Rodney Hooker Named 2009 TBFAA Person of the Year

Networking is Key at the TBFAA Convention
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Submitted articles contained in this newsletter are the expressed opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Officers, Directors, and Members of the TBFAA. The publisher of this magazine is not responsible for any errors or omissions in advertising or other advertising matters.

Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, Inc., (TBFAA) is a non-profit organization of security professionals who have joined together to enrich the industry by providing membership training and representing the membership as a whole in the Texas Legislature, the Texas Private Security Bureau and the Texas Fire Marshal’s Office among many other programs.

The TRANSMITTER is published by the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, a Texas not for profit association.

Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association
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Fort Worth, TX  76107
Phone: 877.908.2322   Fax: 877.908.2522

Advertising Information
Brad Shipp 877-908-2322
Message from the President

Chris Russell

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.” – George Bernard Shaw

A manager, a business owner, an industry, and an association walk in to a bar. The manager says, “We should all order a cold draft beer”. The business owner replies, “Beer is too common, we should all have vintage scotch whiskey”. Industry says, “Wait! I work for Crown Royal Whiskey! It’s the best and we should all have the best”. The association asks “Why are we in a bar”. This parody on a joke and the quote by George Bernard Shaw seems very fitting to many of our concerns that we face moving forward.

On too many occasions we and many others find issue in our rules, regulations, and laws that were inscribed two, three, and four decades ago. The world of electronics, our industries, and the needs of our customers have gradually but significantly changed over the decades. The barriers that we face with progressing as a group are too often based on politics and alternative agendas. Fortunately the majority defines right - unfortunately it’s the loudest voice that sometimes represents the majority. For this reason it is important that we remain united and harmonious as we strive to progress our industries. The TBFAA is you.

Like the parody above, we all have our own good ideas and solutions. If it would have started with the association taking the lead to ask the question, the solutions offered may have been different. Perhaps one of the responses would have included “to sell our products and services”. The Texas legislative sessions runs every two years. Your TBFAA runs continually and will be ready for 2011 with your help. I want to hear from you.

Statewide view Calendar

**January**

01    New Years Day - Holiday
12    STAA Membership Meeting - San Antonio
12-14 ESA - Leadership Summit - Ft Worth
14    HGCAA Membership Meeting - Houston
18    Martin Luther King Day - Holiday
20    NTAA CEU Training - Dallas
21    NTAA Membership Meeting - Dallas
22    Fire Prep Class - Dallas
28    Central Texas Chapter Meeting - Austin
28-29 Level 1 - El Paso

**February**

09    STAA Membership Meeting - San Antonio
11    HGCAA Membership Meeting - Houston
11-12 Level 1 - Dallas
15    President’s Day - Holiday
17    NTAA Membership Meeting - Dallas
18    NTAA CEU Training - Dallas
25    TXBFAA Board Meeting - Austin
25    Central Texas Chapter Meeting - Austin
26    Fire Prep Class - Houston
Houston Gulf Coast Association
Phone: 281.859.4569
Meets 2nd Thursday of the month 11:30 am - 1:00 pm at Cadillac Bar and Grill, Shepard @ I-10
POC: Debi Ulmer  p: 281.859.4569  e: debi@dispatchcenter.net

North Texas Alarm Association
Phone: 214.352.9352
3rd Thursday of each month. Check website for locations and times
POC: Brant Pierce  p: 800.683.6773  e: Brant@SouthwestDispatch.com

South Texas Alarm Association
Phone: 210.402.6262
Meets 2nd Tuesday of the month. Check website for locations and times
POC: Mike Schobel  p: 210-564-2601  e: mschobel@asgsecurity.com

Central Texas Chapter
Phone: 877.908.2322
Meets the 4th Thursday of the month except Oct & Dec at 11:30 am
Springhill Restaurant, 1119 FM 1825, Pflugerville, TX 78660.
POC: Jeff Bright  p: 512.845.1460  e: jbright@brightsecuritygroup.com

Northeast Texas Chapter
Phone: 877.908.2322
Meets quarterly in Longview Area. Plus local meetings will be held in various cities. Check website for times and locations.
POC: Patrick Craven  p: 903.792.7262  e: pacraven@cableone.net

National Electronic Security Alliance
Phone: 301.519.9237
NESA is a federation of state associations, including TBFAA, established to serve and promote the electronic systems industry at the direction of, and through its affiliated state associations.
POC: Rex Adams  p: 972.437.1213  e: radams@asdsecurity.com

False Alarm Reduction Association
Phone: 301.519.9237
FARA is an association of persons working in public safety False Alarm Reduction Units that exchanges information, influences legislation and establishes relationships and partnerships with other groups interested in false alarm reduction. TBFAA is an associate member of FARA.
POC: Brad Shipp  p: 301.519.9237  e: info@faraonline.org
Entries Wanted for PDQ Award

Installing security contractors and monitoring companies dedicated to reducing false alarms are encouraged to enter the 2009 Police Dispatch Quality (PDQ) award program. Entries are being accepted through Feb. 15.

Formerly announced at Security Sales & Integration’s SAMMY Awards in Las Vegas on the eve of ISC West, the 2009 PDQ Award will be bestowed during the Electronic Security Expo (ESX) in Pittsburgh, June 14-18.

Organized by the Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC), False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) and SSI, the honor recognizes alarm installing and monitoring businesses for establishing practices that help prevent false dispatches.

The winning alarm company will be recognized in a hometown ceremony along with a local law enforcement representative and will receive $1,000 courtesy of Honeywell during the award ceremony at ESX.

SSI will also honor the victorious company with an article in the magazine. For more information and to complete the online application, visit www.siacinc.org or www.faraonline.org.

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Transmitter
LEADERSHIP IN A TIME OF Adversity

By Stan Martin, Executive Director, Security Industry Alarm Coalition

Leadership is defined through many circumstances in life, but none more so than when a group of many must come together to form a common voice. A true leader will not only lead by their words, but also by their dedication to the cause. I was again reminded of this when the McKinney (TX) City Council was considering the implementation of a Verified Response alarm ordinance, and a large group of alarm companies needed to come together quickly in one united voice.

Previously hailing from Aurora, CO (where Verified Response was adopted) the McKinney City Manager was strongly advocating Verified Response as a means to curb unnecessary alarm dispatches. Initially, he was outwardly aggressive towards those who might oppose the opinion, including the security industry.

Needing to rally support against the controversial policy, Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC) team member Dave Simon (who at the time was also the President of the North Texas Alarm Association – NTAA) and Brant Pierce, the incoming NTAA President, met with the McKinney Mayor to share information and present alternative solutions that retained police response, while adhering to Texas state law. On a parallel track, NTAA Board members Chris Russell and Kathleen Schraufnagel joined me in attending a city council workshop to hear the positions and concerns of McKinney officials.

Meeting both behind the scenes, and presenting supportive options at an initial city council meeting (along with a larger NTAA team to provide public support), this group was able to build agreement across a broad spectrum – from the top police department officials to city council members and the mayor and within the security industry NTAA represents.

A follow-up meeting with the chief and assistant chief of police, along with their legal team, allowed us to confirm key areas of agreement and iron out details where there was some disagreement on language. Frank dialogue allowed everyone present to present to raise concerns, hear the other side, and work out the best path forward.

Open communication is critical to the back and forth that must occur to reach agreement on policies and procedures administered by local jurisdictions. It takes time to consider new positions. We demonstrated it successfully in McKinney by getting to our intended destination – retaining primary police response and protecting the homes and businesses in the city – all within the confines of Texas state law.

In the end, a 7-0 vote by the McKinney City Council passed an alarm ordinance that just six weeks earlier had a hard Verified Response element, but in the end consisted of Two-Call Verification as a substitute. Other acceptable means of verification in the ordinance included a second sensor trip, audio, video or eyewitness to qualify as an indication that police response was needed.

Collective industry leadership drove this success. It wasn’t one person that carried the water for the security industry, but instead a group of individuals with diverse talents who brought those skills to solve the problem at hand. I hope we see more of this in the future. Not only will our industry benefit, but so will cities and towns through improved public safety and better resource allocation.

As local jurisdictions continue looking for a quick increase in city revenue, rogue and irresponsible alarm ordinances will continue to come to life across the country. It is then that true leadership must take an active role to increase the possibility of a positive outcome. The Security Industry Alarm Coalition is proud to have a leader such as Dave Simon, and the NTAA should be proud of the leadership role taken on by Brant Pierce.

My question to you today would be this, “When your city begins discussions of an ineffective alarm ordinance, will you be prepared to be a leader?”
2009 TBFAA Board is Recognized

Members of the TBFAA board for 2009 received thanks at the TBFAA annual membership meeting.

From Left to Right: Chris Russell, Chip Bird, Malcolm Reed (back row), Debi Ulmer, Bill Parsley (back row), Brian McKinney, Dave Simon (back row), Rex Adams, Roy Horn (back row), Brad Shipp (back row), Mary Edmonson, Jeff Bright (behind Mary), Mitch Retiman (back row), Brant Pierce, Mike Samulin (back row), Tracey Ritchie, Kelly Ryan (back row), Joe Carr (back row), Rodney Hooker, John Helwig (back row), Roger Bryd, Mary Seigler - Not shown - Pat Craven

2010 TBFAA Officers Elected

The following officers and directors were elected at the TBFAA Annual meeting:

President: Chris Russell
Vice President: Jeff Bright
Secretary: Debi Ulmer
Treasurer: Malcolm Reed
Membership Director: Tracey Ritchie
Training Director: Brian McKinney
Associate Director: Kelly Ryan

Region 1 Director- Roy Horn
Region 2 Director- Dave Simon
Region 3 Director- Sonny Sampson
Region 4 Director- Joe Carr
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Using your personal or company vehicle to work a second job may very well be setting yourself up for greater problems. An innocent effort to keep you and your family afloat may result in using your vehicle in a manner specifically excluded by your auto policy.

If you find it necessary to change the use of your vehicle, please call your carrier and verify that you are covered. Don’t wait for something to happen to find out the usage of your vehicle is not covered under your auto policy. A financial necessity may turn into a financial nightmare, if you become entirely responsible for the amount of a loss.

Worth Casualty is a Texas-based company, with our home in Fort Worth, and we understand that your needs change periodically. Our insurance group has specialized in meeting the auto insurance needs of Texans since 1948. If you feel we can help you, please contact us at 866-GO-WORTH or www.worthcasualty.com.
Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association

Subject: Alarm Ordinance Changes
December 2, 2009

In September of this year the City of McKinney City Council approved changes to Ordinance 2007-05-041 concerning Alarms. Here are the key points of the ordinance:

* We have a No Permit, No Response type of alarm ordinance. This basically means that if you do not have a valid burglar alarm permit issued by the City of McKinney we do not respond to burglar alarm calls from alarm monitoring companies to your residence or business.
* Permits cost $50 for residential and $100 for businesses.
* After 8 false burglar alarms we may revoke the permit and discontinue response to the premise, until the permit holder attends an alarm user class and pays a $100 reinstatement fee.
* We do respond to Panic/Duress, Robbery, Fire and Medical alarms whether there is a permit or not. The first three responses that are found to be false are free, but any false alarms after that a fine is imposed as allowed by law.
* The latest amendment to the ordinance requires that an alarm monitoring company conduct an "Enhanced Call Verification" procedure on burglar alarms only. The ECV procedure requires the alarm monitoring company attempt to make two calls to the alarm user prior to reporting a burglar alarm. Communications will be asking them if they made two attempts and to provide us with the names and numbers that they called to attempt verification.
* Alarm monitoring companies may report a burglar alarm immediately if verification or secondary information exists that increases the potential validity of the alarm.
* Verification or secondary information can consist of:
  (1) Additional alarm monitors that provide further information that a crime is in progress or that the burglary alarm is valid (video, audio),
  (2) Witness reports that a crime has occurred or is in progress that corroborates the alarm notification (citizen, monitoring company personnel or security guard),
  (3) Multiple activations of different devices or zones at the same location, during the same incident (window alarm and a motion detector are activated inside the alarm site), or
  (4) Any other events or circumstances that indicate, in the Chief's sole opinion, that the burglary alarm dispatch request is valid. In this case it could be a person on site without a valid permit, a residence where a Protective Order is in place or a business at night where the likelihood of breakin is more probable.
* All human activated alarms: Panic/Duress, Robbery, or Medical will be dispatched immediately without verification. The verifications only apply to burglar alarms.

Enforcement of the ECV will begin January 1, 2010.

Thanks for your assistance,

Keith Long
Analyst / Intelligence & Information Unit
McKinney Police Department
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TIMES ARE TOUGH!
ARE YOU GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR INSURANCE PROFESSIONAL?

By Josh Ring
EL Dorado Insurance

As we know by now, the current economic downturn is affecting large and small businesses alike in all industries. Those of us lucky enough to live in Texas have not had to deal with as many issues as other states, but times are still lean. For most security firms, insurance is their second-largest expense (behind payroll) and anything that can be done to reduce that expense will be explored. However, this is exactly where security company owners can fall into a trap if they are not careful. Not all insurance programs are equal and even if you are able to save a few dollars short-term, the long-term effects could be devastating.

As has been previously discussed, private security insurance is a highly-specialized area that requires additional coverages to guarantee that a corporation is properly insured. One of the most important extensions of coverage to look for is Errors and Omissions, also known as Professional Liability. E&O protection is vital to a security company as it provides protection against “failure to...” scenarios. For example, if a security officer leaves his post during a shift and while gone, a burglary is committed. As the claim develops, the attorneys for the claimant could allege the security company owners “failed to properly supervise their employee,” “failed to properly train their employee,” or even “failed to properly conduct prior-employment verification.”

Obviously, any creative attorney can produce a number of these scenarios for any given claim situation. Another key combination of coverages for any security company would be Care, Custody and Control along with Third Party Theft. It is within these extensions of coverage that your customer’s goods are protected, either through fault of the security officer or a third party participant.

What should concern security company owners is that these coverages are not included on a “standard” general liability policy. In fact, these coverages are specifically excluded on most liability insurance policies. There are only a few, select liability insurance programs properly equipped to handle the needs of the private security profession. By choosing to do business with an insurance broker who does not fully understand these concerns, a security firm could very well wind up with a “declined” claim, and be forced to forever close their doors.

During these tough times, it is certainly worth taking the time to review your insurance policies to make sure you are getting the most for your money. Ask yourself if your current insurance broker specializes in programs for this industry. Is your policy being quoted through a reputable carrier with a sufficient financial rating? Like any professional partnership, you want to do business with a carrier (and broker) who are successful and who will be there for you tomorrow. Does your prospective insurance broker have a history of providing quotes for the security industry? Are they familiar with the service issues that must be addressed on a daily basis? Take the time to look over your current coverages, and contact your current broker with questions. Put them to the test! Engaging your current provider with questions on your current coverages and pricing should be the first step to ensuring that your firm is adequately covered. If you are dissatisfied with their answers, contact a business associate or friend to find out if they have a broker they are happy using.

Continued Page 17
### 2010 Training Schedule

Here’s just some of the many TBFAA Training Courses Available:

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<th>Fire Prep</th>
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<td><strong>Jan 28-29</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mar 18-19</strong></td>
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For more class offerings, information and additional dates, visit www.TBFAA.org or call 877-908-2322.

**Gain Confidence and Improve Your Skills**

This is a great opportunity to increase your own productivity and share solutions with others also on the front lines of the fire and burglar alarm industry.

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Tax Tip

Employee Versus Independent Contractor – Know The Rules

By: Mitch Reitman, S.I.C. Consulting

The new year is a great time to look at your business practices. One issue that traps a lot of alarm companies is the treatment of employees vs. independent contractors. The IRS is stepping up enforcement of payroll tax rules and regulations and many well meaning companies are getting caught in the crackdown. Many “independent contractors” are failing to pay self employment taxes so the IRS is reclassifying them as employees. The reasoning is that it is easier to get a company to pay the taxes than to asses them against individuals. The IRS is pretty unforgiving when it comes to payroll taxes, and many alarm companies find out the hard way.

Here are the top ten things every business owner should know about hiring people as independent contractors versus hiring them as employees.

1. Three characteristics are used by the IRS to determine the relationship between businesses and workers: Behavioral Control, Financial Control, and the Type of Relationship.

2. Behavioral Control covers facts that show whether the business has a right to direct or control how the work is done through instructions, training or other means.

3. Financial Control covers facts that show whether the business has a right to direct or control the financial and business aspects of the worker’s job.

4. The Type of Relationship factor relates to how the workers and the business owner perceive their relationship.

5. If you have the right to control or direct not only what is to be done, but also how it is to be done, then your workers are most likely employees.

6. If you can direct or control only the result of the work done -- and not the means and methods of accomplishing the result -- then your workers are probably independent contractors.

7. Employers who misclassify workers as independent contractors can end up with substantial tax bills. Additionally, they can face penalties for failing to pay employment taxes and for failing to file required tax forms.

8. Workers can avoid higher tax bills and lost benefits if they know their proper status.

9. Both employers and workers can ask the IRS to make a determination on whether a specific individual is an independent contractor or an employee by filing a Form SS-8 - Determination of Worker Status for Purposes of Federal Employment Taxes and Income Tax Withholding - with the IRS.

10. If you have any questions about the critical determination of a worker’s status as an Independent Contractor or Employee contact your tax professional or call us.

Mitch Reitman of S.I.C. Consulting, is an associate member and may be reached at 817-698-9999. Or visit his web site www.sicc.us.
Insurance is a vital component of any successful private security company. Choosing the proper insurance broker to act as your “Buyer of Insurance” is one of the largest pieces to the puzzle. If your current or potential insurance broker does not stack up to the questions previously posed, you are doing your company a disservice and more importantly, putting your livelihood at risk. Ignoring glaring issues such as the ones raised may save a few dollars up front, but is it worth the welfare of your entire company?

Josh Ring is the vice-president of El Dorado Insurance Agency, Inc. For more than 40 years, El Dorado has represented companies to find the best insurance solutions at the lowest premiums possible. Unlike other insurance brokers, El Dorado specializes in offering tailored programs and services to meet the specific and demanding needs of the security industry. For further questions, please feel free to contact Josh at 800-221-3386 or joshring@eldoradoinsurance.com

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TBFAA held a very successful convention and trade show in San Antonio in October of 2009.

A record number of attendees visited our exhibitors, participated in our classes, took part in the TBFAA membership meeting, honored our person of the year and enjoyed the casino night and auction.
Convention A Success
Continued From Page 18

State Fire Marshal Mark Redlitz conducts a class

Gary Dawkins conducts a class

Rodney Hooker conducts a class

Dean McWilliiams conducts a class

Mitch Reitman conducts a class

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TBFAA Convention

TBFAA 2010 Convention & Expo
Galveston - October, 20-23, 2010

Your Best Chance to
* Meet with State Regulators
* Get Legislative Updates
* Attend Business Oriented Training
* Meet with Your Peers

Schedule

Wednesday - October 20th, 2010
Golf

Thursday - October 21st, 2010
Classes & Awards Dinner

Friday - October 22nd, 2010
Updates, Classes, Membership Meeting,
Trade Show & Casino Night

Saturday - October 23rd, 2010
Farewell Breakfast & TBFAA Board Meeting

Location

Tremont Hotel
2300 Ship’s Mechanic Row, Galveston, TX 77550
Phone: 409-763-0300

Reserve hotel room by 9/28/10 for special $129 rate (REG. $250)

About the Hotel

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just a few blocks walk to the beach. Explore and stroll to nearby
shops, restaurants, galleries and attractions; or catch the trolley to
the beachfront. Our hotel now includes a new Tremont Café
which features Starbucks* coffee, pastries, a pizza oven, gourmet
sandwiches, salads, soups and desserts. The new café features
42-inch plasma televisions, Internet booths,
complimentary Wi-Fi and printing capabilities.

Casino Night Back By Popular Demand

Attendees at this year’s trade show will receive a booth card
listing all the exhibitors. Attendees who visit each booth and
get a sticker from each exhibitor will be able to turn in their
card for casino chips to be used in the casino night.
Additional chips will also be available for purchase. Each
exhibitor will also receive chips.

At 11pm the casino night will end and participants will be
able to use their winnings in an auction for valuable items.
Donated items will be displayed during the casino night
along with signage to recognize the contributor. Popular
items in past auctions have included gift cards for retail
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That is why the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA) is offering the National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) / El Dorado plan. NESA has partnered with El Dorado Insurance Agency to create an insurance plan for alarm industry professionals.

The NESA – El Dorado Plan Includes:

- General Liability coverage including: Errors & Omissions, Personal Injury, Completed Operations, Care Custody & Control, Independent Contracts and much more!
- Real Conventional Insurance - not a risk retention group
- Coverage thru First Mercury Insurance – Rated “A-VIII” by AM Best
- An Exclusive discount – Only for TBFAA members
- Prompt quotes and simplified application process
- Online Certificates of Insurance
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The Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA) is a non-profit organization comprised of a large number of professional security and fire alarm companies that operate in the State of Texas. Visit tbfaa.org for more information.

The National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) was formed to promote communication between state associations, to help them solve common problems and to help them serve their members. Visit www.nesaus.org for more information.

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For more information visit

www.TBFAA.org

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