that respondents may deliberately withhold information about their true feelings (Jupp 1989: 149). When being asked questions about the success of corporate security within their respective firms' security managers and directors were, to a degree, being asked how good a job they themselves had done. It is hoped that the establishment of a good rapport early in the interview will mitigate such issues however, while some managers were remarkably frank about the problems they faced, it is difficult to judge to what degree others may have neglected to mention problems and frustrations though feelings of professional pride.

After some cancellations, always a risk given the nature of the security manager's work, the number of interviewees which will be included in the study was 26. Two other interviews took place with managers who responded to the ASIS letter but turned out to be fraud investigators and revenue protection specialists respectively. While these interviews were interesting in their own right it was decided to exclude them for reasons on continuity.

With such a small number of interviews generalizations about the profession as a whole are dangerous and any percentages used in the study will relate only to the small sample examined. The phenomenological approach which this study adopts places much less emphasis on generalisability of results to larger populations than on contextual description and analysis (Gray 1994: 28). As such, the key strength of the interview phase of this research should be that it has facilitated the gathering of qualitative material which was more flexible, rich and spontaneous than has been acquired by previous more rigid forms of data collection.

2.4.2 Single-Case Study.

The second of the research questions detailed in chapter one articulated the desire that this research should examine '*how* other occupations had set about the task of professionalising and lifting the status of their work.' It was decided to this end that a single-case study would be employed. Yin (2003) notes that case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon. Given that the research question met all of these stipulations the decision that some sort of case study should be employed was a straight forward one. Of the different types of case studies outlined by Yin it was decided to proceed with a single-case study.

Yin (ibid) notes that there are several different rationales for using the single-case study. He cites the third of these 'representative or typical case' rationale. Here the single-case study is deemed appropriate when the objective of the work is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation:

> "The case study may represent a typical 'project' among many different projects, a manufacturing firm believed to be typical of many other manufacturing firms in the same industry, a typical urban neighbourhood, or a representative school as examples."
>
> (Yin 2003: 41)

In such circumstances the lessons learned from the single case are assumed to be informative about the experiences of the average person or institution. The single-case examined in chapter five is that of the professionalisation efforts of the Human

Resource Management (HRM) and the role the occupation's professional association, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD), at the heart of these efforts. As an occupation which has, in recent years, strived to lift the status of its work and the rewards for its practitioners HRM is typical of any number of other occupations and management activities which have embarked on so-called 'professional projects' (Larson 1977). As such, it was felt that HRM closely fitted Yin's 'representative or typical' single- case criteria and that a case study focused explicitly on its experience of professionalisation, corroborated with examples from other occupations in later chapters, would be a reasonable way to proceed.

2.5 Summary of Research Design.

Given the facts that that this will be an exploratory piece of work, that few theories exist on which it would be appropriate to base a hypothesis and the limitations of adopting a deductive approach in a qualitative study, this research will progress with an inductive strategy. The researcher's ontological and epistemological beliefs dictate that the research will be grounded in a realist theoretical perspective. The methodology will be phenomenological in nature using qualitative methods and placing emphasis on individual's views and experience. Semi-structured interviews and a single-case study will be the tools employed in the research in keeping with the phenomenological approach.

3. Corporate Security: its development and its modern condition.

3.1 Introduction.

This chapter is intended to first briefly chart the background of the corporate security function before examining its modern condition and the status which its practitioners are afforded within their organisations. Corporate security's modern condition will be analysed through as examination of related contemporary literature and by looking to the experiences the security managers interviewed for this study. It is hoped that this will reveal some current trends in terms of how corporate executives think about security, where security is located within organisations and what status security managers feel they are afforded relative to their management peers from other functions of the business.

3.2 Corporate Security's Historical Roots.

Dalton (2003) traces the roots of contemporary corporate security back to the role of the night watchman prior to the 1960s. In this guise the job of security personnel within businesses entailed little more than acting as a lookout with a primary role of early warning in case of incidents such as fire. Throughout the 1960s and into the latter half of the 20th century this limited early role began to expand and fire watches began to take on more classical security duties including controlling access and egress from properties, patrolling and maintaining perimeter fences and general guarding duties. Dalton terms this the 'Green Shack Era' as activities were typically based out of such shacks located by the main gate. (ibid)

While security management progressed at varying speeds within industries different and between individual organisations a growing role for security departments within the corporate world was apparent. For the most part it moved out of the so-called green shacks and into offices embarking on what Dalton describes as the 'Physical Security Era' (ibid). With the arrival of the physical security era corporate security continued to perform duties such as security patrols but in addition took on responsibilities for responding to medical emergencies, controlling traffic, monitoring equipment, escorting employees and staffing front desks. (ibid)

Kovacich and Halibozek argue that the growth of responsibilities and emphasis on security in the corporate sense was in part driven by geo-political factors, not least the Cold War. Personal security clearances were an example of the spread of security measures into the corporate world. Industrial work in sensitive areas or on classified projects frequently demanded large but trustworthy workforces. To meet these demands businesses adopted personnel security clearance processes. This investigative capability often fell to corporate security departments and enhanced their sophistication:

> "As cold war weapons systems and other governmental needs became more sophisticated, so did the required levels of asset protection. For information considered most critical to the national defence, more stringent levels of control were created. Security controls were specified in contracts awarded to the numerous corporations that had been awarded government contracts."
>
> (Kovacich & Halibozek 2003:51).

Post & Kingsbury's description of corporate or, as they termed it, proprietary security is perhaps typical of attitudes towards the discipline through the physical security era:

> "While the majority of employees are honest and try to do a good job, some cheat or steal and allow others to do the same. Consequently, protection of assets has become an important fact of everyday life. As a result there are security officers, managers, and directors of security for a large portion of major corporations."
>
> (Post & Kingsbury 1991:56)

The authors note that the limited nature of the security manager's role meant that they often moved to non-security positions or to larger organisations for greater challenges (Post & Kingsbury 1991). This picture of a security function with fairly limited responsibilities is reinforced by Hearnden whose 1989 survey of security managers in the UK found that administration and housekeeping generally ranked highly in the list of pressures on the security manager's time (Hearnden 1989). Post & Kingsbury's 1991 rationale for the corporate security department was essentially a defensive or protective one whereby companies require security departments and security managers because some employees "cheat or steal and allow others to do the same" (Post & Kingsbury 1991:33) They argued that organisations needed the capacity to protect themselves from such activity or catch those responsible thus deterring others.

This entirely defensive approach to corporate security could be considered the trademark of the physical security era and to an extent it remains the ethos behind security departments in many large businesses today.

One of the effects of globalization has been a proliferation in the number of threats which face large organisations with exposure to operational risks all over the world. This in turn has made the job of protecting businesses much more complicated and means the number of skills required to do so effectively are more numerous. Despite these changes in the size and complexity of the security mangers work in most contemporary businesses the rationale behind it, while it may now be couched in slightly more sophisticated terms, remains the defensive, protective one observed by Kingsbury & Post. When asked why security existed in their organisations the majority of security managers interviewed for this study responded with similarly defensive statements "…our main function is to protect company assets, our people, our property, our brand and our customers." (Security Director, Retail)

3.3 Contemporary Drivers for Corporate Security.
The fact that this defensive mindset has continued to dominate among corporate security managers does not mean that the function has stood still. Since the study of corporate security conducted by Hearnden (1989) the most successful security managers have made their departments integral parts of their respective businesses attracting a wider more challenging range of roles entailing greater responsibility and resulting in improved visibility with their peers and the senior management tiers of the business. The interviews with our security managers revealed that their work involved a whole raft of tasks which it would previously have been impossible to imagine being delegated to the security manager depicted by Post & Kingsbury. Contemporary roles include: the protection of intellectual property; auditing responsibilities; responsibility for ethical policies; export control compliance; oversight of the divestiture of businesses; and due diligence. Within the businesses where security has taken on these expanded roles there has often been a parallel process whereby the more mundane aspects of the work traditionally associated with security, the so-called 'guards and gates' work, have become the responsibility of other functions such as facilities or health and safety.

In addition to the proliferation of threats to organisations associated with dependence on the internet and doing business in global markets, the success of security departments, where it has occurred, has also been driven by new, contemporary geo-political factors. The emergence of global terrorism; the propensity of terrorists to attack civilian targets and symbols of western influence; and the realisation that damage to economic infrastructure can potentially be just as devastating as damage to physical infrastructure has made large commercial organisations legitimate and attractive targets in the eyes of terrorists. In the UK specifically, the threat to security has been heightened further by the rise in direct action and the threat that groups such as animal rights extremists now pose to organisations and employees with even the most tenuous links to the targeted industries or activities.

The growth of regulatory influences on the conduct of organisations has also worked to the advantage of some security departments in their quest for responsibility, authority and visibility within their organisations. Briggs & Edwards (2006) have observed the benefits which some security managers and directors have felt as a result of the growing awareness of the need for effective corporate governance and the plethora of associated regulation "The past decade has witnessed a flurry of activity which is bringing corporate security to the heart of corporate decision making…" (Briggs & Edwards 2006: 32).

Partly driven by these factors, security considerations feature to an unprecedented extent in the decision making of contemporary business leaders. A poll conducted by MORI, on behalf of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), in 2004 revealed that 97 percent of the business leaders questioned felt that security was 'of concern' to them with just over half reporting that it was 'of great concern' (CBI 2004).

80 percent had discussed security at board level, 82 percent were spending more on security than they had five years previously and 57 percent expected that they would be spending yet more in five years time (ibid).

3.4 Limits to the Success of Corporate Security.

While the security function has apparently gone from strength to strength where it has been most successfully applied, the outlook for the discipline as a whole appears to be

more mixed. The first qualification to be placed on all the apparently positive indicators above is that, despite the proliferation of threats to business and global instability which has proven conducive to the development of corporate security in some organisations, a single dedicated security function with specialist security managers appears to remain the exception rather than the norm among the UK's largest businesses.

While no dedicated work has been done on the topic private estimates by commentators in the field suggest that certainly less than 50 percent of businesses in the FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 employ a dedicated security function with a specialist security management team. Some (admittedly not entirely scientific) support for these estimates comes from the experience of data gathering for this research. Of the 200 organisations from the FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 contacted less than 30 percent could guide the researcher to a dedicated security department or security manager within the business. In most cases the organisations concerned directed the security enquiries to a manager in the facilities or estates department who dealt with security as part of a broader remit. While there is the possibility that other factors- such as ignorance of the existence of the department or manager- may account for some of the organisations, it is reasonable to assume that this experience is indicative of the reality in many of the UK's largest businesses. Despite apparently thinking a great deal about security and envisaging increased spending on security, the majority of businesses in the FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 do not see the need for specialist, full-time security management within their organisations.

Added to the fact that security is relatively rarely employed as a business function it must be further noted that, where businesses have opted for specialist security management, it has not always proven a success. The point has already been made that there has been a chronic lack of research on the topic of security management generally and into corporate security management in particular. Important works such as that by Briggs and Edwards (2006) are beginning to fill the void however, thus far, work which is appearing on the topic focuses almost exclusively on cutting edge of the discipline, the sexy end of the occupation. Briggs' & Edward's resilience agenda for the future of security rests upon the argument that "The business of security has shifted from protecting companies from risks, to being the new source of competitive

advantage" (Briggs & Edwards 2006). While this may be the case in the UK's leading security departments, the situation which many more security departments find themselves in is much better characterised by the question "should security management continue to remain as a separate discipline?" which was the title of a debate run by Security Management Today (SMT) magazine (SMT, 2004). In many regards the debate summed up the mixed fortunes which corporate security as a discipline is experiencing. Those in favour of the motion noted that, despite the apparently conducive conditions, in fact corporate security managers were being squeezed out of many organisations due to budgetary pressures:

> "Inevitably, what has happened is that some key services have been contracted out to facilities management service providers. Ultimately, we've seen the security manager begin to lose some status."
>
> (SMT, 2004)

Notions of divergent fortunes among those practising security management were reinforced during the interviews with our security managers. In terms of their reporting lines, their contribution to planning and decision making, the board's attitude toward the function and the status they felt they were afforded in relation to peers from other business functions it was clear that security mangers could be divided into categories of the 'haves' and the 'have- nots'.

3.5 Positioning of Security within the Organisation.

The vertical positioning of security managers within their organisations was a reoccurring theme of the interviews. Whether they already held a senior position within the organisation or aspired to hold such a position, the managers generally felt that their place within the hierarchy of their business and their reporting lines both contributed to, and were reflective of, their status within their respective businesses.

> "I firmly believe that the head of security in any major corporate should only be reporting to one person and that's the top guy. You have to have a senior position; you have to have parity with other people…"
>
> (Security Director, Retail)

.

None of our security managers occupied positions on the board but approximately half of the managers occupied a position one step from main board level. These managers reported directly to a member of the board who in turn made representations to the board on behalf of the security department. A small number of these managers reported directly to their organisations CEO on a regular basis. Slightly more common was a dotted line to the CEO which could be used in extremis. These security managers were, on the whole, very satisfied with their positioning and in fact in one case it was the seniority of the security function which had attracted the manager across from another function:

> "The first thing that struck me about it was that it was very much at the centre of the organisation, and, at a very high level within the organisation… The second thing that attracted me was the access and exposure. At my stage of a career its quite astonishing really the access that I get."
>
> (Security Director, Communications)

The remainder of the security managers operated at less proximity to the board with the majority operating two steps away. Some were content with this positioning but more common was a sense of frustration that security's message was being lost or drowned out as it made its way from their department to board level:

> "We need to have a voice on the top table. The furthest it should be [from the board] is one position. I have reported to guys who, by their own admission, know nothing about security. How could they advocate for me on the board? You speak to the director of audit, they speak to the director of legal and the director of legal is speaking to the board. My message has to compete with their own agendas and, by the time it gets there, it's been watered down."
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

> "No, we need to sit more prominently. We should be sitting along side the other corporate functions like HR."
>
> (Security Manager, Retail)

Security managers have been accused by some commentators of being too concerned about their relationships with CEOs and board members (Briggs & Edwards 2006). Our security managers clearly felt that these factors had a great bearing upon their status within their organisations. Their reporting lines were important not only because they were a means of sending the security message up through the

organisation but also because of the authority they conferred, or did not confer, upon the security manager:

> "If I'm about to deal with somebody new in the business I'll go straight to the [organisational] charts and look at who they are reporting to. I guarantee that they are doing the same thing with me… it's a good indication of how senior they are and obviously that's going to affect the way you deal with them."
>
> (Security Manager, Retail)

The security managers generally wanted to avoid the classical model of security where it was effectively something that was done *to* the other members of the organisation. However, even pursuing a model of security in which it had the buy-in and ownership of an organisations employees the *real politic* of business life meant that the time and assistance which would be afforded to our security managers by other senior managers, and the level of compliance which the rest of the organisation would maintain with their directives, ultimately depended, at least in part, on the authority which the security manager wielded.

The security managers reporting line was an important indicator of this authority. Those who had authority and status within the business were wary of the consequences should their reporting lines ever change:

> "For me, if something happened and I no longer reported to this director here then yes I would quickly lose respect. Everybody looks to who you work for. When you say 'yes, I report to the CEO' then very few people are ever going turn around and disagree with what you are saying. Here I am treated as a peer because of the reporting that I have."
>
> (Security Director, Communications)

While those who did not enjoy such proximity to the board or such senior reporting lines speculated about the improvements a change in their circumstances could bring:

> "I not satisfied at present. I think we should be reporting to a nominated member of the board. Probably the Finance Director. Why? Well, firstly, he controls the purse strings. But, more importantly, it would empower the department and give us the status we need within the organisation."
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

3.6 Attitude of the Board.

Upstream influences play an important part in ensuring success or otherwise of the security function within an organisation. Most obviously, the board represents the decision making authority within their respective organisations and as a result it is most often at board level where the roles and responsibilities of the security function will be defined and where the resources to fulfil those roles will be allocated. Less obviously the influence and patronage of the board are crucial to the security department's ability to align its strategies to that of the business as a whole which in turn is a measure of the worth of the security function (Hooten 2005). Hooten notes that without the encouragement of board level figures within the business security managers will not be able to enter the strategic planning cycle at a sufficiently influential moment and thus the interests and input of the security department will be under-represented in the plans of the business (ibid).

Accordingly the status of security managers and the security function within the business is impacted significantly by the attitude of the board towards the discipline. Without board level interest and activity the security department will inevitably lose its power, authority and status within the organisation to other better represented departments (ibid).

Significantly differing impressions of their board's attitude to the security function could be found among the security managers interviewed. In keeping with the findings of CBI research on the subject none of our security managers reported that the board's interest in security had declined in recent years. Whether they felt the attitude of the board had not changed, had changed temporarily or that the board had demonstrated a sustained change of heart almost all of the security managers used the events of 9/11 or the July London bombings as a frame of reference for examining the attitude of the board to corporate security in recent years.

Among a small number of the security managers the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the security upheaval which followed appeared to make minimal impact on the running of security within their organisation or the attitude of their board toward security. This appeared to be the case in organisations which had already countenanced attacks of that nature and had the appropriate resilience provisions already in place. The few

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cases where the impact of 9/11 had made minimal impact were also characterised by an excellent pre-existing relationship between the security manager and the senior management of the business. According to the security managers, this relationship was underpinned by a belief in the necessity of the corporate security function on the part of senior leaders in the business, and their faith in the competence of the security management team:

> "I don't think that 9/11 or anything like that had a major impact on us because frankly all the things you would do in response we were doing anyway. A lot of what is said about incidents like that and their effect of security is rubbish. People say 'we've changed a lot since 9/11'. Well, really, they should have been doing those things in the first place."
>
> (Security Director, Retail)

For a number of the security managers the terrorist attacks notably increased the interest which board took in their work and the resources which were allocated to the department. A number of the security departments from which the managers in the study came had been reorganised or even created from scratch in the wake of the events of 9/11. Board members realised with alarm that the responsibility for security had been spread in a disjointed fashion around their organisations lacking any specialised management, any means of co-ordinating activity and without anybody to hold ultimately accountable for security lapses.

It was apparent that some of the security managers interviewed have used the increased currency which the aftermath of 9/11 gave their department as a base upon which they have built security departments undertaking broad ranges of activites and attracting significant responsibility. These managers, having appeared on the radar of the board, were keen to maintain an improved level of visibility by drawing attention to range of duties a security department can conceivably perform and the value it can add to a business:

> "Yes I've noticed a real change. We have a much fuller dialogue with the board now. When we got their attention we were keen to impress upon them the things we could do, that we are not just here for when things go bang. If ever an event like that could be described as helpful, then it was."
>
> (Security Director, Services)

However, by the admission of some of the security mangers themselves and in the experience of others who warned against it, in a number of firms the board's sustained interest in security was driven dominantly by concerns about an imminent repeat of the events of 9/11 or the London bombings:

> "Things like the 7th July bombings mean there is an obvious need for us. They want information on how to respond to things like that… In terms of our profile there has been a big change and when we need to get something done we can get it done much more easily now."
>
> (Security Manager, Communications)

The point was made by more than one manager that security departments predicated largely on the threat from extremely low probability/ high impact incidents, such as terrorist attacks, were unsustainable in the long term. Security managers who derived the rationale for there department's existence from their board's concerns about such low probability/ high impact incidents without demonstrating a real day-to- day contribution were unlikely to ensure the long term success of the security function within their businesses:

> "The risk we all run is crying wolf too often… they think by keeping everybody wired they will get what they want… I know of one security advisor who based his strategy on pedalling fear. 'Armageddon is about to happen!' but what people don't realise is that your senior directors and chairman they mix in some very interesting circles as well. They are talking to government ministers and the like and the CEO realised it was all just totally over the top. That guy was soon a casualty."
>
> (Security Manager, Retail)

While the attitudes of some boards toward corporate security have undergone little change and others have demonstrated a sustained interest in the topic a number of security managers also reported a 'yoyo' dynamic in their board's attitude to corporate security. Generally in these cases the interest the board took in the work of the security department was, under normal circumstances, fairly minimal. The managers concerned felt that their organisations were not convinced of the case for a security department and that it was considered a necessary evil "Security is always the one that can be run off the side of a desk… because it is perceived as a cost centre they say 'lets cut it'" (Security Manager, Communications).

However, in times of acute crisis or in response to a particular threat security managers found themselves thrown dramatically to the fore and in the words of one security manager "…after not getting a sniff of the board since I had joined the company all of a sudden I had the most senior people in the business on the phone to me every hour."(Security Manager, Communications). Inevitably, the managers who reported this 'yoyo' phenomenon felt that as a crisis was resolved or a particular threat passed their status within the business would one again decline and they would return to the routine struggle to get board level buy-in and resources for the function:

> "It's a bit like a yoyo… after 9/11 I got a phone call and all of a sudden security was on the agenda. We got a number of things done which had not previously been possible due to resources. But, I would say five or six months later they lost interest, until July last year and the London bombings when they were on the phone again."
>
> (Security Manager, Finance)

The interviews with the managers revealed that the events of 9/11 and to a lesser extent the July bombings in London served as key markers which many of the security managers judged the development of their departments against. However, the terrorist attacks and their aftermath, while transforming the organisation and management of security permanently in some firms, did not constitute a sea change or coming of age for the discipline of corporate security management in its broadest sense.

Among our security managers, in the few instances where security was already a closely integrated function and the relationship with the board already intimate, the impact of 9/11 on security management was minimal. A number of security managers have felt long term benefits for their departments. Some have achieved this through using the increased currency of the department post 9/11 as a springboard from which they have established a wide range of activities which contribute to their respective companies on a day to day basis. Others, however, have sought effectively to milk the events of 9/11 and continue to justify the existence of their department on the looming threat of a repeat of such an incident. This practice is unsustainable and jeopardises the credibility of security management as a discipline in the eyes of other security managers interviewed.

Finally, a number of the security managers interviewed whose departments previously existed well away from the mainstream activity of their businesses have simply been further frustrated by the 'yoyo' attitudes of their boards. They find themselves temporarily given a status and allocated a level of resource which they would prefer to enjoy permanently only to find that the urgency and attentiveness of the board quickly subsides as the memory of the crisis fades and the security function has ultimately gained nothing.

3.7 The Status of our Security Managers, and that of their Peers.
When asked about the status they held within the business relative to the status given to managers from other functions significantly different experiences could again be found among the security managers. A select number of the managers were confident of the fact that they were considered on a complete par with the managers operating at their level from other areas of the business. Elsewhere, the security managers felt that their department lagged behind the others in the business in terms of the perceived importance of their contribution to the business, their ability to attract resources to the department, to exert authority and influence and to get the buy-in of senior business managers.

The managers who felt that they had achieved a state of complete parity with their peers in other areas of the business cited management grading, leadership of cross-functional committees, general management duties outside the security function and their contribution to high level planning processes as examples of the value which was attached to their role within their respective organisations. However, all of the managers who placed themselves in this category noted that this was not a status they had inherited. Most had been responsible for building up their security departments and for some this had been a process that had taken over a decade. For the security managers who had arrived in existing security departments they had often found departments which existed away from the mainstream of the business, undertaking much less ambitious tasks than was now the case and enjoying a fairly lowly status among the management functions of the business:

> "I don't think adding to your head count or your budget is necessarily a
> sign of a good security manager but we certainly did some of that because

we were under resourced for what we wanted to do. More importantly was raising the profile and the background noise of what security did. It was almost a secret department before I came to it - for no good reason."

<p align="right">(Security Director, Communications)</p>

When discussing the contributing factors to their success in achieving parity with their peers in other areas of the business these managers without exception cited the building up of personal credibility as one of the most important facets of being a successful corporate security manager.

3.7.1 Company Specific Crises and Credibility.

What emerged from the responses of the managers who were most confident of their position was that company specific incidents which they had dealt with in the course of their work had in fact provided them with much more of an opportunity to demonstrate the worth of the security function and establish their credibility with the board than the more generic threat of terrorism had.

In response to the terrorist threat the managers could do little more than reassure the board that they had the correct procedures and continuity plans in place. However, in response to company specific incidents such as fraud committed against the company or malicious activity against employees by animal rights extremists there appeared to be much more scope for the security managers to demonstrate dynamism and the use of initiative. It was much more likely that their activities in relation to company specific incidents would result in obviously tangible benefits for the organisation be it the recovery of stolen assets or an end to nuisance behaviour.

> "I've been fortunate in one sense that we've had some major dramas take place across Europe so the senior management know me. It's not the ideal way to get your work recognised within the company but in our case it has certainly worked."

<p align="right">(Security Director, Finance)</p>

> "I can walk into the offices of any of the board members and have as much time as I think I need. I think that is because of some of the incidents we've dealt with, corporate incidents. They are aware of the need for good security particularly when it costs the business money or people's lives are put at risk."

<p align="right">(Security Director, Retail)</p>

The lack of recognised qualifications in corporate security will be examined later. However, given this lack and that the majority of the managers had come from the

peacekeeping backgrounds- unfamiliar to most board members- some security managers felt that upon their arrival their board members had little idea of what security managers were actually capable of or what their experience equipped them to do. While it is no doubt important for managers of all functions to demonstrate their competence once in post, it appears that their unfamiliar background and the absence of recognised qualifications place an extra onus on security managers to demonstrate that they are competent and that they can add value to the business before they can establish a close working relationship with those above them in an organisations hierarchy.

> "That point was made to me by a friend doing security in the banking world. He said 'what you need is to have a couple of major investigations and you'll find that if you have handled them properly then that'll make your credibility."
>
> (Security Manager, Retail)

3.8 The Challenge of Achieving Parity.

In the case of the security managers who were most senior and had greatest parity within their organisations this was by consensus a major contributing factor in their success. Crucially, while they felt that personal credibility was an important factor for a manager hoping to achieve a senior status from any area of the business, there was a feeling that as security managers they had to work longer and harder than their equivalents from other areas of the business to achieve a similar status:

> "I've been around this company for 13 years. Everybody knows I've been here for 13 years they know I talk to the chief exec. Everybody gives me time. However, I had to work to get to that position… I have as much access as I want but I have got it through longevity and kicking on doors and I have had to work harder than others of a similar level in different functions."
>
> (Security Manager, Communications)

The interviews revealed that among the security managers there was the perception that being from one of the more established functions of the business appeared to immediately infer upon an individual a natural level of authority or credibility which in turn contributed to their standing within the business:

> "…the head of Audit can open doors because he is a professional accountant or the head of legal can open doors because he's a legal professional. Even the head HR guy can open those relevant doors."
>
> (Security Director, Services)

When this security manager arrived in post he did not feel that any doors naturally opened for him and as such the climb to achieving senior status was a much more difficult one for him than for his peers from the audit, legal and HR functions of the business. Arguably, this notion is reinforced by the fact that in the majority of the organisations from which the security managers came security management, as a discipline, and the security managers as individuals, according to their own perception, were regarded as having a less important status than many of their peers from other functions:

> "Much lesser status, that goes without saying."
>
> (Security Director, Communications)

> "Second class citizens. I don't think security professionals are seen as business partners. There are exceptions, but that is the general rule…"
>
> (Security Manager, Finance)

> "Probably not regarded as highly. In this company my title gives the impression of a senior role but in reality I can't put myself up against, for instance, the head of HR here."
>
> (Security Director, Retail)

These security managers felt that they did not have the influence or authority that managers from the other areas of the business held. According to the managers who felt that they did not have equal status within the business their lesser status manifested itself in a number of ways. Financially some of the managers reported a sense that their department was the one which the business leaders most loathed to allocate resources or funding:

> "Whenever there is a round of budget cuts you can guarantee we'll be hit. That's partly because we come under the finance director and dentist's kids always have the worst teeth, but it also reflects the ambivalence of some senior people in this business towards the work of security."
>
> (Security Director, Retail)

In addition, some of the managers felt that their lack of status was reflected in the limited formal powers they were given and their inability to enforce decisions or exert authority in areas of activity which were rightly their concern:

> "The problem I face is that security plans are created for a particular project and they are not then used. A project manager will instead opt to do things at the lowest possible cost, which he has the power to do."
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

The security managers who described holding an inferior status in the business attributed their position to a number of factors. It was suggested repeatedly that the image of 'security' was a key problem and that security managers struggled with a perception among their peers and in the higher echelons of their organisations that security still existed in something akin to Dalton's 'green-shack era' described above. "Why? It's historical- security is seen as guns, guards and gates. The face of security is the guards and all the baggage that goes along with it."(Security Manager, Finance). A number of managers subscribed to this idea that their problem was essentially one of perception and was a hangover from days gone by.

However, some of the managers were equally clear that they felt the problems their function faced were the result of entirely rational doubts grounded in problematic aspects of modern security management. Foremost among these was the question of how security could demonstrate its worth to the business. This encompassed security demonstrating its worth in terms of its effect on the bottom line but also its worth as a management function. One manager commented that, while he felt that as an individual he had never witnessed anything to make him think he did not have the respect of his management peers, he was unsure how aware they were of his contribution to the business:

> "I think that I am well respected within the business. But that's maybe not enough. It's difficult to quantify our role here. It's difficult for anyone to say 'they are good because this is what they know and this is what they do.'"
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

Pressing more deeply into the question of what security management as a discipline brings to the management capabilities of an organisation the observation was made by another manager that the problem he and his peers in the security function faced was that they could not readily show what their area of expertise consisted of or what distinct contribution they were making to their organisation:

> "I think it's because we have not reached the right level of maturity. There is no core central knowledge or best practice- it just doesn't exist. Because of that security people tend to invent things and respond pragmatically and to some extent you could do that without ever having an understanding of risk… perhaps people in other parts of the business must look at me and wonder 'what is he doing that I couldn't do?' Under those circumstances how can you hope to be recognised for making a unique, valuable contribution?"
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

3.9 Summary of Conclusions.

One might expect that the many drivers for corporate security described in this chapter would be creating a business environment extremely conducive to the rise of corporate security as a management activity. However, this brief study of the modern condition of corporate security management indicates that the discipline's development appears to be taking place in a somewhat disjointed and uneven fashion. The insights of our security managers suggest that experience of the typical corporate security manager lies somewhere between two quite different extremes.

At the most positive pole are the security managers who have successfully persuaded their parent organisation of the importance of corporate security and their competence to undertake tasks far beyond the mundane guards and gates work which has been historically associated with the role. While these individuals have apparently had to work longer and harder than their peers from outside security management for their rewards, those rewards have come in the form of senior positions within their organisations, excellent reporting lines and parity of status with the other management functions. These are the managers who are leading the ambitious new agendas for corporate security, but in terms of the occupation as a whole they are also in the minority.

Much more numerous are the security managers whose experience has been less positive. The most frustrated among these security managers do not perceive any conviction in the senior ranks of their organisation about the worth of their function nor have they managed to take ownership the more interesting and sophisticated areas of work which could conceivably come under the remit of their departments. These managers suffer from unsatisfactory reporting lines resulting in an ongoing struggle for resources, inability to get adequate access to planning processes and an inferior status to their peers.

Both the security managers who have been very successful, and those who have not, are united around the fact that being in the occupation does not automatically 'open the doors' that being from the other more established business occupations does. Clearly, with dedication and perseverance the most able security managers have been able to surmount these barriers to success to achieve parity. One obvious way forward for the discipline is to try and distil and spread the practices which have enabled them to do so. However, more fundamentally, the discipline must try to crystallise the barriers to success and remove them.

4. The Background of a Security Manager: the value of a security background.

4.1 Introduction.

Broadly speaking the careers of security mangers play out differently from that of individuals from other management functions and business professions. A much observed feature of security management is that its practitioners are frequently engaged in their second career having previously amassed security experience in the police or military, the so-called 'peace keeping' professions. This transition from the public sector to often very senior posts in the commercial world means that security managers face some fairly unique challenges in terms of their professional development. This chapter is intended to examine why industry appears to prefer candidates with police and military backgrounds for their corporate security departments, what challenges this raises for security management as an occupation, whether the trend is set to continue and if so, what particular steps corporate security's professional project will have to take to accommodate it.

4.2 The 'Peacekeepers'.

All the previous analysis of the backgrounds of security managers both in the UK and the US indicate that the majority of security managers have come from what Cavanagh and Whiting (2003) term 'the peacekeeping professions', either the police or the military. In their study of security managers and directors in the US they found that 47.2 percent of those questioned had come from a prior career in the police force while 32.7 percent had previously been in the military. Hearden's (1989) quantitative study of UK security managers revealed that individuals formerly of the peacekeeping professions similarly dominated security management in the UK with 42.5 percent having previously been employed by the Police, 31 percent with the army and a further 12.5 percent having been employed with both.

At the beginning of each interview each of the security managers was asked a little about there career history. The vast majority of managers who took part in the interviews for this research were formerly of the peacekeeping professions and there were marginally more ex- servicemen and women than ex-police officers. Clearly there is a historical pattern which continues today of individuals leaving the services or police force and finding themselves in corporate security positions. While most

commentators have made reference to this phenomena (Barefoot and Maxwell, 1987; Wyllie 1999; Manunta, 2000) little attempt has been made to explain it. In an effort to add some depth of understanding our security managers were asked what it was that had attracted them to the discipline?

There was a common feeling amongst our managers that the move into the general field of private security was a natural progression from their previous peacekeeping posts. A few former police and servicemen expressed a specific, predetermined desire to work in corporate security. These were, on the whole, individuals who felt they had skills which particularly qualified them for work in the corporate setting:

> 'Head of special branch had given me experience with dealing with senior people and dealing with outside agencies… For some time before [I retired] by looking at job advertisements and reading the literature it became apparent to me that security was an issue within companies and I saw a niche there.'
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

> 'Initially it was very much an information assurance role. I had transferable skills from the military which were in demand… rare combination of specialist IT knowledge and the ability to talk the language of physical security.'
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

In addition to the managers who had targeted corporate security there was a handful who had been headhunted either during service or upon retirement from their previous career. These were mainly senior ranking officers from the police or military who moved directly into security director positions which required the strategic thinking and leadership skills they had acumulated in their previous roles.

For most of the interviewees it appeared that upon leaving their peacekeeping career they were unwilling to begin learning entirely new skill sets and felt that their existing skill sets were most marketable within the private security sector:

> 'It was somewhere to use the skills gained in the police service. You know, investigations and thinking about security.'
>
> (Security Manager, Retail)

> "I wasn't attracted so much as moved into it almost by default. After 21 years in the X security branch you are not going to change career when you leave, in my case aged 44."
>
> (Security Director, Services)

While they felt that the private security sector held the most possibility of well rewarded employment for them there was a sense from many that their arrival in corporate security positions specifically as opposed to any number of other roles in the domain of private security owed as much to circumstance and chance as to a particular desire to undertake that role. Accordingly, a number of the managers interviewed had been involved in at least one other role in the private security arena since leaving their former role.

When pressed on why they had left their former career most of the managers said they had wanted a new challenge or felt they had achieved all they could in there previous role. Some cited improved pay or the attraction of more comfortable working conditions:

> 'Frankly I liked the thought of coming to the city and being paid well and the thought of a completely new environment- it was time to get out of defence.'
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

Interestingly, among former police officers there was repeated expression of sentiments along the lines of "I had become very tired of the police. The force has changed a lot and to tell you the truth it's not really fun anymore."(Security Manager, Services).

4.3 The Value of a Security Background.

As noted above the trend of former government security personnel, be they police or military, moving from the services into corporate security has been the subject of much discussion and debate in corporate security literature and forums. So much discussion in fact, that it has clearly frustrated some in the field 'the profession does not have time to argue, yet again, the question of whether ex-service officers or ex-police officers make better security managers…' Despite this frustration in some quarters, the question of who security managers are and what affect this has on the

occupation goes, in many ways, to the heart of the professionalism question and was an reoccurring theme in the interviews.

The background of corporate security managers, namely the predominance of former police and military professionals, has been singled out by a number of authors as having a significant bearing on the way the occupation is regarded. Manunta (2000) suggests that security managers' backgrounds have a practical effect on there ability to perform the management aspects of a modern business function:

> "…most security managers are retired servicemen or policemen with only a superficial understanding of management concepts and techniques, furthermore referred to non-business, institutional organisations. As a result those security managers who try to blend in with the new environment tend to develop a schizophrenic attitude: they *speak* as a manger but they think as a serviceman, policeman ect."
>
> (ibid: 8)

In terms of our security managers' own attitudes to the merits of prior military or policing experience they fell broadly into 3 categories:

- Those who were enthusiastic about the worth of such experience;
- those who were more circumspect about the worth of a peacekeeping background;
- and those who very much doubted its worth.

Those who doubted the worth of a prior peacekeeping career were relatively few in number and, perhaps unsurprisingly, were mainly drawn from the managers who had not had a prior police or military career. However, among those who were dubious about a peacekeeping background were also a small number who had come from just such a background. These were corporate security managers who felt that their current work bore no resemblance to what they had done before. Among the managers who had not had prior military or policing careers there were some fairly negative impressions of what employing a former military officer or policeman as a corporate security manager entailed:

> "95 percent of other security managers have been in the police or the military and when I speak to them I tend to apologise and say 'look guys

50

> I've never killed anyone. What I do is that I tend to bring much more of the commercial side. I know there is no way the business was going to have an ex- military person. They wanted someone who could build the business and be professional. They did not want some military type to march around the place."
>
> (Security Director, Communications)

At the other end of the spectrum were the enthusiasts. As with the doubters the enthusiasts made up a relatively small number of the security managers. In their answers they were the strongest advocates of the merits of a peacekeeping background feeling that it equipped them very well for their latter roles in the commercial world. While all the managers described some upheaval when leaving their former roles for the corporate world the enthusiasts saw the most continuity with what they had done in there previous military or police careers and did not see that they had made any major chances in the way they operated in their current environment as compared to their old one:

> "It was critical. The armed forces provide the best quality and in- depth information on security that I think it's possible to get. When you spend months on courses learning the trade of conducting security surveys, understanding CCTV, understanding firewalls, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of personnel vetting… all these things come together… hence the reason I do what I do."
>
> (Security Manager, Communications)

Between these two extremes of strong advocacy and significant doubt, fell the bulk of managers who were more circumspect. These were the security managers who felt that there previous careers contributed to there current role but were keen to emphasise that that a background in security by no means qualified an individual to work in corporate security and should not be a pre-requisite do doing so. Somewhat unexpectedly, when this group of managers discussed how well their previous roles had prepared them for working in corporate security the specific security knowledge they had accrued received relatively little attention. Of much greater significance to them were the aspects of their former roles which qualified them for management positions generally rather than security management specifically. In direct contrast with the thinking of Manunta, a number of managers expressed their belief that military or police service had endowed them with skills and qualities which enhanced their ability as general managers in the corporate world:

"I think in the military we sell ourselves extremely short on our skills, particularly our management skills. When I came into the corporate world we would sit around for 30 minutes discussing the answers to problems when it was perfectly obvious what the answer was. Why are we sitting around here talking about it? That's the answer, lets go and get it done. I think generally we have the ability to think on our feet and come up with solutions which are acceptable and workable and I think in some areas of corporate life those management skills are lacking."

(Security Manager, Services)

"…the skills you develop in the service stand you in good stead. A work ethic, leading by example and a can-do mentality is what people in businesses look for. We often get asked to do things and you think 'well shouldn't that be going to HR or elsewhere?' It gets given to us because people are comfortable with the discretion we put around things and the fact that we deliver."

(Security Director, Finance)

By the same token, this group of security managers were keen to emphasis that while some of the experience and the skills they had gathered from their former roles continued to serve them well in the corporate environment, they were very aware of the differences between to two. They felt that being successful in the latter to a large degree meant leaving behind much of what had gone before. At the most fundamental level this meant getting used to what success in the profit driven corporate world means as opposed to success in the public sector. The security managers not only had to adjust what their concept of what 'success' was but also had to adjust the techniques and behaviour they employed while pursuing it:

"You work almost by drawing a line under everything you have learnt. You use it as a frame of reference rather than trying to drag it forward. There are some corporate security people who will spend there whole careers trying to hammer square pegs into round holes."

(Security Manager, Finance)

A number of managers talked about risk and their appetite for risk as an area which was typical of the changed mindset they had to employ in their new commercial guise. In their previous environments they were expected to take a risk adverse approach where the aim of their activities was often to eliminate risk as far as possible. In the corporate environment the 'belt and braces' approach to eliminating risk was much less desirable. The security managers now found themselves taking a cost effective approach to risk, doing the minimum possible to mitigate against risk

and occasionally choosing to do nothing at all "…before I was asking what *could* I do. Now I find myself asking what *should* I do?" (Security Director, Finance).

In terms of changing the way they did things a point raised on a number of occasions was the need to utilize softer skills in the corporate setting. Perhaps wary of prompting criticisms such as that expressed above about 'ex-military types marching around' a number of the security managers highlighted the changed approach that the departure from their previous, hierarchical, peacekeeping environment had necessitated:

> "It's a much more soft focused approach to security… I don't think the authoritative approach is what they are looking for. It's about having the soft skills, the people skills, understanding the needs of the organisation and what it is prepared to tolerate."
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

4.4 Distinguishing Between Different Peacekeeping Careers.

Existing literature, and indeed much of our security managers' commentary, on the relevance of a security manager's background have tended to treat the peacekeeping professions as almost a homogenous identity giving the impression that all individuals emerging from it will have had broadly similar roles and training, and thus, will be broadly similarly qualified for corporate security roles. Such literature has preferred to address the question of whether this fairly homogenous bunch are better or worse placed than those from traditional management backgrounds when it comes to security management. What became apparent from the security managers' comments on the subject was that they often did not consider themselves to be part of a homogenous whole and felt that to describe them as such was something of an over-simplification. For some the important distinction lay between those from policing and military backgrounds and their eagerness to make this distinction sometimes conveyed a touch of prejudice "invariably ex-policemen are only interested in nicking people". (Security Manager, Finance)

One security manager highlighted the fact that being from the military or the police by itself indicated very little about an individual's skill sets or knowledge of security. The point was made that in many branches of both professions there is little more

training or requirement to understand the principles of security and security management than would be expected of a civilian:

> "I was a security manager in the army and that has made things much easier for me. I see a number of colleagues who are ex-military and ex-police and I look at the things they have actually done in their former careers and think 'what does that have to do with security'? I doubt their qualification and I doubt their experience. I think it is often exaggerated."
>
> <div align="right">(Security Manager, Communications)</div>

4.5 The Security Managers of the Future?

4.5.1 Change.

The make-up of future generations of security managers remains unclear. Work by Briggs and Edwards (2006) suggests that the current trend of former peacekeepers dominating the ranks of corporate security managers will become increasingly unsuitable as the role of security departments evolves within organisations. Firstly they argue that many security managers from the traditional mould will struggle to cope with the more strategic role which they envisage for corporate security departments of the future. Secondly, they suggest that the complex matrix reporting structures increasingly being found in large organisations demand the ability persuade, collaborate and cooperate and can be "…antithetical to those with police or armed service backgrounds" (ibid: 80). Thirdly, the risk adverse mindset which formal security training breeds will continue to mean that those who emerge from such training will not be able to contribute to the risk taking activities which are central to the ethos of business. Fourthly, corporate security will increasingly demand people who are happy to break rules and innovate, but people from the security-related professions tend to be more inhibited from innovative responses to security incidents. Finally, security experts are trained to respond to incidents in a way which fails to factor in the human dynamics of situations. Briggs and Edwards (2006) argue that the human element is critical to modern risk and security management but that among the peacekeepers it is overshadowed by an emphasis on technical security skills.

According to this analysis the skills which security managers from the classical peacekeeping background have will be increasingly inadequate in terms of responding to the demands that modern organisations will make of their security functions.

4.5.2 Continuity.

In contrast it was apparent from the interviews that some of the security managers felt that far from becoming outmoded the experience that workers took with them from the public to the private sector was in fact growing in relevance. The closing gap between management techniques in the public and private sectors were cited as an important consideration meaning that future generations of military and police professionals will emerge from their service much better equipped for the corporate business environment. The growing influence of New Public Management (NPM) over the last 20years has meant a move away from an ethos of public administration based on a largely hierarchical, formalised approach with its emphasis on avoiding mistakes, caution and the application of rules. Those characteristics are being substituted increasingly with a private-sector model of management based on decentralization, valuing innovation, enterprise and problem solving (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2000). The results of influences such as NPM are that the gulf between the public and private sector is narrower than ever. This was graphically borne out by the experience of one security manager while in the public sector:

> "…when I went back to X it was, in effect, 19 devolved budget centres. I went in I had to pull assets from all those places, it was a matrix management exercise. Managing, understanding where the lay lines were, where the influence was and how to influence people. In many senses X is structured like many multi-national organisations… I was responsible for 3,500 personnel and had to reduce that to 2,000. The same as a business manager would have to do."
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

The case for service personnel being well equipped to thrive in industry is supported to some extent by experience in the US where, once they have completed their service, graduates of the various military schools and academies are in high demand by major US corporations. The largest recruitment agency in the field boasts that junior military officers, non-commissioned officers, and technicians have long been sought for the leadership qualities, hands-on experience, and other intangibles, such as

loyalty, work ethic and integrity which distinguish them in the civilian workplace (Orion 2006). Further evidence that those formerly of the peacekeeping professions can succeed at the highest levels in business comes in the form of a study of CEOs with military experience, again in the US. The study found that candidates with military experience were over represented amongst the ranks of CEOs, that their organisations delivered better results, and that they lasted an average of 7.2 years in post compared with 4.5 years for CEOs without military experience (Korn Ferry 2006).

4.5.3 Diversification

The security managers generally felt that they were witnessing a very gradual diversification of the types of people being found in the discipline. Based on the observations of our security managers, diversification is slowly coming about by various means. In a small number of security departments something akin to graduate places are being created whereby young individuals with no experience of security are being employed and trained within the business. This practice is currently confined to a few of the largest security departments and remains ad-hoc in nature with no guaranteed intake on a yearly or bi-yearly basis and no established sources to which the departments look for candidates. A very small number of instances whereby security managers had worked their way up from manned guarding or CCTV operators positions into more general management positions could also be discerned from the experience of the security managers interviewed. However, as with the graduate places, this appears to account for a very small number of security managers and remains extremely ad-hoc in nature. The lion's share of the diversification which has occurred in security management is accounted for by intra-organisational, inter-functional movement of managers into the security department. This usually involves individuals with particular skills, such as specific IT skills, being poached from other areas of the business by security managers and gradually building up their knowledge and experience in the security department becoming generally competant security managers in the process.

4.6 Advantages of police and military backgrounds.

While the security managers interviewed unanimously welcomed the more diverse range of people slowly appearing in corporate security positions there was equally a

feeling among many that, as candidates for corporate security roles, individuals from a governmental security background maintained some natural advantages over their civilian counterparts. These advantages meant that candidates from a peacekeeping background offered an added value which those who had not come from a policing or military background could not. The natural advantages most alluded to could be grouped as:

- Contacts and networks.
- Demonstrable pedigree.
- Pre-existing capability.
- Experience and judgement.

4.6.1 Contacts and Networks.

In instances where the link between what the manager did in their old career and what they do in their new one is not obvious a number of security managers raised the point that the value of the contacts they take with them has, at times, been over-estimated by firms and occasionally overplayed by security managers themselves. Some managers made the point that peoples contacts rarely have a very good shelf life and that, in fact, the personal relationships they built up in their respective service careers are likely to be with people of similar age to themselves and at a similar point in career progression. As such, quite often these potential contacts are planning to similarly move on from their peacekeeping post for the same reasons that they have:

> "The contacts are pretty short term and the younger generations coming through probably won't feel the obligation to give them the time or the resources."
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

However, for some of the security managers contacts and networks they had established in their previous incarnations had real value in terms of their suitability as candidates for latter corporate security roles. One of the security managers interviewed had moved from a senior post in a branch of the armed forces to a senior security role with a firm providing equipment and services to the same branch of the forces. The security manager felt that his understanding of military bureaucracy and the relationships he had built at the MOD and elsewhere gave him a real advantage in managing the security of the business he subsequently moved into:

"Coming from an X background to a company like X is actually very helpful. Some important relationships are already established, such as that with the MOD, and others can be established much more easily."

(Security Director, Services)

4.6.2 Demonstrable Pedigree.

In terms of their security function, for many organisations it is not good enough to take security seriously, they must also be seen to take security seriously. Briggs and Edwards (2006) suggest that corporate security is increasingly a source of competitive advantage. Organisations which can project an image of a competent security operation can give themselves an edge over their competitors when customers are deciding who to do business with. Whether it is rational or not the security managers reported a perception on behalf of both the businesses and their customers that having either a senior ex-policeman or senior ex-military officer at the helm of a security operation adds credibility on the part of the seller and builds confidence on the part of the buyer:

"Its still an old mans game. When X recruited me they wanted somebody of a certain age with a certain background. They will not recruit somebody younger than early forties or somebody without that security background because they will not be credible to go and speak to board members or speak to customers and say I'm your security guy. They are looking to buy that credibility into the business."

(Security Director, Services)

The point was also made by some of the interviewees that, when they are appointing security managers, executives are mindful that any appointment they make should not leave them vulnerable to third party criticism. In companies where security is of a particular importance, for instance those that form part of the Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), board members are conscious of the need to make decisions which are readily defendable in hindsight:

"…you can imagine, if there was a disaster with X's infrastructure, some prat standing up in the House of Commons and saying 'and you appointed as your head of security somebody with no previous experience?' …it is

easier for some companies; they can be seen to have discharged their duty, and due diligence and all the rest of it."

(Security Director, Finance)

In a small number of recent instances large organisations have taken the step of appointing individuals without a predominantly military background to senior security positions. However, given the sheer criticality of security in some organisations and the potential ramifications should something go wrong, this was judged likely to remain the exception rather than the rule by many of the security managers interviewed.

4.6.3 The Importance of Judgement and Experience.

When discussing the important traits of a successful security manager the managers questioned almost unanimously made reference to good judgement which they felt was borne of experience. Writers on the topic of security management have made reference the particular importance of good judgement and experience as qualities of a security manager. Wyllie, for instance, describes the 'art' of security management and talks of successful security managers having a 'nose for trouble' (Wyllie, 1999). Among our security managers this nose for trouble was something of an illusive quality and appeared to endow those possessing it with something almost akin to a sixth sense in terms of security. One of the security managers described it thus:

"It's about the elephant. There are people who have seen pictures of the elephant and then there are the people who have actually seen the elephant. I have sat with a family telling them how to negotiate with kidnappers so they get their son back. That experience and that background are important. It's one of the things that I bring to the corporate world which my line managers value. It allows me to judge when things are going pear shaped and when they are not really that important."

(Security Director, Finance)

The impression from the security managers was, that in their role, their instincts and judgements played a more important part in decision making than it did for many of their peers across the other functions. This extra emphasis on their personal judgement meant that having suitable security experience was essential. However, this was not to say that security experience could only be gathered through a career in the military or the police. It is fair to say that, with the exception perhaps of firms in the

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mobile communications sector, the size of the security departments from which our security managers came was generally small in relation to the size of the organisations which they were responsible for. One symptom of this was that very few of the security departments had graduate places and as a result when our security managers were recruiting they were looking for people who already had specific skills and experience which could be immediately employed rather than for people with the potential to learn skills and gather experience:

> "There is no substitute for experience. That sounds like an old dinosaur defending his territory and I don't mean it to because I am quite progressive and receptive to new ideas. But, you know, if you spend a lifetime training and learning through practical experience then it counts for a lot. I was fortunate that the police service provided me with that… I'm not saying that you have to come from a police or military background. I'm saying that you have to build up your experience somewhere and the police and military are perfectly acceptable and seem to offer many more opportunities to do it."
>
> (Security Director, Retail)

The work of the security manager places a premium on the attributes of good judgement and experience. However, this demand for experience, and the extra pressure on individual judgement that being part of a small team adds, mean that rarely is there the opportunity for individuals to build up their experience in a corporate security context. Rather than invest time and money in developing security management talent it makes good sense for organisations to effectively buy in the experience which has been gained at somebody else's expense:

> "My previous career has been fundamental. I was recruited to X because of what I had done in the past and who I was. X is a huge company but with a tiny security function. It's not in the business of growing and developing its own executives. It doesn't need that capacity so it buys that experience in. It goes to the military or the civil police where it can find people who have formal training in security and also in general management. So yes, my former life has been fundamental to me getting this job."
>
> (Security Director, Communications)

4.7 Summary of Conclusions.

For the most part the security managers rejected the notion that a prior career in either the police or the military left individuals fundamentally ill-suited to fill security management positions in the private sector. While a conclusive analysis will obviously require some sort of corroboration from the consumers of corporate security management, outlined a convincing set of rationale for the preference of former peacekeepers on the part of industry to-date and the likely continuation of this trend in the future.

 The fact that security managers, particularly those arriving in their first corporate security jobs, are somewhat thrown into an alien environment and expected immediately to operate a senior level means that security management as an occupation faces some unique challenges. Our security managers all report steep learning curves, upheaval and trauma in the move from the public to the private sector. They quickly had to change their conceptions of success and the means they employed to achieve it. These problems are not insurmountable but certainly appear to constitute the barriers to success, discussed in the previous chapter, in the short term. Based on the contribution of our security managers in this chapter, the occupation as a whole has not done enough to help individual managers cope with these challenges. An obvious way in which a professional project can add value to the occupation in these circumstances is by organising practitioners so that they can develop coping mechanisms and mitigate against the unique challenges that the second career dynamic of their work entails.

5. The Professional Project of Human Resource Management in the UK.

5.1 Introduction.

Although they have not described it explicitly as a 'professional project', human resource practitioners and their occupational predecessors have been engaged in efforts to raise the status of their work and themselves since the origins of the discipline. These efforts have notably intensified in the last 15 years culminating in the award of full chartered status in 2002. This case study is intended to highlight the institutional structures and organizational strategies which Human Resource Management (HRM) has employed in the course of its 'professional project'.

5.2 The Origins of Personnel Management.

The history of HRM can be traced through personnel management back to the end of the 19th century when the extension of the franchise and the growing influence of the labour movement led to the appointment of the first welfare officers. These early welfare officers were women and were generally employed in the newer industries where they were responsible for the welfare of women and children employed to do routine tasks such as packing and assembly. (Cannell 2001)

With the outbreak of the First World War the discipline of personnel management began to develop more quickly. The Munitions War Act of 1915 sought to ensure the supply of labour to the munitions industry and it made the provision of welfare services mandatory within munitions factories. Personnel management also became concerned with industrial relations as Unions resisted the influx of women into factories complaining of 'dilution' as they undertook tasks previously done by craftsmen. (ibid)

The 1920s saw the proliferation of 'labour managers' and 'employment managers' particularly in the engineering sector where they took responsibility for issues such as absence, recruitment and dismissals. As large companies began to emerge as a result of mergers and takeovers personnel departments were created with the aim of standardising employment policies across the respective firms. In the more cutting edge industries there was a growing awareness of the merits of suitably motivating

employees through holidays and pensions however, continued recession and consistently high levels of unemployment meant recruiting labour was not difficult and more progressive personnel practices were slow to spread. (Jossernad 2004)

The Second World War again added emphasis to personnel management. The Ministry of Labour and National Service viewed it as a key tool in the push for improved efficiency. Industrial relations again came to the fore with the unions concerns over dilution of skills. Ernest Bevan the Minister for Labour engaged the unions in extensive dialogue persuading them to suspend restrictive practices for the duration of the war sowing the seeds of the consultation and negotiation which became a key feature of post-war industrial relations. War time experience had demonstrated further the benefits to productivity of good employment management and considered welfare polices. These two areas began to come together formally in the context of personnel management. The role of personnel management was further cemented by the growth of local level bargaining. While pre-war industrial relations had taken place at a national level in the 1950's and 1960's there was a trend to local-level bargaining which gave much greater scope for the company-level personnel function to intervene. However, these local level interventions were too frequently ad-hoc in nature and unsustainable in the longer term. The poor industrial relations which resulted were known as the 'British disease' and productivity levels which compared unfavorably with the UK's competitors prompted the creation of a Royal Commission under Lord Donovan.

Donovan, reporting in 1968, was critical of all the parties concerned. His report suggested that personnel managers lacked appropriate negotiating skills but also that the companies which they worked for were failing to give them a sufficiently high priority within the business (Donovan 1968). In reaction to criticisms such as these and also to the growing body of legislation from the European Economic Community (EEC) pertaining to workers rights the number of personnel managers as well as their prominence within organisations was gradually increasing. In tandem with the increasing demand of personnel management was a growth of academic study on the subject. Theories borrowing from the social sciences about motivation and organisational behaviour were developed and increasingly employed. Management

techniques aimed at improving performance arrived from the US and were also applied in the UK context. (Cannel 2001)

5.3 The Challenge from Human Resource Management.
Throughout the 1980s under successive Thatcher Governments the central thrust of economic, industrial and legislative policy in the UK was to create a market driven economy. With regard to the management of personnel the most crucial aspects of these efforts were successive pieces of legislation designed to limit the role and influence of trade unions. The effect of Thatcher's legislative programme was essentially to move the unions and the issue of industrial relations from being a central corporate concern, and frequent corporate headache, to a position much more on the periphery of corporate thinking (Guest 1995).

In terms of their employee relations businesses were increasingly seeking to move away from the 'endless merry-go-round of collective bargaining'(Armstrong 2005) and a combative industrial relations model whereby all the businesses people management energies were used keeping the peace rather than moving the business forward (ibid). Emerging HRM models espoused tools such as 'psychological contracts' to breed organisational commitment and persuade employees to go above and beyond minimum expectations because they felt they held a stake in their company's success. The classic personnel manager had two key roles: employee champion, whereby they concerned themselves with the day-to-day preoccupations of individual employees and administrative expert. In contrast, emerging HR theories argued that effective people management had the potential to give organisations a competitive edge but that in order to benefit HR must work in partnership with the organisation at a strategic level (Josserand 2004).

Throughout the later half of the 1980s, the title 'Human Resources Manager' was steadily being found more commonly among large UK businesses. Yet the motivation for adopting the term was often unclear. In some organisations it seemed that the move from 'personnel manager' was more indicative of a re-branding exercise by personnel managers hoping to impress the corporate centre than a real change in thinking about the management of people:

> "HRM is regarded by some personnel managers as just a set of initials or old wine in new bottles. It could indeed be no more and no less than another name for personnel management, but as usually perceived, at least it has the virtue of emphasising the virtue of treating people as a key resource, the management of which is the direct concern of top management as part of the strategic planning process of the enterprise."
>
> (Armstrong 1987)

While the situation varied from organisation to organisation Armstrong's comments reflected that broadly speaking personnel management had failed to become an issue which board members took a serious interest in outside times of acute crisis and that it had also largely failed to make any impact upon the strategic decision making processes of the business.

5.4 Personnel Management as a Business Function.

When describing the realities of Personnel management at the end of the 1970s Legge (1978) noted that while the importance of the effective manpower management was formally recognized by the senior management of organisations; in practice it was neglected in the course of strategic decision making and indeed in the course of almost all decision making which was not personnel specific. One result of this indifference from senior management was that personnel policies were rarely conducted within the context of any long-term plan and that the personnel function was particularly prone to the whims of the organisation:

> "...while major shifts in policy could occur in all functional areas, personnel was uniquely susceptible to a swings and roundabouts approach as their resources, not being irreversibly committed, were seen as being relatively flexible."
>
> (Legge 1978: 41)

As part of the same work Legge spoke to a number of middle ranking and senior managers about the importance of the work of the personnel department an how effectively they felt it was performed. The results make for an interesting insight into how personnel management was regarded through the period:

> "The trouble with the personnel department here is that they try to introduce new gimmicky theories. They should stick to welfare- that's what personnel's job is- looking after routine welfare matters."

"The statistics they give us don't provide the information we need."

"I, along with a lot of my colleagues, am worried that it's impossible to measure the real impact as there are so many variables to be considered in the effectiveness equation."

<div align="right">(Legge 1978: 68-71)</div>

This last quote was indicative of the fact that part of the personnel function's problem was that it had not sought to develop any means of demonstrating its worth in terms of an organisations bottom line and senior management appeared reluctant to give their backing to an operation which could not demonstrate its contribution. The lowly status which personnel managers held in relation to their other management colleagues is demonstrated by surveys of the period which revealed that personnel was among the most poorly remunerated of the management disciplines (AIC, 1980). Poor wages and low status contributed to a vicious circle in personnel management:

"…whereby brighter managers steer clear of the personnel function because of its lack of status, and in consequence the personnel function remains low in regard because of the relative lack of talent."
<div align="right">(Jenkins, 1981)</div>

By the end of the 1980s perceptions in some quarters about personnel management and personnel managers as professionals seemed to have improved little. In a paper titled *'Personnel Management: the End of the Orthodoxy'* Guest (1991) argued that personnel management was being sidelined by organisations as a result of its failure to embrace technology and poor record of personnel managers in terms of innovating and pushing the discipline forward.

This failure of personnel managers to innovate was attributed by some to the state of personnel as a profession. Tyson (1985) argued that UK personnel managers typically lacked belief that what they were doing was genuinely grounded in a professional base of knowledge. The result of this was that they were overly risk-averse and reluctant to question the established way of doing things. In practice, he argued, the model of a modern personnel manager in the 1980s was of an individual who, chameleon like, blended into whatever organisation they could find and did whatever they were told as long as it suited the immediate needs of the organisation. Acting with greatly increased speed and flexibility had become key aims of large businesses

throughout the Thatcher period. However, moves towards flexibility and innovation naturally challenged the 'expert administrators' of personnel management and commentators concluded that British organisations were setting challenges, in terms of their employment practices, which classical personnel management was not well positioned to respond to (Guest, 1990).

5.5 Personnel Management as a Profession.

Sisson (1995) noted that there was a particularly pronounced tendency for most of the functions into which management can be divided to aspire to be regarded as a profession akin to medicine or law and that in that respect personnel management up until the early 1990s had been no different. Personnel management had for some time held some characteristics which suggested professional status. It had a permanent organisation in the form of the Institute for Personnel Management (IPM) which, by 1993, had a permanent staff of around 100; education and training provisions- the IPM was responsible for two major education programmes; qualifying examinations in the form of the Professional Education Scheme which was the main route into membership; and a code of ethics. In addition the discipline was serviced by a semi-academic journal in the form of the monthly publication 'Personnel Management'.

However, as a profession, personnel management still showed significant signs of immaturity. Large numbers of personnel managers did not belong to the IPM and as a result of it was estimated that the professional association only represented a minority of personnel managers in the UK and that a significant number of the most senior personnel managers and directors were not members (Marginson 1993).

Linked closely to the question of professional membership was the issue of professional qualifications. Despite being the profession responsible for the qualifications of workforces up and down the country estimates of the time reveal that in fact in the second half of the 1980s the number of personnel specialists with a qualification of any sort actually fell from 54 percent to under 50 percent. Among those managers who were qualified the nature of the qualification varied significantly, only 18 percent of personnel managers were qualified to degree or post-graduate level and few managers held the professional qualification being issued by the IPM (Airey Tremlett & Hamilton.1990).

In the early years of the 1990s personnel management found itself facing a number of challenges:

- Membership in the field was disjointed and split between overlapping associations. Large numbers of personnel managers did not belong to any of these associations and were not qualified. Many that did not even see themselves as 'professional' in the sense of owing their prime loyalty to the occupation. Most were "managers first and personnel people second" (Mackay and Torrington 1986:161- 162).

- Personnel management as it had traditionally been practised was increasingly being seen as irrelevant to modern business practices and this problem was being compounded by the inability of personnel managers to innovate. This added to the ongoing inability of personnel to demonstrate its worth to the bottom line of the business meant that personnel as a business function was struggling to wield authority and attain seniority within organisations which in turn inhibited its ability to attract the best management talent.

- Personnel as an aspiring profession had not definitively codified the body of knowledge which it laid claim to. There was some ambiguity as to where the boundaries of a personnel professional's knowledge should lie and what the demarcation between personnel and neighbouring occupations such a training and development was.

5.6 Professional Project.

The professional projects which Larson (1977) describes such as that of medicine and law can be observed over periods of time running to centauries in length. As such they should not be thought of in the sense of a single project with discernable consensus on end goals or a clearly mapped and definitive strategy. Rather, the most ancient professional projects have been driven by the determination of successive generations in a particular field to improve their status and achieve autonomy in their work. Where such professional projects have been successful the net result of these concerted 'projects' has been the closure of an occupation and monopolisation of work in that field. In this sense the efforts of modern human resource managers to improve their status and attract respect for their occupation can be traced to the

establishment of the Welfare Worker's Association (WWA) with a membership of 34 in 1913.

5.6.1 Historical Project

World War I and the mandatory appointment of welfare workers to munitions factories boosted the association's membership to 600 members and also saw it change its name as it moved to incorporate the various local welfare associations which had emerged across the country. The newly named Central Association of Welfare Workers (CAWW) resisted a merger with the employer dominated Industrial Welfare Society (IWS) in order to maintain its professional independence before adopting the new title of Welfare Workers Institute (WWI) in 1920. This new title was an effort to promote the professionalism of welfare and the new institute was accompanied by the launch of the Welfare Work journal. (Evans 2006)

In 1931 the Institute was renamed the Institute of Labour Management (ILM) in an effort to encompass the growing band of dedicated labour managers within industry. The Welfare Work journal was renamed Labour Management soon after and as its articles reveal that the term welfare soon became redundant coming to be replaced first by 'industrial relations' then 'labour management' and latterly by 'personnel management'. The welfare professions had been dominated by women however, new labour and personnel management positions were being largely populated by men and by 1940 they made up 44 percent of the ILM's 1800 strong membership.

By 1946 the term 'personnel' had become sufficiently popular as to merit another change of name and the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) was born. During the 1950s the activities of the IPM expanded as it moved to provide short courses, publications and qualifications for its members. In 1955 full membership of the institute was restricted by means of an entry examination. Throughout the 1960s the IPM showed a greater appetite for influencing government policy and a number of national committees were established in order to determine the line the IPM should take on the great debates of the day. In 1977 a merger between the IPM and the Institute of Training and Development (ITD) under the name Institute of Personnel and Training Management (IPTD) was proposed and put to a ballot by the members of both organisations. The merger was backed, but by such a slim majority that it was

decided sufficient support did not exist and the idea, while occasionally discussed, did not become a real possibility again until 1993 when it once again went to a ballot of both organisations members. (ibid)

The suggested merger was again a controversial subject for members in 1993 as demonstrated by the letters sent to the respective publications of the two bodies:

The Price of Admission.
It was with some dismay that I studied the recent briefing document highlighting the moves towards a possible merger with the Institute of Training Development. As a fellow of the IPM I am deeply concerned about the future of my professional institute and, in particular, want to urge the rank and file membership to resist any moves which would dilute our standards… we will not be a true profession unless we insist on the examination path as the only route to professional status… As Groucho Marx said 'I would not want to be a member of a club that would have me as a member.' How many IPM members would wish to belong to a club where everyone can join?

David Butterfield
Devizes, Wiltshire

(Letter published in Personnel Management. June 1993)

Despite the resistance of hardliners in both camps the overlap between the two disciplines was increasing with the growing influence of HRM and, accordingly, so was the number of members who belonged to both institutes. Geoff Armstrong the then Director General of the IPM argued:

"It really does not make sense to retain to separate institutes', duplicating their efforts, their resources and their headquarters, but working towards the same end and representing members whose roles increasingly overlap."

(Armstrong 1993: 22)

He went on to outline the benefits of a single institute which would facilitate the presentation of a coherent voice to outside agencies including the government and the EC. In addition, it would better place the profession to nominate members to external bodies and strengthen the chances of obtaining a royal charter.

"It is more likely that the department of employment will support us in our charter application if we speak for the whole profession with an authorative voice, a single set of qualifications and a clear code of ethics… this clarity of view and the value of our contribution will earn us a place at the top management tables."

<div align="right">(ibid: 22)</div>

Apparently accepting this logic the membership of both the IPM and the ITD voted strongly in favour of a merger and on the 1st July 1994 the new Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD) was born. The integration of the two organisations was not without its problems. In July 1995 one year after the merger the journal People Management reported that in some areas the integration of regional branches had been problematic "…generally due to personality clashes or area loyalties when it is not possible to please everybody" (Mac Lachlan 1995). It went on to report that in the most serious cases the central IPD committee was having to become involved in order to break the log jam (ibid).

However, such problems were the exception and in general terms the merger was proving a success. The combined membership of the existing organisations together with a surge of new members prompted in part by the higher profile of the IPD meant that after a year it could boast a membership of some 75,400 making it the largest organisation of HR professionals anywhere in the world (ibid). While the efforts of those working in the field to organise themselves and co-ordinate their activities toward raising the standards of practice and the level of reward associated with the occupation had begun almost 100 years earlier the creation of the IPD marked a renewed emphasis on professionalisation and personnel management's professional project.

5.6.2 Modern, Reinvigorated Professional Project.

Professional Standards.

Goode (1969) describes abstraction as an essential feature of a profession noting the importance that knowledge be organized into a codified body of principles if it is to maintain or enhance the social status of an occupation. Larson outlines the line which professional knowledge must tread being "formalized or codified enough to allow standardisation" without being "so clearly defined that it does not allow a principle of exclusion[or discretion] to operate." (1977: 31).

One of the most significant aspects of HRM's reinvigorated professional project was the creation of its professional standards document. The document was borne out of determination to explicitly define the profession (Whittaker 1995).From the outset the new Institute saw the establishment and monitoring of standards as one of its key objectives (ibid). The Professional Standards document which first launched in 1995 and is continually updated. In its current form it runs to 220 pages. The document defines standards across the whole spectrum of personnel and development and details what a professional working in people management should be able to do or should be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate if he or she is to work at the varying levels of expertise within the discipline and at the varying levels of membership within the organisation (CIPD 2004).

Table: 5.1: 'Membership Grades of the CIPD'

Chartered Membership	Chartered Companion (CCIPD)
	Chartered Fellow (FCIPD)
	Chartered Member (MCIPD)
Non- Chartered Grades	Graduate
	Licentiate
	Associate
	Affiliate
	Organisational membership

The Professional Standards are designed around the philosophy that they should answer the question: 'What is a CIPD Professional?' As a reaction the historical inadequacies of personnel management modern professional standards emphasise the role of a HR professional as a 'business partner' contributing to the overall goals of the business. The CIPD argues that as hard evidence that HRM is built on a discreet body of knowledge; and as a benchmark for the levels of understanding that CIPD members must attain, the Professional Standards "provide the firm foundations on which external credibility and respect for the organisation have been built."(CIPD 2004b: 5)

CIPD Membership and Qualifications.

According to various analysis of professions they are defined in part by their search for shelter from the rigours of labour markets. Professions attempt to gain a monopoly over an area of work by erecting entry gates between those areas and the general labour markets. They assert that only those who meet the criteria inherent in the entry gates should be allowed to practice. The CIPD has attempted to create entry gates to the field of personnel management through its membership and qualifications structures.

Routes to Chartered Membership.

The CIPD has developed a range of different routes to membership in order to cater for the differing circumstances of individuals at different stages of their careers and different stages of their professional development. Of these different routes the two most popular routes to full chartered membership are the educational route and the professional assessment of competence route featured in table 5.2 below.

The Educational route.

With some 13,000 new members coming in via the educational route each year it accounts for the majority of members which gain a professional grade within the CIPD. At the heart of the Institute's educational activities is the Professional Development Scheme (PDS) which is an interpretation, via a qualification, of the Professional Standards at a practitioner level. The mission of the PDS is 'To set a professional standard of competent CIPD Graduates.' (CIPD 2004: 51)

The CIPD argue that the PDS represents a valuable mechanism for enabling entrants into the profession to credibly claim a full professional status (ibid). Crucially, the CIPD has continued to set the PDS at a post-graduate level making it more stringent than many of the established professions.

While the CIPD determines the content of the PDS it is delivered across the UK by a network of CIPD approved centres which operate a combination of full and part time courses. Historically the PDS has been assessed in two ways, either through national assessment or through internal assessment. National assessment entails a combination of locally set and marked assignments and management research reports with nationally set and marked examinations at the end of each of the modules taken.

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Internal assessment similarly uses locally set and marked assignments. However, it also entails locally set and marked examinations. The process of becoming an approved centre is a rigorous one which can take up to ten months and involves examination of assessment strategies, quality assurances processes and facilities. This system of accreditation means that centres for higher learning such as universities can run their own post-graduate courses and providing that the content maps equitably against that prescribed by the CIPD's Professional Standards individuals can emerge from the course as graduate members of the Institute.

Professional Assessment of Competence.

Among the Institutes non- educational routes the PAC has an important role to play. The route is aimed at professions who for a variety of reasons have not previously sought membership of the CIPD but now operate in senior HR roles and for whom the educational route would be neither attractive nor appropriate. The PAC allows them to demonstrate that the knowledge and competence that they have accrued during the course of their careers meets the criteria set out in the CIPD's professional standards. Historically competence based assessments have not always been available and where they have they have at times not been taken seriously. As a response to this the CIPD has gone to great efforts to increase the number of people undertaking the assessment of competence but is also keen to emphasis that it is not a 'quick and dirty' route to membership:

> "In terms of the PAC route it's not just a case of somebody turning up and saying 'well I've worked in recruitment for 20years I must be good mustn't I?' We say, 'Well ok fine but these are the criteria and standards that we work to and this is what you'll be assessed against.' People think that somehow accrediting people is a less credible way- or a quick and dirty route- into getting qualifications and membership. We aim to ensure that it isn't. It's just more appropriate for some people, such as busy senior professionals."
>
> (Williams 2006)

Candidates submitting themselves to the Institutes PAC are required to have been working at a senior management role within HR for a minimum of five years before

table 5.2: 'Routes to chartered membership.'

		Chartered Member	
Senior HR Professionals.	⇨	**Professional Standards criteria:** Successful completion of PDS and three years relevant management experience.	**Professional Standards criteria:** Demonstration of 5 years relevant managerial experience.
Generally business and social science graduates seeking to progress in human resource management	⇨	**Graduate.** Successful completion of the four fields of PDS study obtains post-graduate level qualification	
For those seeking to transit from AS/ A' level or non HR degree qualifications to the post- graduate PDS.	⇨	**Licentiate.** Complete the CIPD certificate in Business Awareness and Advanced Professional study. NVQ level 5	
Those seeking fairly basic, practical skills such as: line managers secretarial/personnel assistants, or clerical staff.	⇨	**Associate.** Complete a CIPD certificate equivalent to NVQ level 3/4	
		Educational Route.	**Professional Assessmentof Competence Route.**

they will be considered. They are then subject to a variety of assessment methods including one-to-one interviews, the provision of worked based evidence and a 7,000 word management report. In all the process can take up to 18months. It is estimated that over 80 percent of the most senior HR practitioners working at up to director level come into the Institute through the PAC route (ibid).

From a position 20 years ago where most practitioners in the field did not belong to the IPM and had not achieved its qualifications the CIPD has achieved a high degree of occupational closure with its membership almost doubling from 67,000 to 125,000 since the introduction of its qualifications. This occupational closure has been

accompanied by impressive market closure with approximately 80 percent of recruitment adverts for HRM practitioners requiring Institute membership.

5.8 Broader Activities.

The CIPD's Professional Standards and membership structures are integral to its professional project. However, social closure and the other natural goals of a professional project cannot be achieved through qualifications alone. Fournier (1999) notes that all aspects of the profession are man-made and there is no natural area of professional knowledge with neatly defined boundaries. The most successful professions depend on deliberative employment of rhetoric and co-ordinated activities which go beyond the obvious tools of qualifications and membership systems. The CIPD serves as an excellent example of Fournier's point having undertaken a range of extra- credential activities to bolster its claim to professional status. The CIPD's reinvigorated professional project is apparent in numerous aspects of its work and organisation beginning with its systems of governance.

Governance.

The CIPD as it is currently constituted consists of a headquarters in south London where most of its 260 full-time staff is employed alongside a large network of branches spread throughout the UK and Ireland. The branches operate thanks to the voluntary efforts of their members with some logistical and financial support from the CIPD in order to provide updates and organise meetings for people who are interested in networking on a local or regional basis. Each of the branches nominates a member to sit on the CIPD council which meets twice a year. The council facilitates the representation of membership views to the CIPD's executive although its actual decision making powers are limited. Most of the power within the CIPD apparatus lies with its Executive Board. Unpaid and serving for three year terms the executive board consists of senior members of the Institute and is chaired by the President who serves as a figurehead for the organisation. Reporting to the Executive Board is the CIPD's Director General and staff management team which takes responsibility for the various aspects of the Institute's work. The power now concentrated with the CIPD's Executive Board is typical of a trend among professional associations which have sought to move away from traditional, unwieldy models of decision making. Many associations have replaced a large council and numerous sub-committees with a

much more streamlined form of governance based loosely on the corporate model found in large commercial organisations (Friedmann & Phillips 2004). While this corporate model raises concerns about democratic deficits in membership organisations in terms of a professional project they do facilitate the dynamism and strategic thinking which the creation and maintenance of professional boundaries requires.

Evidence based Advocacy.

The CIPD acts in a variety of ways which constitute its role as the voice of the profession and effectively the manager of the profession's image. The Institute's work as the voice of the profession involves advocacy, consultation and marketing. In terms of the former of these one of the most important roles the CIPD and its predecessor the IPD have undertaken is that of advocate for HRM to the business community. As discussed above, prior to the creation of the IPD the worth and relevance of the traditional personnel role was increasingly being called into question. Upon its creation an urgent priority for the IPD was that of finding a strategy which would enable them to effectively advocate the worth of a personnel or HRM function to a business. A weakness of personnel as a discipline until the 1980s was that many practitioners were resigned to the fact that the contribution of the function to the business was difficult if not impossible to measure and that its worth certainly could not be appreciated through such tangible measures as productivity levels or the effect on the bottom line.

Inspired by the HR theories which were growing in influence in the early 1990s there was a growing demand within HRM circles for evidence based advocacy of their work. With the key underlying assumptions of HR theory being that HR should contribute to organisational aims and that this contribution should be demonstrable, one of the early actions of the IPD was to create the Professional Knowledge and Information Network (PKIN).

> "We have a great advantage over some bodies in that we have always had-
> and indeed now have a very successful PKNI… We've also been able to
> do research which validates HR as a profession demonstrating that good
> HR practices can make a difference to your bottom line. Some of that

research has taken pace over quite a long period- several years- it's been about evidence based work."

<div align="right">(Williams 2006)</div>

While the research of the PKNI is not solely aimed at producing HR validating reports it has resulted in a number of influential pieces of research which contrast the fortunes of businesses where HR practices are being successfully employed with businesses where they are not (ibid). Williams argues that faced with such stark evidence it has become increasingly difficult for sceptical business leaders to refute the logic of good personnel management practices:

> "When you can amass that sort of data about how important it is that people are properly managed and developed and that doing so makes a sustainable difference in an organisation it makes a powerful case and changes the way people think about the function. We can demonstrate that it is not a Cinderella profession."

<div align="right">(Williams 2006)</div>

Aside from this advocacy role the CIPD also acts in a kind of consultancy capacity being a centre of expertise which other bodies and governmental departments can consult for information. This recognition of the CIPD being the foremost authority in the area of people management is an implicit feature of it being awarded chartered status and Williams argues that the willingness of both governmental and non-governmental bodies to consult with the Institute is in part a reflection on the success of its research activities (ibid).

Attracting Management Talent.

As a marketing body one of the most important roles that the CIPD plays is that of attracting talent to the profession. As discussed above the personnel function historically faced a vicious circle whereby young management talent did not see the profession as appealing. Lacking sufficient calibre in its practitioners personnel as a profession struggled to advance its cause and improve its status in relation to the other business functions which, in turn, meant that it continued to be an unattractive prospect for managers considering which discipline to enter. Since the creation of the IPD the problem of this vicious circle has been addressed by the Institute in a number of ways. Members from local branches do much of the work at ground level volunteering to go to local schools, colleges and universities to speak about the

profession and the work of the Institute. Centrally, the CIPD currently works with the Universities and Colleges Administration Service (UCAS) to raise awareness of the profession and arouse the interest of potential management talent even prior to them becoming undergraduates. In addition, the CIPD participates in 'countless recruitment fairs and open days' ensuring that HRM is presented as an attractive option alongside the other management functions.

Image Management.

Linked closely to the CIPD's work in attracting people to the field is its role managing the image of the profession. HRM has traditionally attracted a number of stereotypes, in terms of the people that work in the function, Williams was conscious of the 'tea and sympathy' view of personnel. According to this view people who could not survive the cut and thrust of other areas of the business would console themselves with the idea that they were 'good with people'.

> "We struggled with the idea of tea and sympathy. If you were no good at accountancy or one of the proper professions you would go to personnel. It was the bane of the profession."
>
> (Williams 2006)

Similarly, in terms of the work which the HR function does there have been stereotypes to contend with. Largely as a hangover from the classical personnel function ideas persist in some quarters of a HR department which rather than being a genuine partner in the business is purely a home for administrative tasks and transactions:

> "There are a lot of administrative things that have to go on but a modern HR department should be about so much more than just that… a failure to communicate that to people outside the profession was part of our image problem."
>
> (Williams 2006)

The images of the different management functions and the different professions have an important role to play as a factor in the decision making process of potential practitioners and negative stereotypes can have serious practical consequences. A student with little or no experience of the business world can only go on their own often simplistic understanding of what the work of different professions involves and

the type of people he or she can expect to be working alongside. Often, irrespective of what the contemporary reality is, if a profession has failed to counter perceptions borne out of historical practices or entirely out of ignorance they may struggle to attract candidates who are put off by the stereotypes. Equally problematically, may attract candidates who are not troubled by the stereotypes and are be happy to perpetuate them (Connelly 2002).

The CIPD has used various tools to try to counter the stereotypes which have surrounded the people management profession. It has been keen to substitute the importance of 'being good with people' with the importance of understanding that people contribute to the success of an organisation and that a good HR professional facilitates this contribution. It has developed the largest body of company case studies in Europe partly in an effort to emphases that in the most successful companies HR is not simply a home for transactions and administration. Williams notes that the achievement of Chartered Status has also been a crucial tool for the Institute in its efforts to have HR recognised as a 'proper profession' "...an important incentive in seeking chartered status was the return it would give us in terms of being seen as a valid, prestigious profession and to a greater degree now we have achieved that." (William 2006)

The Ethical Role.

A key distinguishing feature of professions, and thus a key goal of professional projects is that of achieving a high degree of autonomy in their occupational field. Professional status and the privileges which it entails are not irrevocable. They are offered on the condition that in return for monopoly and shelter from the general labour markets professions will act in the public good and avoid abuses of there special position. Traditional faith in professions has been severely undermined in recent years by a string of high profile scandals which have posed questions about the various professions ability to define and enforce high ethical standards (Friedman 2005) and as such the ethical role of professional associations has taken on even greater significance.

Wiley (2000) argues that the ethical dimension of the HRM profession is particularly important as it practitioners are so often faced with ethical dilemmas surrounding

issues such as favouritism, inconsistencies in pay, sexual and racial discrimination, harassment and breaches of confidentiality. The CIPD sets out the ethical standards it expects of its member sin the form of its Professional Code of Conduct. The code is a condition of the organisations royal charter and pertains to 'professional standards of behaviour' dictating that CIPD members have a responsibility towards the profession, towards themselves, towards the organisations within which they function and toward the public interest more generally. To this end members are required to:

> [4.2.1]
> To exercise integrity, honesty, diligence and appropriate behaviour in all their business, professional and related personal activities.

> [4.2.2]
> Act within the law and must not encourage, assist or act in collusion with employers, employees or others who may be engaged in unlawful conduct.
>
> (CIPD 2004c)

Where complaints fill the appropriate criteria the complainant is required to formally write to the Institute Secretary specifying which part of the code they feel has been breached and supplementing their complaint with any evidence they may have. If the Secretary decides that there is a case he or she will with an investigation and then pass the case to a disciplinary panel. If the disciplinary panel, having taken into account the available evidence, the decision of the Institute secretary and any appeal the accused may have lodged, upholds the complaint, they have a range of sanctions at their disposal. The sanction against the offending practitioner may take the form a formal warning, withdrawal of chartered status for a specified time or in the most serious cases, permanent expulsion from the institute.

The non-licensed nature of the HRM discipline means that unlike the Law Society or the General Medical Counsel it cannot strike members from its register and stop them practising. However, HRM practitioners have noted that the general expectation that HRM hold CIPD membership, combined with the stigma attached to having been expelled, mean that the practical employment opportunities in the field of HR for somebody who has been expelled from the Institute are extremely limited. (CIPD 2005)

5.8 The Current State of the HRM Profession.

Sisson (1995) notes that throughout the 1980s practitioners in the field of personnel could have been forgiven for thinking that the time when their work was considered useful to business had almost come to an end. Of course the situation was different from organisation to organisation but there was a general sense that others who considered themselves genuine business partners looked upon personnel with disdain and other business functions predicting its demise and began to lay claims to take on its responsibilities once it had passed:

> "An organisation's employees can be effectively influenced and motivated to customer-mindedness and improved buyer-seller relations, not by administrative actions and tasks, typically the responsibility of the personnel department, but by a marketing-like internal approach and by using marketing activities such as marketing research, segmentation strategies and communication efforts internally."
>
> (Richardson & Robinson 1986:13).

Far from this gradual fade into insignificance modern surveys of the personnel or HR function reveal that it is in a rude state of health and in fact being employed more widely and exerting more influence than ever. Recent surveys have revealed that 71 percent of HR managers and directors work under chief executives who are convinced that the HR function had a key role to play in achieving business outcomes; the same percentage reported that HR issues were frequently discussed at board level (CIPD 2003).

Far from being subsumed by the other functions the report notes that HR is actually taking on broader, higher profile responsibilities prompting the phrase 'more communications and organisational design, less canteen and toilets.' HR was found to have partial or complete responsibility for organisational design in 45 percent of responding businesses, responsibility for internal communication in 41 percent of businesses and oversight of corporate social responsibility in 39 percent of businesses (ibid).

The traditional image of personnel as a function of last resort for managers also appears to have been shaken as almost 50 percent of the HR managers questioned had spent time in other functions of the business outside HRM. A high proportion of these managers had spent time in established functions such as sales and marketing or

finance at a senior level before switching to HR suggesting perhaps that the image of the profession is now one which can attract high flyers within business.

The drivers for the resurgence of people management in the face of the predicted stall of the personnel function are numerous and the subject of fierce debate. The most ardent proponents of HRM feel that it has represented a fairly radical departure from what had gone before it and that its emphasis' on adding value and strategic input has to a greater degree saved people management as a mainstream business activity from extinction. At the other end of the spectrum are the sceptics who feel that HRM consists largely of what the best personnel departments were already doing by another name along with some 'fads and gimmicks' thrown in. In the middle ground are those that feel that HRM is more evolution than revolution from what had gone before and that the repackaging of a mixture of old and new under the title HRM was a useful exercise (Armstrong 2005).

Regardless of arguments about the other driving factors one point that raises much consensus across the entire spectrum of thinking is that, whether they describe themselves as personnel managers or human resource managers, the practitioners in the field of people management today are on the whole much more professional in their own right and part of a profession which has a much stronger claim to 'proper' professional status than it did twenty years ago. "One thing I think we can all agree on is that people management as a profession has come of age over the last two decades"(Armstrong 2005: 4).

 The WRES, when comparing surveys of the people management discipline from the 1980s and 1999, noted that one of the most striking changes had been in the people working in the field. From a position where only a minority of those working in personnel management had qualification in the mid 1980s, by 1999 some 75 percent of practitioners held a qualification- most commonly that of the CIPD. Today that figure is even higher. Sisson argues that an especially significant feature of the trend is that qualifications have not solely been adopted by newcomers to the profession. In fact, the proportion of specialists with qualifications increases in relation to their length of experience suggesting that seasoned professionals have been convinced of

the case for qualifications and keen to be associated with the emerging professionalism (Sisson 2004).

Asked what the symptoms of not being regarded as a proper profession were for personnel managers and how things had changed in the wake of the re-invigorated professional project Williams noted:

> "15 or 20 years ago people were discarded into personnel. It was a case of organisations with failing people or people in the twilight of their careers and needing a place to put them. People thought personnel was soft, it was associated with housekeeping and certainly not essential to the performance of the business… Now HR has developed standards and we have been able to say 'there are things which people must know and the consequences of not knowing them are this and this for your business.' If you want to avoid disputes with unions and maximise your productivity you have to think carefully about the way you manage your human resources. We have been able to prove that and as a result HR has moved along way from being the least important of the business professions."
>
> (Williams 2006)

By definition, professional projects are never completed and should be regarded as an ongoing search for improved levels of status. However, as a marker of the success of the reinvigorated professionalisation efforts in the field of HR since the creation of the IPD in 1994 practitioners would point to the successful achievement of chartered status for the CIPD.   The IPD in it past guises had sought chartered status on a number of occasions however dialogue with the Privy Council had revealed that prior to the merger with the Institute of Training and Development (ITD) doubts had existed about the old IPM's claim to be the sole authoritive voice in the field as well as its claim to be based on a distinct body of professional knowledge. The merger with the ITD, the explicit outlining of the professions body of knowledge in the form of its Professional Standards and the continued growth of membership to 100,000 full members meant that the Privy Council's fears were eventually allayed. The IPD became the first body to be granted chartered status in the new millennium being renamed the Chartered Institute Personnel Development (CIPD) and in 2002 its members were further granted individual chartered status allowing them to describe themselves as chartered members and fellows of the CIPD. As a result Williams argues that:

"HR practitioners are now getting a better deal out of their employment in terms of the way they are recognised and rewarded. HR has risen in profile and is now better placed within organisations to implement good HR practices so hopefully it will continue to be an upwards spiral."

(Williams 2006)

5.9 Summary of Conclusions.

The central tenet of Larson's (1977) exposition of professional projects is that occupations engaged in such projects attempt to trade the valuable commodity in their possession, specialist skills and knowledge, for the valuable commodities they seek, improved social status and economic reward. HRM's professionalisation efforts provide an excellent practical model of this process. HRM first set about creating for itself the capability for occupational negotiation by a politically fraught, but ultimately successful merger of the representative bodies in the field. HRM engaged in boundary work to explicitly define the reach and content of the profession by producing its 'professional standards' document. The occupation was closed through the establishment of membership criteria and qualifications and the CIPD's research activities and consultation with industry have helped its members to substantially monopolise the market for HRM.

6. Professions, Professionalism and Corporate Security.

6.1 Introduction.

The question of whether security management constitutes a profession is one, which has emerged often in security management literature (for example: Manunta 1996, Simmonsen 1996). However, previous discussion of the topic has failed to acknowledge the substantial body of sociological study, concerning the professions and professionalism. This chapter is intended to give a brief overview of the development of thinking on professions before exploring the attitudes of our security managers to the subjects of: professionalism; being professional; and being a professional. Finally, this chapter is intended to examine the current proximity of corporate security to genuine professional status by comparing it to the ideal type-professionalism as described by Friedson (2001).

6.2 The Study of Professions.

The apparently simple question 'what is a profession?' has in fact become a rather complicated, ongoing theme in sociology literature. The term 'profession' itself is now widely acknowledged to be closely intertwined with the historical context in which it is used and as such its meaning has changed periodically and progressively in the West over at least three centuries (Everetts 1999). Until the early 19th century the professional landscape was dominated by the three learned professions of law, the church, and medicine. However, stimulated by the industrial revolution, the number of occupations which lay claim to professional status grew into the 20th century paving the way for an ongoing sociological debate as to what constitutes a profession and why members of certain occupations seek to raise the status of their work above that of other occupations in order to achieve professional recognition.

MacDonald offers "Occupations based on advanced, or complex, or esoteric, or arcane knowledge" (1995: 1) as a working definition of a profession. Although MacDonald's definition correctly identifies knowledge as an essential criterion of a profession, credible professions are not constituted simply by knowledge alone. Restricted access to the relevant body of knowledge and the codified nature of that knowledge are distinguishing characteristics of occupations, which have lifted themselves to professional status (O'Regan 2001). These, knowledge based,

characteristics combine to create the widely held acceptance that only a professional surgeon should perform an operation and only a certified public accountant should give a formal audit opinion on a set of corporate financial statements (ibid). However, although knowledge is an important ingredient, by itself it cannot constitute a credible profession.

To illustrate this point Scruton (1982) uses the example of the 'professional' criminal. While the knowledge possessed by a professional criminal may fit MacDonald's criteria of advanced, complex or arcane the professional criminal lacks the social legitimacy which is a further key ingredient of genuine professional status. Friedson (1986) attributes the lack of social legitimacy to the absence of a discernable institutional framework and an acceptable ethical basis. While one may admire the bank robber's audacity, their technical expertise in defeating counter measures and disabling alarms society has resisted elevating them to professional status alongside barristers or human resource managers. Friedson (ibid) suggests that this is because the credibility of a profession is also derived from its social legitimacy and the manner in which its knowledge base is institutionalised and ethically framed.

A profession's institutional framework represents, governs and restricts access to the profession and is typically characterised by a formal constitution and a system of examinations which serve to license its members (O'Regan 2001). Institutional structures, which surround professions tend to be responsible for research activities and the issuing of written standards of professional conduct and best practice. These features mean that the existence or otherwise of a profession's institutional framework is usually clearly identifiable. However, questions relating to the ethical legitimacy of the professions have proven somewhat more opaque and the ethical qualities of the professions have been the subject of much debate in sociological literature. Thinking related to the ethical basis for professions and efforts to professionalise can be broken into two broad streams which Johnson has describes as the 'functionalist' and 'interactionalist' schools (Johnson 1972).

Barber (1963) was one of the most influential proponents of the functionalist school and argued that a professional possesses a "high degree of generalised and systematic knowledge" which they would employ with a naturally occurring "primary orientation

to the community interest rather than to individual self- interest"(ibid:33). Barber argued that professions emerged as a result of the need for those with high value knowledge to assert control over the practitioner- client relationship for the greater public good. He argued that professionals were essentially altruistic in nature and that their natural inclination to employ their knowledge for the greater good was recognised by the public and rewarded in terms of the status and autonomy, which they were afforded for their work. (ibid) The functionalist perspective depicts a professional culture characterised by public spiritedness, altruism and virtue. According to this view the desire to be a professional is based on a vocational calling and a commitment to public service and professions form "moral communities" which glue together society's bonds (Johnson 1972: 12). In the functionalist vein, Anderson has observed that: "… what makes a profession a profession is the sort of person who practices it." To this end professional training should be considered "… not just as knowledge inculcation but as the formation of a certain sort of person. Only those of good character should be accepted and only those of good character accredited." (Anderson 1998:9).

From the 1960s onwards, the 'interactionist' school of thought increasingly challenged this wholesome interpretation of the professions. The most prominent of the interactionist thinkers was Larson (1977) who interpreted the rise of professions as expressions of institutional self-interest. Far from altruistic groups of citizens concerned for the betterment of society, interactionists portrayed professions as greedy and cynical groups of men and women craving economic advantage and social advancement through the employment of 'professional projects'. These professional projects, where successful, led to workers in the specific occupations rising from the general population by achieving dominance, closure around their field of work and sheltering themselves from the rigours of the labour markets. The result of this monopoly for the occupational elites which drove it were the economic and status rewards associated with social mobility. Many interactionists argued that power was at the root of occupations professional projects as groups of experts sought to translate their competence and authorized power over specific discourses into much more overtly political power (Larson 1990).

Larson's (1977) initial critique of professions and those who aspired to professional status was deeply critical of both. She viewed professional projects as deeply selfish adventures resulting in the 'stratification' of society. According to Larson monopolistic practices reinforced societies discriminatory power structures compounding structural inequalities associated with gender, race and ethnicity (MacDonald 1995). This dismal initial critique of the motivations behind professional projects has, to a significant extent, faded as the study of professions has matured. As is demonstrated by the example of HRM in the last chapter, and the experiences of occupations such as internal audit and risk management, the pursuit of a professional project is now viewed as a worthy activity. However, Larson's work remains important due to its consideration of the deliberate nature of professionalisation. Previous theorising about professions had paid little attention to the processes which took place prior to arriving at 'professional' status or, had tended to treat the development of professions as natural history in which worthy occupations made gradual inexorable progress toward and inevitable professional conclusion. The interactionist school of thought was the first to treat the process of professionalisation as a conscious effort requiring strategy and rhetoric.

If an appropriate professionalisation strategy is to be developed for corporate security, it is worth first examining the views of practitioners in the field towards the concept of being 'professional' and merit of belonging to a profession.

6.3 Varying conceptions of being 'Professional'.

Lester (1994) has distinguished between two understandings of professionalism, that of being 'a professional' and that of being 'professional'. These two different paradigms for understanding professionality he has termed as 'Model A' and 'Model B'. Model A is a model of professionality, which closely resembles that represented in much of the sociological literature on the subject. According to Model A professions are bounded, externally- defined and based on a knowledge common to all those belonging to the said profession (ibid). Under Model A being professional means being *a* professional, submitting oneself to formal, external validation and abiding by the relevant rules and codes of practice usually defined by a professional body.

Model B involves a quite different perception of being a professional, which is not tied to membership of any recognised profession. Professionality, as Lester terms it, under this model, is dependent upon a "…portfolio of learningful activity individual to the practitioner, integrated by common personal values and beliefs." (Lester 1994: 2). According to Model B being professional is not the sole claim of those who belong to recognised professions. Rather, individuals who demonstrate adequate personal ethics, undertake work which requires reasoning and intelligent intuition, and do so in an effective manner can also properly lay claim to the term professional.

This idea of being judged professional on the basis of the quality of your work and your personal integrity, without belonging to a profession, is one which also emerged repeatedly in the course of discussions about professionalism with our security managers:

> "I think a lot of it depends on what you mean by professional, we can all become a little bit precious about it. What is a profession? It's an organisation that regulates itself. We are not barristers or doctors. If you mean professional in terms of doing things right, doing things competently, then yes, I strive to be professional and so do most of my peers."
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

This security manager was typical of a number of the security managers from the point of view that he appeared to have given some amount of prior thought to the question of what it meant to be professional. In this instance the security manager chose to interpret the concept of being professional in a manner, which correlated closely with Lester's Model B, being largely dependant on the competence and integrity of the individual. Perhaps unsurprisingly, all of the security managers who had Model B conceptions of what it was to be professional judged that they were very much professionals:

> "Well quite simply I have to be. If I did not come here every day, work hard and work effectively the business and the people I have to deliver to would not tolerate me. So yes, I am a professional."
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

"I am dedicated. In this area of the business we cannot afford to make mistakes so, I am professional, and, I expect all my staff to be very professional as well."

<div align="right">(Security Manager, Finance)</div>

Roughly half of the managers adopted the Model A interpretation of being a professional. Model A requires validation by a recognised profession and adherence to regulatory and ethical frameworks of that profession as pre-requisites for being a professional. The opinions of those who subscribed to this more classical sociological view of professionalism as to whether they belonged to a profession were more mixed. A small minority of the security managers felt that theirs was a discipline which had sufficient professional structures in place to merit its being recognised alongside the other emergent management professions:

"Yes I am a professional security manager. I'm proud of that. I have been validated by the [Security] Institute. I think the growing number of training courses available and TSI [The Security Institute] reflect the fact that we have professionalised."

<div align="right">(Security Director, Communications)</div>

Generally however, most managers did not feel that security management could be considered as a credible profession. For most this was a reflection of the fact that as an occupation it had not yet matured sufficiently, had not developed many of the characteristics and institutional structures expected of a profession and had not established proper entry gates controlling access to the occupations area of work:

"No. I've never really thought about it in those terms. We don't really have, well, we don't have the trappings of a profession."

<div align="right">(Security Director, Retail)</div>

"No. Not now at the moment. I know how the dictionary defines professionals and it usually surrounds some sort of academic qualification. Being able to prove that you posses a certain level of knowledge and I think a lot of people in the industry can't do that."

<div align="right">(Security Manager, Finance)</div>

Almost without exception the security managers who felt that security management did not yet merit the label 'profession' noted that moves towards becoming a profession, in the Model A sense of the word, was a desirable way to proceed. Some noted the progress they felt had already been made in the form of professional

associations, academic study of the field and the diversity of people who were seeking to enter the occupation:

> "…I think it's slowly getting that way. Over the years I've seen the difference. There are good quality individuals entering the field and if you are that way inclined, you can go out and get yourself an MSc."
>
> (Security Director, Retail)

A number of things became apparent from the discussions about professions and professionals with our security managers. Perhaps most striking was the obvious degree of consideration many of them had given the subject. This is perhaps testament to the fact that, in one form or another, the question of professionalism has been a reoccurring theme in security management for some time. Some of the security managers interpreted their professional status as a phenomenon, which was specific to themselves, their competence and their integrity. The remainder of the security managers subscribed to a group interpretation by which their ability to be a professional security manager was dependant on the existence of a credible security management profession to which they could belong. In the opinions of the majority of these managers, and to their regret, such a profession had not yet satisfactorily been established.

6.4 Professionalism: the ideal type.

While they offer an interesting insight into the views and aspirations of our security managers with regard to the question of professionalism, the interviews with our security managers are not sufficient by themselves to impartially assess the proximity of security management to full and credible professional status. Thus, it is intended here to triangulate the security manager's assessment of their occupation with a comparative analysis of corporate security management using Friedson's (2001) ideal type- professionalism as the basis for comparison. Friedson stresses that his 'ideal type' approach is an intellectual tool and heuristic device rather than an effort to portray the varied realities of professions in different times and places. As such, the elements of his ideal type should not be considered a checklist of criteria to be fulfilled prior to proclaiming professional status. Friedson doubts that any profession has entirely fulfilled all of the theoretical criteria he lays down and that individual

profession's proximity to the ideal type is likely to have fluctuated over time (ibid). The key elements of Friedson's ideal type- professionalism are:

- specialised work grounded in a body of theoretically based, discretionary knowledge and skill;
- exclusive jurisdiction in a particular division of labour created and controlled by occupational negotiation;
- a sheltered position in both external and internal labour markets that is based on qualifying credentials created by the occupation.

6.4.1 Specialised Work Grounded in a Body of Theoretically Based, Discretionary Knowledge and Skill.

According to Friedson, the privilege of professional status is bestowed upon occupations whose work is specialized and beyond standardisation to the extent that it is deemed that those with the required training and experience should be allowed to control their own work (ibid). Dietrich & Roberts explain the link between theoretically grounded, specialised, work and professional status by suggesting that purchasers of professional services face problems which entail decision- making complexity of such magnitude that they themselves are "incapable of pre-thinking all the issues involved" (1997: 16). This scenario provides the economic basis for professionalism in that professionals must demonstrate that their professional knowledge and skills provide the means to satisfy client ignorance. Continued satisfaction fuels societal recognition of the professional's uniquely valuable abilities and lends credibility to their claim for enhanced professional status. In Friedson's ideal-type model these claims eventually lead to recognition from the state, which facilitates greater institutionalisation and occupational closure.

With regard to corporate security management, the extent to which the occupation is underpinned by a theoretical body of knowledge appears limited. Manunta (2000) has been one of the keenest critics of the lack of a theoretical base upon which to build the occupation and suggests that the continued absence of a broadly agreed core of theoretical knowledge has a number of negative consequences for those in the field. Perhaps foremost among these is the problem of understanding. Manunta notes that a number of authors in the field have discussed and written on the subject of security

whilst candidly admitting they have no clear definition of what security is about. (ibid)

> "Some confound security with deterrence, mutual destruction, retaliation and war readiness… Some include within the domain and responsibility of security the full spectrum of negative events, from acts of God, global warming, meteorites and ethnic movements to terrorism, money laundering and organized crime… whilst others think in terms of risk management and equate security with loss prevention."
>
> <div align="right">(ibid: 8)</div>

The absence of a core body of knowledge in which decisions are grounded also generates questions about how those decisions can be justified. Complaints about the difficulty of attracting resources to the security function have been a common theme among many of the security managers participating in this research. Security decisions and initiatives must be approved by senior managers within organisations who frequently consider security as a marginal activity and work to a set of expectations and criteria, which have not been conceived with security issues in mind. Manunta argues that, under these adverse conditions, to win their case, the security manager must build a robust argument (ibid). Robustness depends on clear definitions and reliable information, but crucially also on the transparency of the decision making process. The absence of codified, abstract principles for decision making is problematic for transparency.

Among the managers who doubted the professional status of their occupation a factor, which was repeatedly cited, was the absence of any core body of knowledge. As will be discussed further below there was a sense from many of the security managers that they had, to a significant extent, taught themselves how to perform the role and that there was no central body of security management knowledge in which they could claim their work was grounded. Rather than applying abstract theories of security management to different situations as they progressed there was a real sense that among some managers that their work was too frequently based on pragmatic solutions. Bluntly, they questioned security management's entitlement to professional status because they felt much of their role involved making things up as they went:

> "I think it's because we have not reached the right level of maturity. There is no core central knowledge or best practice- it just doesn't exist. Because

> of that security people tend to invent things and respond pragmatically and to some extent you could do that without ever having an understanding of risk."
>
> (Security Director, Finance)

In response to the problems that arise for security managers working without a core body of knowledge it appears that in relation to some reoccurring security problems, managers have at times developed theoretical frameworks and abstract principles of their own. At times this knowledge has been used to justify spending or demonstrate project feasibility while at other times it has been used as a teaching aid for developing junior security managers. The various undergraduate and postgraduate courses related to security management, which have emerged in recent years will also have contributed to the theoretical body of knowledge. Manunta's work in defining 'the security problem' is an example of this (Manunta 2000a). However, security management has nothing even close to the codified knowledge core of other professions such as HRM's Professional Standards document described in chapter five.

When Friedson describes "a body of theoretically based knowledge and skill" (Friedson 2001: 89) he is referring to a centrally held and consolidated body of knowledge which all members of the profession will have access to and be expected to have an understanding of. At present, the slowly increasing, body of theoretical knowledge, which relates to corporate security, does not match this description. It is largely anonymous, disparate and uncoordinated in nature being held by individual practitioners and individual institutions in a fashion, which makes access to it in its entirety difficult if not impossible. Adding to and co-ordinating the knowledge on which the occupation is based appears to be one of the most urgent tasks for corporate security if it is to seek genuine professional status.

6.4.2 Exclusive Jurisdiction in a Particular Division of Labour Created and Controlled by Occupational Negotiation.

Friedson (ibid) observes that professions are able to claim specialized expertise in the performance of work. As a result, they are in a position to negotiate where the boundaries of their work lie and to ensure that only those considered "bona fide members of the occupation" may practise (ibid: 56). For corporate security

management this analysis raises two main questions: do corporate security managers have exclusive jurisdiction over the work in their field and are they equipped to engage in occupational negotiation?

Occupational negotiation and the ability of an occupation to speak with a single authoritative and representative voice are an important characteristic of professions according to almost every definition in sociological literature. For instance, Larson's (1977) analysis of professions suggests that occupations use their collective monopoly of a certain branch of knowledge as a bargaining chip in their dialogue with the state. They dispense their knowledge in exchange for further autonomy and legal entrenchment of the entry gates, which they place in front of those wishing to practice in their field. Clearly, the ability of a profession to bargain, and to use its monopoly of expertise as a bargaining tool, would be extremely limited if the practitioners within the profession did not have a means of acting in concert and engaging in occupational negotiation. The experience of HRM serves as an example of the broader imperative of an occupation being able to coordinate its activities and speak with a single coherent voice. For HRM, with the CIPD at its hub, the ability to act in a concerted fashion and been seen as representative of an entire occupation has been crucial to the success of it efforts at engaging in a dialogue with business about the competitive edge that HR can offer. It has further been an important consideration in its efforts to attract the best young management talent to the HR function (chapter 5).

However, the interviews with our security managers as well as a survey of the corporate security landscape suggest that the ability of corporate security management to enter into any form of occupational negotiation is limited. One of our security managers observed:

> "Our problem is we proliferate. If you look on the web there are all sorts of different bodies. All with good intentions, but there is a danger in that. Who actually represents the industry? If the government has a question in our field who does it go to to get a sensible answer? I think if we could develop something like that and all of us would, as it were, bend the knee to it, that would be a positive step…"
>
> (Security Director, Services)

The discussions with the security managers about their knowledge of, and affiliation to, institutions and associations related to security substantiated this point. The interviews with the security members revealed membership or knowledge of thirteen different bodies, associations or institutes whose membership encompassed corporate security managers. Considering the actual number of security managers being employed, estimated to be around 5000 in the UK, and allowing for the fact that many may have no affiliations at all, this seems to be an exceptional number of occupational bodies. The composition and purpose of many of these bodies was different. However to some extent they all competed for the membership and time of our corporate security managers. Thus, serve to make it much less likely that any single institute or association could credibly speak for security managers as a whole and facilitate engagement in occupational negotiation.

Similarly, corporate security managers 'exclusive jurisdiction' in the field of security management is not yet a reality. In tandem with Friedson's (ibid) criteria of exclusive jurisdiction is Wilensky's (1964) observation that a critical step in professionalisation is that an occupation become 'full time'. In combination, Wilensky and Friedson's analysis imply that an occupation must be regarded as being of such importance that generally only those who specialise in the field are employed and, that their work is of sufficient substance and complexity to require their full- time effort. As such, it is pertinent to ask: to what degree is corporate security management only undertaken by corporate security managers and to what degree is corporate security management the sole responsibility of those involved in the work?

It seems that, on both counts, the standing of corporate security management has improved in recent years. As discussed in chapter three, corporate security management has been driven, over the longer term, by the continued growth in crime generally and the increased threats which globalisation and operation in international markets have entailed for large businesses. Over the shorter term, the rise of a brand of terrorism which views western corporations as legitimate and desirable targets, along with a regulatory emphasis on good governance within businesses, have served to even more acutely raise the profile of corporate security management. As is revealed by the fortunes of our security managers and their security departments, this has meant that in some companies the profile and resources available to corporate

security have increased. In others, entirely new positions and departments have been created to bolster resilience and coordinated previously balkanised security efforts.

However, despite this progress, there remains substantial evidence to suggest that security managers do not have exclusive jurisdiction over security management. As was also discussed in chapter three, it seems that less than 50 percent of FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 companies have a dedicated, full-time security manager. It is reasonable to suppose that in the remainder of these companies there are security management issues and decisions, but that these issues and decisions are dealt with by somebody whose speciality is not security. This characterisation of the state of security management is backed up anecdotal experience such as that of the security managers involved in an SMT debate (SMT, 2004) titled 'Should security management remain as a separate discipline?' One contributor to the debate ruefully noted that: "…what has happened is that some key services have been contracted out to facilities management service providers. Ultimately, we've seen the security manager begin to lose some status" (ibid: 4). Given such observations from those working in the field it must be concluded that security management has some way to go before achieving the professional ideal of exclusive jurisdiction in its occupational field.

6.4.3 Shelter from Labour Markets based on a Qualification.

As will be discussed further in the next chapter one of the early goals of the professional project and a feature of professionalism, which makes it so attractive to aspiring occupations is the shelter from the general labour market which professionals enjoy. Such shelter ensures that the number of people who enter a professional occupation can be controlled, the supply of professional services can be manipulated, and those services can then be provided at a premium. The most important tool at the profession's disposal, in building entry barriers and ensuring shelter between itself and the outside labour market, is the professional credential:

> "It is the authoritative source establishing the legitimacy of the practical
> work activities of the occupation's members, and it is the primary source
> of status of its members and their personal, public and official identities."
>
> (Friedson 2001:84)

Friedson (ibid) notes that the credentials it results in are not the only valuable aspect of 'professional schooling.' As one of the institutions supporting Friedson's ideal type, the professional qualification also serves to provide the intellectual basis for the professions jurisdictional claims and its relation to other occupations. Friedson notes that the individuals and processes involved in administering professional schooling usually also serve as a factory where new theory is developed and new knowledge is produced. Qualifications and the schooling process also contribute to a practitioner's commitment to an occupation invoking a shared identity and sense of community among all those who have passed through it (ibid).

Gibson & Borodzicz (2006) have drawn attention to the difficulties corporate security has faced in identifying a single core of knowledge on which a professional credential might be based. Given these difficulties, opportunities to create a professional qualification derived from the core knowledge of security management have been limited. While a number of different qualifications, ranging from certificate to postgraduate in nature, were mentioned in the course of the interviews with the security managers there is little evidence to suggest that any of them bolstered security management in the fashion alluded to by Friedson (2001).

About a quarter of the security managers held a security management qualification of some kind. Of these managers a very small number felt that their current employment had been dependant on their qualification. In the most limited sense these security members benefited from some shelter from the general labour market. However, they were by far the exception. Generally a qualification, of any kind, is not a pre-requisite for working in corporate security in either the formal sense of it being a legal requirement, as in medicine, or the informal sense, where possession of a specific qualification has become a convention, as in HRM. As such the qualifications, which exist around security management cannot be said to offer the discipline any significant shelter from general labour markets as Friedson's ideal model suggests they ought.

6.5 Summary of Conclusions.

The discussions with our security managers revealed that they distinguished between the concepts of being 'professional' and being 'a professional'. The security mangers

without exception felt that they were 'professional' in the self-regarding sense of the notion. However, the majority did not feel that they could credibly claim to be 'a professional' in the sense of belonging to a profession, owing to the relatively low level of maturity which their occupation demonstrates.

Their assessment of the work which remains to be done before the occupation can claim professional status is corroborated by a comparative analysis between what currently exists, in terms of professional institutions and capabilities, and what should ideally exist. Friedson's (2001) ideal model of a profession includes a grounding in a theoretical body of knowledge, the ability to engage in occupational negotiation, exclusive jurisdiction over the occupations chosen field and shelter from general labour markets based on a qualification. The analysis suggests that, while the occupation has made recent advances in relation to some of these criteria, it does not yet adequately fulfil any of them.

7. A Proposed Professional Project for Corporate Security.

7.1 Introduction.

The preceding chapters of this thesis have been directed at:

- examining the types of people who are, and who will be, employed in the field of corporate security now and in the future
- adding substance to the widely perceived issues of status which face corporate security management
- examining how others occupations have addressed similar status problems through professional projects
- offering an insight into corporate security manager's views about professionalisation and examine the progress which corporate security's professionalisation efforts have made to date.

Based on the views of our security managers professionalism, Friedson's (2001) ideal type and Larson's (1977) concept of the 'professional project', this chapter is intended to outline a broad, strategic roadmap, which the corporate security as an occupation may consider as a template for a route to genuine professional status.

7.2 Corporate Security's Professional Project.

The professional project proposed in this chapter is broken into five distinct elements:

1.) A conversation about corporate security's professional future.
2.) Developing the capacity for occupational negotiation.
3.) Boundary work.
4.) Occupational closure.
5.) Monopolisation of supply.

These five elements of the corporate security roadmap are not sequential nor are they neatly contained separate areas of activity. While an initial 'conversation' about corporate security's professional future would be a sensible pre-requisite to the other elements of the roadmap, it is likely that, given shifting work patterns, societal

contexts and the length of time over which corporate security's professional project would unfold, that this initial debate would become something of a periodic dialogue. The purpose of such a dialogue should be to consider what any professional project had achieved and what its next sub-goal should be. Similarly, most of the elements are reciprocal in nature. The ability to act cooperatively and in unison in order to partake in occupational negotiation is also essential if a universal qualification is to be developed and occupational closure achieved. In return, studying for a qualification which is common to all those practising the occupation, will undoubtedly breed a sense of community further cementing the discipline's capacity for occupational negotiation (Friedson 2001).

Inherent in Larson's (1977) accounts of the various professional projects which occupations have embarked upon is the idea that professional projects are essentially cynical undertakings by greedy self- serving occupational elites seeking to harness their owns skills and knowledge as a commodity to be traded for economic betterment. Larson argued that this greed aggravates society's inequalities to the detriment of its most disadvantaged members. As discussed in the previous chapter, these negative assumptions have come to be challenged in academic circles. While the roadmap outlined below will focus on harnessing corporate security manager's skills and knowledge in order to make them a more marketable commodity, the experience of this project also contradicts Larson's assertions that occupational elites' only considerations are personal gain.

In fact, in the case of corporate security management, the most active and enthusiastic advocates of a reinvigorated professional project have been members of the occupation who have least to gain personally. They have already enjoyed long careers in the field and do not expect to reap the rewards of their efforts. In any case, in achieving their positions as occupational elites, they already personally enjoy many of the benefits associated with being a professional in terms of economic rewards and status. Thus, the research has revealed a somewhat altruistic element to professional projects in which professional elites seek to pave the way for those who follow. Larson's model cannot account for this phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is the means by which occupations professionalise rather than the spirit behind their professionalisation, which makes Larson's work of relevance here.

7.3 A Conversation about Corporate Securities Professional Future.

The historical professional projects which Larson observed entailed "…attempts to translate one order of scare resources, special knowledge and skills, into another-social and economic rewards" (Larson 1977: xvii). While very deliberate undertakings, these historical professional projects unfolded over the course of decades, even centuries, and as such it was impossible for a single generation to envisage the beginning and the end of a professional project. Writing in 1977 Larson observed that the number of occupations embarking on professional projects was increasing, and that contemporary professional projects were becoming more acute in that occupations were becoming more adept at translating their knowledge and skill into marketable commodities. With proper planning, a conducive social and work context and sufficient intensity of effort, occupations such as HRM have moved from a state very similar to that of contemporary corporate security to credible professional status easily within the span of a single generation of practitioner.

However, the notion of working towards becoming a profession in the institutional sense is not without its detractors. Both in broad occupational terms, and more specifically among our security managers, concerns have been raised about the future of professional work and the worth of pursuing a professional future. Gold, Rodgers & Smith (2002) note that, while the system of professions has dominated UK society for much of the last century, it is a system, which is increasingly being challenged from a number of directions. Advances in technology and the ease with which information can be sieved and accessed threaten the markets for specialised knowledge on which professional work is based (Pearson 1999). Deregulation and the growing faith in free markets and competition have presented a further challenge to professional work. Powell, Brock & Hinings (1999) cite the experience of accountants, the efforts by others to routinise their operations and the falling profitability of audit work as examples of the pressures which the appetite for free markets has placed on professions since the 1980s. The declining social recognition given to professional work is probably the most frequently commented upon aspect of the challenges facing professionals. Scase (1999) highlights the increasing distrust, cynicism and suspicion of authority as features of modern society, which do not lend themselves easily to the self- regulation and autonomy long prized as the central privileges of professional work.

While the majority of our security managers favoured professionalisation of some kind some of the security managers clearly held different perceptions of what the problems facing security management were, what professionalisation entailed and how it could help address the problems the occupation faced. Not all the security managers subscribed to the general consensus described in the last chapter surrounding the need for a theoretical grounding for security. Among some of the mangers there was a perception that there was little lacking in the substance of security management. These managers felt that corporate security management met the criteria of a profession and that the status issues they faced stemmed entirely from the disciplines failure to communicate its good work. Accordingly, these security mangers felt that the most important function of professionalising was to develop mechanisms and structures, which would enable corporate security to broadcast its merits:

> "I feel that, really, we are professional enough. We just do not get the recognition. I don't think that what we require is a whole load of navel gazing, we have to get out there and make people realise what our work involves."
>
> (Security Manager, Communications)

If corporate security management is to invest the effort and resource associated with a professional project and to achieve the collective action that a professional project strives for, as an occupation it must first test whether it can come to a single agreed analysis of the problems it faces. If this can be achieved it must then be decided whether pursuing a professional project is the most appropriate way of advancing the occupation. On this point, despite the challenges to professionals and professional work outlined above, there have been recent compelling defences of the system of professions:

> "I have analysed and then discarded the criticism of professions which has become increasingly common over the past few decades. I do not deny the occasional truth of those criticisms, nor the need to make professional institutions more honest, but the criticisms have failed to deal with the central problem: how else to nurture and control occupations with complex esoteric knowledge and skill, some of which provide us with critical personal services and others with functional knowledge without which much of our standard of living could not exist."
>
> (Friedson 2001: 220)

The challenges facing professions do not appear to have discouraged other occupations from striving for professional status. In the UK, for example, the number of jobs in the professions increased by 50 percent between 1981 and 1999 (Skills task Force 2000). The evidence from our small sample of corporate security managers suggests that consensus concerning the problems which face the discipline can be achieved and that corporate security managers are broadly aligned in their desire to address these problems through a professional project. If this turns out indeed to be the case, corporate security will have to develop for itself the capability to enter into occupational negotiation.

7.4 Occupational Negotiation.

The space which professions occupy must be initially justified and continually maintained through occupational negotiation. This occupational negotiation takes place with the state with whom the occupation must negotiate shelter from general labour markets together with the authority to regulate its own work. Furthermore, occupational negotiation is entered into with other occupations and professions in order to establish and maintain the boundaries of a professions work and guard against encroachment across those boundaries.

In order to make occupational negotiation feasible, and to engage in it credibly, an occupation must have a means of establishing a single coherent position on the particular topic for negotiation and must have institutional structures capable of representing, advocating and deliberating on that position as necessary. Historically professions have established a capability for occupational negotiation through the creation of a professional association or institute. As such, professional associations have long been seen as a marker of professionalisation: "…in particular the existence of a single, identifiable national association, is clearly a prerequisite of public or legal claims on the part of a would- be profession" (Abbott 1988: 83). Almost every measure of professionalisation includes an examination of the capacity for occupational negotiation. The award of chartered status by the Privy Council, for instance, demands that:

> "(a) the institution concerned should comprise members of a unique profession, and should have as members most of the eligible field for membership, without significant overlap with other bodies."
>
> (Privy Council 2006)

While much work has been done on how, once organised, an occupation pursues professional status, much less consideration appears to have been given to how a mass of individuals with a variety of interests manage to organise itself into a group coherent enough to undertake a professional project. Berman (2006) has documented the fierce early institutional competition between different factions of medicine. This competition was eventually resolved through the creation of the British Medical Association (BMA), which in turn facilitated medicine's rise to true professional status. The disagreements between the different medical factions were profound and went to the heart of what it meant to be a doctor. The number of factions competing to be the voice of professional doctors was few but the gulf in thinking and attitude between them was enormous. Corporate security management currently appears to suffer from the opposite problem in that, based at least on the experience of this project, there are no huge ideological issues to be overcome between security managers but, as a discipline, it is balkanised and disparate. As one security manager put it:

> "Our problem is, we proliferate. If you look on the web there are all sorts of different bodies. All with good intentions but there is a danger in that. Who actually represents the industry? If the government has a question in our field who does it go to get a sensible answer?"
>
> (Security Manager, Retail)

As discussed in the last chapter, between them our small sample of security managers acknowledged or stated an affiliation with thirteen different groups, associations or institutes with corporate security managers making up part of their membership. Not all the groups sought to be a representative voice of security managers, some had much broader security 'industry' focus and a few were by invitation only. However, the existence of all these groups, vying for the time and contributions of security managers, inevitably inhibits the chances of corporate security engaging credibly or successfully in the occupational negotiation which is crucial to a professional project.

The Security Institute (TSI) is currently proud of its status as a source of information and consultation for government and is arguably at the fore of the associations claiming to represent corporate security managers. While it has many of the institutional structures required of a professional association, the disparate state of the occupation means that it has a membership running only into the hundreds, someway short of the magnitude required for credible occupational negotiation. Currently, much of the administrative work of TSI is duplicated elsewhere, resources are wasted and the potential membership is divided. If security management is to embark on a reinvigorated professional project it must address its capability to project a single coherent voice with which it can engage in occupational negotiation.

Provided that corporate security as an occupation decides that it is prudent to embark on a professional project of the type outlined here, and provided that it can develop its capability for occupational negotiation, it can then begin to address the core purpose of the professional project- the attempt to lift the value of security managers knowledge and in turn improve the status and economic reward they are afforded for dispensing that knowledge. For corporate security, this thesis proposes that attempts to do this should encompass boundary work and occupational closure before ideally culminating in monopolization of the field. Essentially, the goal of these three elements, in combination with the occupational negotiation already discussed, is to harness the skills and knowledge of the corporate security discipline so that they become a tradable commodity, controlling the supply of that commodity so that its value, and the status of the practitioners who dispense it, is raised. The successful operation of this process is represented below in figure 7.1 and figure 7.2.

In its unreformed state (figure 7.1) Occupation X is discernable but not distinct from the general labour market. Its boundaries are unclear and the content of the work which it lays claim to within the boundaries is not explicit. Movement between Occupation X and the general labour market is not subject to any formal restrictions. It is impossible to identify exactly who is inside and who is outside of Occupation X.

For the purpose of this model client markets are constituted by those who pay for and consume a specific service. In the case of corporate security managers, the client

market is made up of the companies who employ security managers and make use of their specialist security management advice.

In 7.1 the movement of services from the labour market to the client market is relatively unstructured. Clients may or may not realise that they have a problem which requires solving. In the case of clients who do not realise they have a problem the labour market's efforts to inform them are disparate, uncoordinated and possibly contradictory. For these reasons messages from the labour market are unconvincing and fail to fully penetrate the client market. The client may leave the problem unsolved, or turn to the general labour market rather than the relevant occupation for a solution. In the case of clients who do realise they have a problem, which they cannot solve, identifying which service is appropriate for them can be difficult.

**Figure 7.1: An occupation in its unreformed state.**
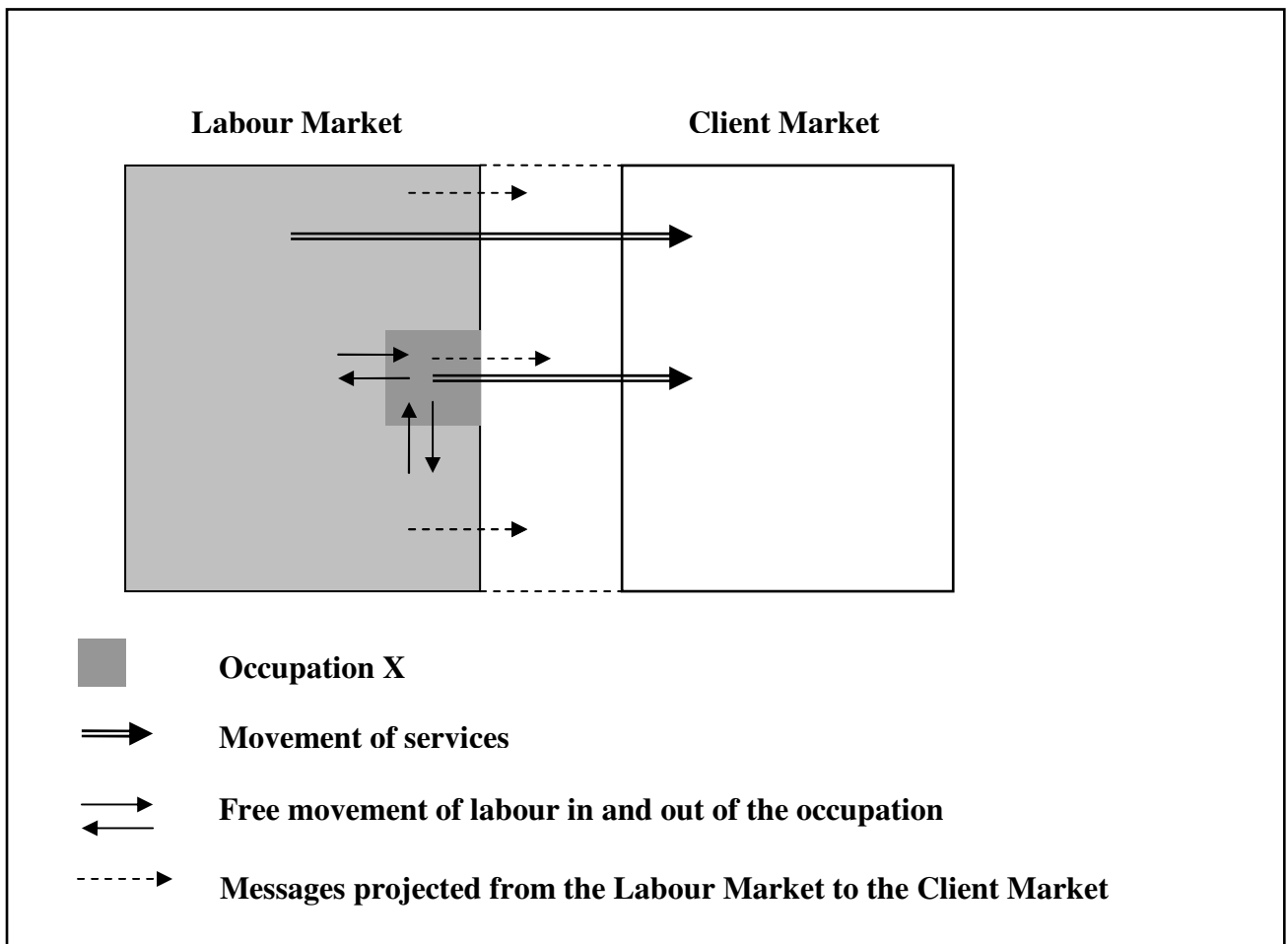
The exact nature of Occupation X's work is un-codified and unclear. The client cannot easily decide what their service is and whether it is appropriate for their problem. If they do decide that Occupation X has the appropriate service they are then faced with the task of discerning which service providers belong to Occupation X and will be properly experienced and qualified to provide their solution. Occupation X is not closed from the general labour market and potentially anybody from the (opportunistic) general labour market can claim to be competent to provide the client with the service they require. For the same reason that clients are not qualified to solve the original problem themselves, they are unlikely to be well placed to decide which offers of help are credible and which are not.

The views of our security managers indicate that, while corporate security as an occupation has moved beyond this most extreme theoretical state of an unreformed occupation, it still suffers many of the same problems, albeit to a lesser degree. As a disparate uncoordinated occupation corporate security has struggled to communicate the worth of a specialist security management sufficient widely. This means that over 50percent of the UK's largest businesses do not employ it and do not realise the benefits of employing it (chapter three). In terms of our model, these are the clients who do not realise they have a problem. The lack of a codified theoretical core of knowledge means that corporate security has struggled to lay exclusive claim to an area of work. Security managers bemoan the difficulty which employers face in distinguishing between themselves, their competent peers and those who do not have the required skills, but are not restricted from entering the occupation. The results of this phenomenon can be seen in the mixed success of the function from organisation to organisation.

Figure 7.2 represents Occupation Y, which has undergone a successful professional project and enjoys the market closure associated with professional status. Occupation Y has engaged in boundary work, which means that the services it claims jurisdiction of are easily discerned. It has established occupational closure, which means that it can restrict entry into the occupation to those who can demonstrate the appropriate knowledge. Thus, Occupation Y has the ability to project a single coherent message, which much more successfully penetrates the client market.

Thanks to the credible message it can project Occupation Y is well placed to persuade clients who do not realise that they have a problem. Clients who realise they have a problem can easily discern whether Occupation Y provides a relevant service for them and occupational closure means that they can equally easily distinguish between those who belong to Occupation Y and those who do not. Those who do, by inference, possess certain skills and knowledge. The skills and knowledge of those who do not belong to the occupation represent something of an unknown quantity to clients, and as such they are at a competitive disadvantage in the race to provide the required service to the client.

7.2: A successful professional project.
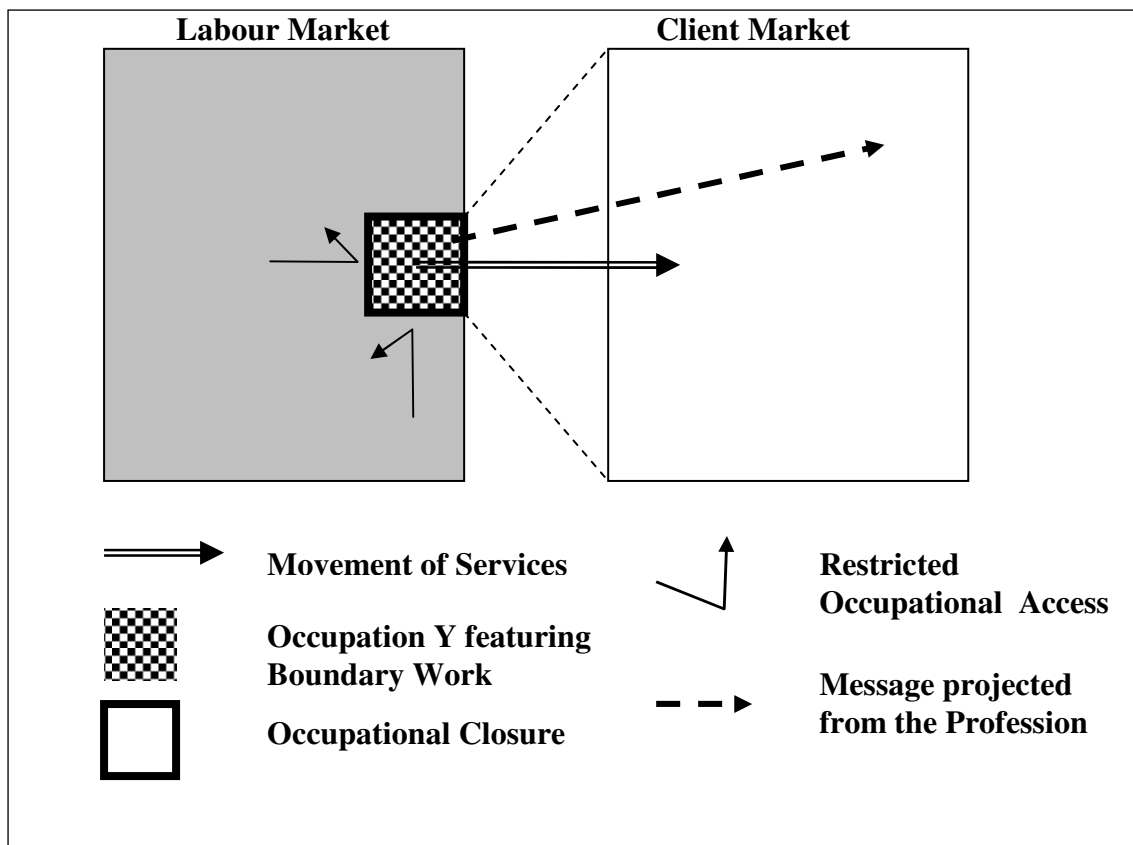
Provided that the client considers that their problem is of sufficient complexity and importance to merit the premium they will have to pay for the assured service provided from Occupation Y, they will logically always choose the service of occupation Y. Thus, the professional project is complete and a professional monopoly is achieved. Occupation X and Y represent a simplistic model of the transition that

has historically been made from occupation to profession. The idea behind a professional project for corporate security would be to move it from a state close to Occupation X, as far as possible, to a state which resembles Occupation Y.

7.5 Boundary Work.

Fournier describes boundary work as: "… the constitution of an independent and self-contained field of knowledge" (1999: 69). She argues that such activity is the basis upon which professions build their authority and exclusivity, and as such, it is central to the business of establishing and replicating professions. As various bodies of knowledge become legitimised and professionalised through boundary work and professional projects, the boundary areas become a battlefield on which power games are played as rival bodies compete for status and influence. A contemporary example of this is the international posturing for position between accountants and lawyers, as members of rival professional bodies, seeking to claim the domain of the international legal scene through the national position of their knowledge boundaries (Dezalay 1995).

Academic literature on boundary work builds a picture of competing professions, acquisitive if not imperialist in nature, all prepared to annex knowledge, and associated work, which lies at the fringes of their own field and which cannot be claimed or defended by rival professions. This is a picture, which is borne out in our HRM case study (chapter 5) but also in the direct experience of our security managers. When asked about sources of conflict in their working lives, a number of security managers cited the blurred boundaries between their own work and that of other functions:

> "I wouldn't put it as strongly as 'conflict' but sometimes there are problems with demarcation… other people think that you are fishing in their pond… Yes, I would say it probably is more of a problem for us than some of the other functions"
>
> (Security Manager, Finance)

Another manager put it even more graphically "…it can be irritating. I find myself having to ring different managers and say to them, you know, 'get your dick out of my custard'" (Security Director, Services). Given the competitive nature of the

system of professions it is essential that corporate security engages in boundary work and attempts to credibly lay claim to the activities it wishes to be considered as its areas of professional specialization.

A profession seeks to isolate and then control an area of work but what will constitute that area is dependant on factors of rationalisation and expedience as much as any naturally occurring boundaries. Focoult (1977) has demonstrated that even a profession apparently so naturally and neatly isolated as medicine was not always considered a separate entity. Medicine has had its boundaries shaped by social and economic factors, as well as the personalities involved in its professionalisation (ibid).

In order to keep this project manageable the research has concentrated on 'corporate' security management as its unit of analysis. However, it has quickly become clear that in fact corporate security managers by themselves are an unlikely focus for professional isolation and that the principles of their work bears enough in common with the work of other types of security managers as to necessitate a broader conception of what a security management profession will encompass. However, just as all other professions have done, security management as a profession will also have to set perimeters and, to an extent, set itself adrift of those who fall outside those perimeters. Conclusions on how the activities of security management, risk management, security consultancy and private investigation (to name but a few) will fit together are beyond the remit of this study, nevertheless, must be determined as part of an aspiring profession's boundary work.

Decisions on the breadth of a re-invigorated professional project will have to take into account the requirement that the profession has a theoretical underpinning. It seems likely that not everybody in the new profession will precisely be 'corporate security managers' but, everybody in the new profession must engage in work which springs from the same core principles and theories. Before it can be established which work springs from this core knowledge, this core knowledge must be assembled.

Professional knowledge is defined by the fact that it cannot be entirely taught from a textbook, that it requires the skill and experience of a professional to interpret and implement it in a given situation. Yet, at the same time, a professional's claim to

professional status is based on their possession of specialist knowledge and there must be some hard evidence of that knowledge in the form of a codified theoretical core. For example, HRM has codified a core of knowledge on which their work is based in the form of their 'Professional Standards' (CIPD 2004). Similarly, Internal Audit has its 'Code of International Standards' (IIA 2006), Insurance has its 'Job Role and Competency Framework' (CII 2006) and Librarians and Information Professionals have their 'Body of Professional Knowledge' (CILIP 2004). The absence of any comparable core of theory within security management was remarked upon by one of our security managers:

> "There is no core central knowledge or best practice- it just doesn't exist. Because of that security people tend to invent things and respond pragmatically and to some extent you could do that without ever having an understanding of risk."
>
> (Security Director, Services)

Abbot (1988) is emphatic about the importance of a theoretical grounding arguing that the evolution of and interrelationships among professions are determined by how a profession controls its required knowledge and skills. "Practical skill grows out of an abstract system of knowledge, and control of the occupation lies in control of the abstractions that generate the practical techniques" (ibid: 77). He argues further that, in the competitive system of professions, without professional knowledge, rooted in abstract principles and theories, a profession cannot redefine its problems and tasks, cannot defend its turf and cannot hope to seize other activities, which it may hope to perform. Abstract theoretical cores of knowledge are, according to Abbot, "…the ultimate currency of competition between professions." In charting the rise and fall of various professions over time Abbot cites the key variable as "…the power of the professions' knowledge systems, their abstracting ability to define old problems in new ways" (ibid: 79).

7.6 Occupational Closure.

Occupational closure refers to the raising of barriers between practitioners in a particular occupational field and the larger general labour market. Witz (1992) observes various means by which occupations pursue closure of their field. Foremost

among these is 'exclusionary closure' which is the exercise of power downwards by an occupational association concerned with defining the shape and nature of an occupational membership. This type of occupational closure may be thought of as a proprietor locking all but one of the many entrances to a large building. Before the doors were locked people could flow in and out of the building at their leisure. The proprietor could not restrict the number of people entering the building, could not tell how many people were in the building and could not enforce any criteria he might have for the type of people he wanted in the building. But equally problematic for the proprietor, being the generous and helpful type, was the fact that they could not greet everybody who entered the building, could not offer help to those who were visiting the building for the first time and, with people coming and going as they pleased, could not breed any sense of community within the building.

Having established the perimeters of a building with boundary work, occupational closure means locking all but one of the entrances and then controlling how many people enter, what type of people enter, what people must know before they can enter and ensuring that people who do not act according to the rules of the building are forced to leave and refused re-entry.

MacDonald (1995) notes that the initial closure efforts of British psychologists during the 1980s were typical of many professional projects in that they involved agreeing definitions of membership for those already practising the occupational skills as well as defining criteria by which future entrants into the closed occupational field will be judged. The former of these is commonly referred to as the 'grandfather' clause while the latter most commonly refers to the passing of professional exams and obtaining of professional qualifications.

As the most potent tool which can be used for occupational closure qualifications, and the attendant examinations, play an important part in the professional project. As will be seen below, successful monopolisation of a market depends on demonstrating to consumers of a service that all who belong to a closed occupation have the requisite knowledge for the work and thus are more employable than those outside the closed occupation whose knowledge cannot be assured. Qualifications are the easiest and most widely credible way of doing this.

Occupational closure also entails controlling the numbers of people who enter an occupation. Closing all the doors to a building is worthless if the proprietor then proceeds to let as many people as wish rush through the remaining entrance without consideration for the capacity of the building. As occupations professionalise the number of people seeking to enter them increases. In order to prevent professionals disproportionately increasing supply and undermining demand, they use qualifications as a means of controlling numbers entering the field. Sweet (1990) has observed a correlation between the demand for professional services and the difficulty of professional examinations:

> "…professional examinations have notably low pass rates, generally between 25 and 50percent… this was an indicator that professional exams were being used as a deliberate means of restricting entry to professions by setting high standards."
>
> (Sweet 1990: 6)

Friedson (2001) notes that genuine professions do not merely recruit and train those who will enter their ranks. What sets the professional qualification apart from those of other occupations is that is that the educating process also serves as a means for "systemizing, refining and expanding the body of knowledge over which the profession claims jurisdiction" (ibid: 96). Friedson has observed that the process of educating professionals is itself a factory from which new professional knowledge is produced and existing professional knowledge is refined. If this is true for the fresh-faced graduates who embark on other professional qualifications, it is likely to be the case even more so for corporate security candidates bringing with them a career's worth of experience. Exposing aspiring corporate security managers to academia and encouraging them to refine and codify their security expertise has the potential to produce much, urgently required, core theory and knowledge for the discipline.

The educating process may also help to remedy the arms length relationship which appears to exist between security management and academia. All professions must be grounded in an academic base. Abbot notes that the ability to refine problems and solutions to abstraction and apply that abstract to new scenarios is crucial to the progress of professions (Abbott 1988). Typically, the role of abstraction falls to academia, the role of application to the practitioners. But there is a natural tension

between the two, the need to document and refine, versus the need to achieve results and meet targets. In other fields this tension is bridged in part by individuals who are practitioners in their first incarnation and academics in their second. In corporate security most are already in their second career and as such there are few academics in the field of security management, and even fewer with practical corporate security experience. Inevitably this dynamic has fostered some tension:

> "We end up despairing of the universities. In the past we have wanted them to produce things. But, as seems to be the case with academics, things revolve around their interests rather than our needs."

> (Security Director, Finance)

The educating process is likely to ease this tension, enabling corporate security managers to more readily articulate what they want, and academia to more accurately deliver it.

As discussed in the previous chapter, while there are currently a variety of different qualifications related to security management our security manager's repeatedly bemoaned the absence of a single, widely recognised and credible qualification to the extent that many felt that a universally recognised qualification should be the single highest priority of any professional project:

> "…first of all the different organisations must stop competing with each other. We have to have a single qualification that we can throw all our effort and resources behind. We badly need something that people recognise and can say 'oh, he has that so he must be able to do this, this and this.'"
>
> (Security Manager, Services)

> "We are never going to get there if we continue with this plethora of competing organisations. ASIS, ISMA, they all offer security qualifications of some sort but I don't think there is anybody in this company apart from me, and I would struggle, who could tell you what they represented or what they are worth."
>
> (Security Director, Communications)

Occupational closure need not just be about restrictive practices and limiting numbers. The upheaval associated with the move from the public sector to a senior position in

the private sector, described in chapter four, was commented upon by almost all of our managers. Corporate security management, lacking the direct impact on an organisations bottom line of other functions, is inclined to co-operation and is characterised by the quite free sharing of sensitive information, often even between competing businesses. Yet this co-operation is often informal and, while support networks exist, they are discreet and built upon personal trust. For the new corporate security manager, first happening across one of these support networks, and then being accepted into it, can be a haphazard process. Occupational closure offers to lessen this problem by effectively funnelling new practitioners into contact with the central institutions of the occupation and mitigating its initial 'sink or swim' nature. Like the helpful proprietor wishing to offer information to those visiting his building for the first time, this provides corporate security the chance to offer assistance to those entering the field:

> "You learn the craft out there… but to then take it and apply it in a executive management context you need another set of skills, and those aren't security skills, those are executive skills… The role of an institute should be as a sand pit where security people can make that transition relatively comfortably."

> (Security Director, Finance)

If corporate security as an occupation can create the capacity for occupational negotiation, successfully engage in boundary work and achieve a degree of occupational closure it will have already gone some way to achieving the final element of its professional project, the drive to monopolize the provision of security management.

7.7 Monopolisation.

Market closure and monopoly over the supply of a specific service or branch of knowledge has been described as the 'glittering prize' of the professional project (Abbot 1988:17). During the 1970s and 1980s Anglo- American sociological analysis of the professions came to concentrate on their quest for monopolies and market closure. Throughout the period professions were considered almost as conspiracies. Critical theorists (Larson 1977; Johnson 1972) argued that monopolies served only to promote their occupation interests. Larson's work is still frequently cited, and, while

the search for professional monopolies is now a broadly accepted feature of professions and professional projects, the negative consequences of professional monopolies and profession's fiercely self-interested reasons for pursuing them are aspects of Larson's analysis which have increasingly been challenged in academic circles. Friedson (2001) has bemoaned the 'ideological shibboleths', which surround professional monopolies and urges society to recognise that, while the curtailment of free markets has become anathema in many aspects of modern life, the need for professions to benefit from market closure represents a special case. The economic efficiency of free markets demands that prices be kept low and that work is always calibrated to the interests of the consumer. Friedman (ibid) argues that exposing professions and professional knowledge to these principles would be devastating:

> "…economically successful goods and services are those that consumers understand, desire and are interested in. if professions could survive at all without shelter they would be popularised and lose some if not most of their disciplinary character and value. It is economic monopoly that reduces this necessity for modifying or at least diluting disciplinary knowledge and skill so as to gain a greater resemblance to everyday knowledge."

(Friedman 2001: 23)

Nevertheless, as academic interest and esteem for the professions has begun once again to rise, the public's preparedness to defer unquestioningly to professional knowledge has begun to wane. Gold, Rogers & Smith (2002) note that this is a process which has been hastened in the last decade by a number of scandals, not least Harold Shipman and Enron, which have, in the eyes of the public, highlighted either the inability or unwillingness of professions to properly regulate their members. Inevitably, this growing public disquiet has been reflected in government policy and, under successive Labour Governments, the supply of professional services and the existence of some professional monopolies have been viewed as a problem: "I don't see why consumers should not be able to get legal services as easily as they can buy a tin of beans", remarked Department of Constitutional Affairs Minister, Bridget Prentice in October 2005 (Prentice 2005).

The result of this attitude is that established professions have had to fight to maintain their monopoly and the chances of emerging professions establishing the near

watertight market closure which law and medicine have enjoyed have greatly diminished. Larson (1977) notes that successful professional monopolies require the outside sponsorship of authority in order for legitimacy. Historically professions directed their claims for the right to monopoly to the social elites and gentry. Steadily throughout the 19th century the source of authority became the state, and professions sought to convince governments to sponsor their professional projects with legal entrenchment of occupational closure, for example through mandatory licenses to practice medicine. However, with the declining willingness of the state to support existing monopolies, yet alone sponsor new ones, emerging management professions such as internal audit and HRM are dependant more than ever on the patronage of the users of their services for the degree of shelter from the market, which they can achieve.

HRM provides a useful model for corporate security in terms of pursuing market closure in the contemporary, monopoly unfriendly, world. Our case study reveals that, since the 1980s, HRM has made great progress in persuading industry that there is significant competitive advantage to be gained from well-informed HRM practices. Further, it has convinced industry that it should implement these practices using specialist HRM management from the relevant, occupationally closed area of the labour market. In short, the profession has successfully transmitted the message that businesses should take HRM seriously, and that the most prudent way of doing so is by employing individuals whose knowledge and competence have already been assessed and so come with a level of assurance.

HRM has succeeded in convincing industry that the management of people offers the possibility of a competitive edge through the various strategies described in chapter five. The most important of these has been the use of evidence-based research:

> "We've produced case studies of business where we think HR has not been properly regarded and contrasted that with business where HR is really working. When you can amass that sort of data about how important it is that people are properly managed and developed and that doing so makes a sustainable difference in an organisation, it makes a powerful case, and changes the way people think about the function."
>
> (Christine Williams, 2006)

As HRM achieved success in persuading industry that as a management activity it could make a difference the IPD, and latterly CIPD faced the separate task of persuading industry that its members were the best qualified to deliver that specialist management. This has been done through boundary work, occupational negotiation and closure. The CIPD has maintained a running dialogue with industry in an effort to decipher what it expects its HR managers to be able to contribute to the business and translate that into its professional standards and the continued professional development of its members.

> "We have established that there are certain things HRM practitioners must know. If you run a business the only way you can be sure your HRM staff know those things is if they have been accredited by us."
>
> (William 2006)

The CIPD sells it members expertise to industry not just on the basis of what they will know when they get the job but also on there ability to keep up to date with new trends and ideas while responding to the needs of the business. CIPD members can do this because of the huge information sharing infrastructures it has put in place for its membership, not least its online communities.

The success of these strategies is borne out firstly by the huge increase in the numbers of businesses which have accepted the need for carefully planned people management strategies and have opted from HRM specialists, rather than general management, to implement those strategies (WERS 2004) The success of the CIPD in selling the calibre of its members to industry is reflected in the fact that 80percent of recruitment adverts for HRM managers now stipulate CIPD membership. In of our occupation X and occupation Y models, HRMs professional project has been a success to date having closed the occupation from the general labour market, projecting a credible penetrating message to its client market and proceeding to monopolise the provision of a particular service to that market.

> "HR practitioners they are now getting a better deal out of there employment in terms of the way they are recognised and rewarded. HR has risen in profile and is now better placed within organisations to implement good HR practices… As a result HRM has moved a long way from being the least important of the management functions."
>
> (Williams 2006)

If corporate security is to successfully embark on a professional project, achieve a degree of market closure, and similarly enjoy the benefits outlined by Williams it must engage in the same strategies as HRM. As an occupation security management must be able to demonstrate the different consequences for an organisation where security is treated as a specialist management activity and an organisation where it is not. To do this they must employ evidence-based research be it quantitative or qualitative in nature. However, this requires consolidation and the pooling of the occupations resources. HRM's research output would certainly have been much less prolific if it had operated on the basis of ten different groups with divided budgets, different agendas and duplicated running costs.

If security management can demonstrate the advantages of its being treated as a specialist management activity to industry it seems likely that the corporate world would embrace the assurance of competence and articulation of capabilities which a professional association would entail.

> "…the CEO does not know what a security manager or director should know or should be able to do. The CEO does not know if he has a good security man or a bad one and, if he has a bad one without realising it, there is every chance he will just write off the whole function"
>
> (Security Director, Services)

Corporate security is certainly one of the most esoteric of the management activities. The military and policing backgrounds of security managers are alien to the majority of senior business figures and, with the content of the security managers job varying from organisation to organisation, there does not appear to be any widely understood conception of what the potential contribution of a security department is. If an occupational association could, given these circumstances, formulate a set of competencies which complimented the needs of industry and then guarantee that everybody within its ranks would possess the requisite skills and knowledge, there is, according to the experience of other similar occupations, no reason why a professional monopoly and genuine professional status cannot be achieved.

8. Conclusions.

This research has been guided by the three research questions set out in chapter one.

8.1 *What* is the current status of corporate security as a business function within the UK's largest businesses?

The State of Corporate Security.
Among the security managers who have taken part in this study, widely held notions about the mixed health of corporate security management as an occupation have proven to be well founded. Our security managers enjoyed distinctly mixed fortunes in their efforts to attract similar status for their work to that of their peers from other areas of the business. While some of our security managers and directors were confident that the leaders of their business understood and appreciated the value which security could add to an organisation, equally there were a number of our security managers who described their position within their organisation, and the regard in which their work was held, in frustrated tones. The most successful of our security managers cited their senior reporting lines and breadth of responsibilities as evidence, while the most frustrated described a failure to include them in the planning considerations of the business and the struggle to attract resources. The interviews with our security managers painted a picture of an occupation which, at worst, lagged behind the other functions of the business and, at best, could achieve equal status, but had to work longer and harder to do so.

Background
Some have attributed the mixed fortunes of the occupation largely to its constituents questioning their suitability for executive life in the corporate world coming from, as most have, public sector police and military careers. However, this study suggests that background alone does not provide adequate explanation for the state of corporate security. While a few of our security managers appeared somewhat exasperated with their experience of the private sector, equally a number offered convincing arguments that the gap between public and private management was not unreasonably difficult to span and that the slow convergence of the two meant the cross-over was becoming easier all the time. Added to this, is the fact that almost all of the most respected corporate security practitioners have come from public sector backgrounds. Their

ability to succeed in a profit driven environment does not appear to have been overly inhibited by a former career in the police or the military.

System of Professions

Based on the analysis of our security managers and lessons from sociological study of occupations and the professions, this thesis contends that the predicament which corporate security faces stems partly from structural and organisational inadequacies of security management as an occupation.

Sociological and management literature paints a picture of a highly competitive system of management functions and professions. Each lays claim to an area of knowledge and attempts to achieve monopoly over the specialised work related to that area. However, the boundaries between the profession's respective fields are in continual flux as they lay competing claims to areas of knowledge and work, each trying to annex attractive work at the boundaries of others, while protecting their own. Our security managers described how this pattern was played out on a smaller scale within their organisations. For example, the most successful managers and directors had expanded their remits well beyond the traditional bounds of security, usurping the responsibilities of other functions in the process.

Occupational Challenges

To be well equipped to survive and thrive in this environment occupations must be dynamic and well organised. Members of an organisation must be able to act in concert and project a single coherent voice if they are to manage their reputation, lobby for improved position and persuade existing and potential consumers of their service's value and necessity. The research interviews with our security managers and a survey of its institutional features suggest that corporate security, as an occupation and aspiring profession, does not currently fit these criteria.

Corporate security is balkanised; perhaps no other management activity has a ratio of groups, associations and institutes to practitioners as high as security does. The result, as many of our managers observed, is that it cannot project a single representative voice, cannot act decisively or in concert and so cannot put together a coherent strategy for defending or bettering its position in relation to its occupational rivals.

The disparate nature of the occupation means that it cannot achieve closure or shelter itself from the general labour market. Its problems are compounded by the absence of a discernable theoretical core which acts to bind genuine professions together. Other occupations and professions in the UK have developed formal systems of identifying new knowledge and best practice and disseminating it around their membership. Corporate security managers must compete with these other occupations on the basis of sharing knowledge in small, cliquey networks. Most of our security managers reported essentially teaching themselves the job. As a result, while other professionals break new ground with improved practices, security managers re-discover that already learnt elsewhere.

8.2 *How* have other business disciplines previously sought to improve their levels of professionalism and status within business?

Lessons from Sociology

What study of the professions reveals is that at some stage all aspiring professions have existed in this disparate state. Even such grand professions as medicine and law struggled to achieve cohesion in their formative years. However, having done so, they collectively worked to harness their specialised skill and knowledge so that it could be used as a commodity and traded for the scarce resources they sought, namely status and economic wealth. This is now widely understood as the professional project. Occupations are continually becoming more adept at implementing professional projects and, whereas the professional projects of law and medicine took decades and centuries to deliver genuine professional status, occupations such as HRM have successfully transformed value attached it their work, and the status of their practitioners, in a matter of years.

8.3 *What* steps can corporate security take as a discipline to consolidate or improve its status?

A professional Project.

Based on the successful experience of other comparable business occupations, and the appetite for professionalisation apparent among the security managers participating in this study, it is proposed that corporate security should set about addressing the

structural weakness of the occupation. It should consider lifting the value of its work, and the status of its practitioners, through a reinvigorated professional project of its own.

This study's survey of corporate security management reveals that a number of the activities which constitute professional projects has already been undertaken in one form or another. However, in keeping with the disparate nature of the occupation, its professional project efforts have been sporadic. While admirable, and indicative of an ambition to progress, they have originated from different factions of the occupation at different times. Lacking any overall co-ordination and unable to attract widespread support from the estimated five to ten thousand security managers in the UK, these activities appear to have undermined corporate security's professional project as often as they have advanced it.

- the first element of the proposed, reinvigorated professional project is a **conversation about the professional future of corporate security**. Such a conversation would require talks between the many representative voices within the occupation to establish whether the desire for professionalisation expressed among the mangers in this small study reflects attitudes in the occupation more broadly.
- If this is the case, corporate security must then develop for itself, through institutional structures, the **capability for occupational negotiation** with other professions, industry and the state.
- Simultaneously, it must engage in **boundary work** to explicitly identify what the body of knowledge belonging to a future profession would contain and where its perimeters would lie.
- This study took corporate security as its unit of analysis however it seems unlikely that 'corporate' security managers alone would constitute a profession. **Occupational closure**, most likely in the form of a professional qualification, would offer corporate security managers some shelter from the general labour markets, the ability to control the supply of their work and thus the ability to lift and maintain its value.

- The successful combination of these steps, according to the experience in other occupations, might lead to the 'glittering prize' of professionalism, the **professional monopoly** and genuine professional status.

8.4 A Future Corporate Security profession?

The theoretical model, which this study proposes cannot account for the human barriers of politics and personality. Presumably if these barriers could be easily overcome security management as an occupation would be less disparate than is currently the case. However, other much larger bodies of people separated by much deeper ideological divides have historically managed to form and maintain professions.

Professions advance and recede through time due to any number of political, social and economic factors. Similarly, the success of a professional project is contingent upon a favourable context against which it may be played out. We have seen that the convergence of conducive factors was crucial to the success of HRM. Presently, many of the necessary ingredients appear to be in place for a re-focused professional project in security management. Corporate governance, crime and terrorism have increased the complexity and currency of the occupation at the same time as joint funding of projects such as this suggest there is a mood for co-operation. With this in mind, it does not seem unreasonable to conclude that more favourable conditions for a resurgent professional project have probably never existed.

Appendix A.

Interview Invitation Letter.

Dear Sir/Madam.

My name is Anthony McGee. I am a graduate of Hull University and previously worked for the Rt. Hon Bruce George MP. I am writing to ask if you would be prepared t participate in the research I am currently undertaking which is aimed at establishing the status of corporate security as a business function.

The research is based at the UK Defence Academy in Shrivenham and is being sponsored by the Risk and Security Management Forum (RSMF), The Security Institute (TSI), British American Tobacco and Prudential amongst others.

As the head of security for your organisation I would be grateful if you would allow me to come and interview you in an effort to establish the status of corporate security within your organisation and to gauge your views on how corporate security as a discipline can be further professionalised.

The interview will take no longer than an hour and while your specific contribution will be entirely anonymous I would be happy to acknowledge the help of you or your organisation in the final report should you so wish.

If you are prepared to participate perhaps you could contact me by email or by phone and we can arrange a date and time which is convenient or you.

Yours gratefully,

Anthony McGee.

My name is Anthony McGee.

You may already be aware, but just to clarify; I am a student at The Resilience Centre, Cranfield University and am working towards my MSc.

The project I am current working on is looking at the professionalisation of corporate security management. This is one of approximately 30 interviews I hope to complete with corporate security managers.

All the interviews are conducted on grounds of complete anonymity. Everything you say in the interview will be in complete confidence and neither your name nor the name of your organisation will be used in the final report.

The aim of these interviews is to establish the current state of corporate security and to establish the need for, and possible means of, professionalisation.

Is it OK for me to tape-record this interview to save me trying to remember everything and from writing it down?

I will of course turn of the tape recorder at any point in the interview should you wish me to do so.

Do you have any comments before we start?

Appendix C
Interview Schedule

Section 1.
Background.

1) Could you briefly outline your career history prior to your current post?

2) What was it that attracted you to security management?

3) Could you outline how your company is structured?
(e.g. Business model, size, turnover, global reach.)

Section 2.
Security Managers Role.

1) What does your role as a security manager involve?

2) Does your role include work that you do not strictly consider to be in the domain of security?

Section 3.
Becoming a Security Manager.

1) How have you learnt to become a security manager?

2) What resources have you used in the process?
(e.g. Magazines, Courses?)

3) How would you rate these resources?

4) How important has the experience gained in your previous careers been in your work as a security manager?

(*If negative reply go to next section.*)

5) Could you offer an example?

Section 4.

The Security Department.

1) Could you offer a brief outline of the development of your department?

2) How many people does the security department currently employ?

3) Have you detected any change in the board's attitude to security in recent years?

4) Has your budget gone up, down or stayed the same in the last 12months?

5) Where is security currently positioned in the organisational structure of your business?

6) Are you satisfied with this positioning?

7) Do you feel that security currently has the potential to contribute more to the organisation than it currently does?

(*If no, go to next section.*)

6) What are the limitations?

Section 5.

Information Sharing.

1) Do you currently share information or working practices with other security professionals?

(If no go to question 3)

i)   How?

ii)   Why?

2) What determines who you share information and working practices with?

(e.g. Those employed in a similar sector?)

3) Would you like to exchange information or working practices more?

(If no go to next section.)

i)   With whom?

ii)   Why?

iii)   What are the current limitations?

Section 6.

Security as a Business Function.

1) How do you view the role of security within your organisation?

2) Do you consider it to be a business function alongside other functions such as Human Resources or Accounting?

(If yes go to question 4.)

3) What are the differences?

4) What are your company's priorities and objectives for this year? And how do your objectives help to meet them?

5) Are you under pressure to demonstrate the return on investment security makes to your organization?

(If no go to next section.)

5) How do you do this?

Section 7.

Security Managers as Professionals.

1) Do you consider security management to be a profession?

2) What status do you feel is afforded to you as a security professional relative to professionals from other business functions?

i)   Why is this

ii)   Is this appropriate?

3) How frequently do you work in partnership with colleagues from other functions?

4) What, if any, are your major sources of internal conflict?

Section 8.

Institutions and Associations.

1) Are you aware of any institutions or associations which are aimed at corporate security managers such as yourself?

(If no go to question 6)

2) Which, if any, do you have the closest links with?

(If none go to question 4)

3) What do you gain through your membership of that organisation(s)?

4) What do you feel are the aims of those organisations?

5) How successful are the organisations in achieving those aims?

6) Can you think of any services not currently adequately provided which would be of use to you if delivered by an institution or association?

Section 9.

Qualifications.

1) Do you have any qualifications related to your role as a security manager?

(If no go to question 3)

i)   What are they?

2) Have these qualifications proved useful in your work as a security manager?

3) Would you seek further qualifications?

(If no go to question 4)

i)   Which ones?

4) Would you recommend formal qualifications to somebody seeking to enter the discipline?

(If no go to question 5)

i)   Which ones?

5) Do you feel existing qualifications adequately meet the needs of security managers?

Thank you. Are there any further comments you would like to make on the topics we have covered or on the conduct of the interview?

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