

Admiral Lord West discusses the latest threats to UK transport security and calls for a more holistic and co-operative approach to ensure the safety and security of passengers

FIRST CLASS TRANSPORT

intersec: Could you start by telling us something about your background in relation to Transport Security?

LW: I first became involved in fighting terrorism and terrorists in Aden in 1967, having joined the Royal Navy in 1965. Over the course of my career in the Navy, which culminated in my becoming First Sea Lord, I held the position of Chief of Defence Intelligence for three years, covering the Navy, Army and Air Force, and some years before that I'd been Director of Naval Intelligence. So I have quite a lot of experience in the security and counter-terrorism field. In fact, I was Deputy Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee for three years.

Then, after I had left the Navy, I was asked by Gordon Brown to join his government as the minister responsible for security and counter-terrorism and, later, cyber security as well. During my three years in government, I led the development of our Counter Terrorism Strategy 2 (CONTEST 2) and I produced the first UK national security strategy as well as a great deal of work relating to border security and protection against nuclear, biological and chemical attacks from terrorists. I also produced the UK's first ever cyber security strategy.

intersec: What do you think are the greatest challenges to border security currently faced by the UK?

LW: We're living in a more and more chaotic and troubled world. There are huge disparities of wealth and opportunity, and it became quite clear some years ago that demographic pressures were going to mean there would be vast movements of people. Recently, those pressures have been exacerbated by the trouble in Syria and the collapse of Libya as a nation, which has facilitated the trafficking of people across the Mediterranean to Italy. It's an issue that has to be addressed because there are probably about 100 million people in the world who would rather live in Europe than where they live now.

In addition, as the threat from terrorism waxes and wanes – and it's waxing at the moment because of the success of ISIS – a large number of countries, particularly in Europe and the Middle East, realise how important it is to have proper control over their borders. These countries are looking for assistance, and this is where the UK, and UK security firms, can do a lot to help because we have a lot of expertise in this area.

It's also the case that a lot of refugees, and indeed terrorists, travel by conventional means – ferries and aircraft – and you need to have a very good handle on who exactly is getting on and off, who's travelling where. Firstly, you need to control who is coming into the country and, secondly, you need to make sure that terrorists are not boarding planes or boats with the express intention of blowing them up.



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Containing the threat: cargo containers present a particular security challenge for border security forces

intersec: Maritime security and port security present a wide range of challenges. What are the most urgent areas that need to be addressed?

LW: I started to realise some time ago that containers presented a particular security risk, and a lot of work has gone on to make sure that we now monitor and control them – where they're going, where they've come from – because, of course, we're talking about tens of thousands of containers coming into the country every day.

We're also seeing a great stream of drug traffic coming across from the West Indies, some of which is directed towards Europe. So we need to monitor our coastal waters, and one of the things I did as Chairman of the National Security Forum when I was in government was to set up the National Maritime Intelligence Centre. Made up of a number of partners, including the military, the coastguard service, the border agency and HMRC, the Centre uses aircraft and ships to monitor and track coastal traffic.

There's also the technology of course. Within the ports, we now have methods of looking into containers without

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having to open them all up, as well as equipment for detecting radioactive material. We also now have the kit for detecting drugs onboard boats which means we don't need to take the whole vessel apart anymore which can obviously be very time-consuming.

But one of the things I've been calling for, not just at ports but airports too, is a more holistic, joined-up approach, and at Transport Security Expo this year, there will be features that bring technologies and products from a lot of different companies together to show how, when you take a composite view, you can make transport systems much safer for the travelling public and make the actual assets themselves more secure.

intersec: Do you think that our railway system remains vulnerable to attack?

LW: When you look at railway systems, particularly commuter services, the sheer number of people makes it a very different problem from, say, airports. When you've got six million people coming into and out of London each day, that's quite an issue. Similarly with the

Underground – after the 7/7 attack, we looked at ways of making that more secure and a lot has been done such as addressing the problem of communications underground, including the issue of too many people talking on the same frequencies. But it's a fact that in an open society it's very difficult to ensure 100 per cent security over something like a rail network.

Having said that, the risks are greater in some other countries than they are here and I think those countries will be very grateful for the ideas and the products that will be on show at the Expo.

intersec: How important is the export market for the UK security industry?

LW: The UK and UK firms are an exemplar in this area – we're probably the best in the world – but we haven't seen anything like the export level that we see in the defence industry, for example. However, I have no doubt that we have the expertise and the kit to match the level of defence exports once people around the world become more and more aware of what we have to offer.

Lord West is a member of the advisory board for Transport Security Expo, which takes place at Olympia, London on 2-3 December 2015.

Upgrading UK Rail Security

Andy Odell, policy and security liaison officer at ATOC/RDG, explains how the updated National Rail Security Programme will enhance security across the whole network

intersec: Andy, what led you to your current position?

AO: My background is in policing and security: over the years, I've worked for the City of London Police, with the British Transport Police and their Police Authority, and other policing and security organisations. I actually started my career in 1972 with Essex Police as a cadet, and joined Essex Police in 1975. In 1979, I transferred to City of London Police and worked my way up to the position of Chief Superintendent. My last operational role in the City Police was as divisional commander at Bishopsgate police station. I worked many operations at senior level and in positions of command across central London. It was one of these – Operation Benbow – that really gave me a deeper understanding of our transport infrastructure and what the British Transport Police do.

intersec: To what extent do you think security on the rail network has changed in recent times?

AO: There is no doubt that transport security is a top priority for our police and security forces. In terms of rail security, we're working hand in hand with the British Transport Police (BTP), Department for Transport (DfT), security experts and the rail operators to support an updating of the National Rail Security Programme (NRSP). This is an extremely comprehensive programme that clearly sets out security standards, how these should be upheld, and who are the security contacts responsible for ensuring the standards are correctly implemented. It covers how we maintain security standards across our trains, stations, freight and operator staff and rail infrastructure including buildings. When it was first produced, the NRSP was widely recognised as a ground-breaking document that demonstrated just how seriously the government is taking rail security. We are currently updating the document to reflect the latest requirements and technologies.

In the last few years, we have been scaling up CCTV interconnectivity right across our rail network. There are currently about 35,000 CCTV cameras across the network, many of which are connected to a central hub that can easily be monitored by the police. It's a massive improvement, and its importance is reflected in the updated NRSP.

Another aspect we've been looking at in great detail is our people. Because there are now so many people involved in maintaining security standards across our rail network, we've had to develop a more structured approach to how we deploy our people – everyone is involved from special constables and accredited railway security experts through to volunteers and our own operator staff. Earlier this year we launched a complementary policing "good practice guide" that

focused on all people involved in rail security, and this has proved extremely popular – it really demonstrates how we're picking up on the key issues in a structured way. We also ran a number of roadshows that helped bring our approach and recommendations to life. Then there are the processes we operate. The rail and security industries are now working together as a partnership much more than ever before, so we've had to examine some of the issues and challenges we've been facing and discover new ways of leveraging our knowledge and our resources more effectively. For example, the BTP has launched "Operation Trafalgar", which examines and implements best-practice use of its resources. We're taking the most effective and successful aspects of this approach, and piloting them across the network.

intersec: How far does your role as advisor take you?

AO: It's absolutely what I do: not only do I provide consultation to our rail and transport officials, but I also work hand-in-hand with organisers of big events and conferences such as Transport Security Expo. I get involved very early on in the planning stages: advising the organisers on which topics are likely to create the most interest, which 'hot topics' would prove good discussion points, how to map out an agenda or a schedule that will cover all bases.

For example, in the past we have majored on topics such as cyber crime: not only was this a new and emerging issue, but it impacted numerous transport sectors, so the differing aspects to consider were significant. It brought a great number of people together, across diverse industries. The discussions were so useful that we've taken the most insightful points and are building these into the National Rail Security Programme.

Andy Odell is a member of the advisory board for Transport Security Expo, which takes place at Olympia, London on 2-3 December 2015.

The updated NRSP will set out network security standards, how they should be upheld and who is responsible for implementing them



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