

Security Design Centre Ltd delivers

High flying security



Zen garden



Sphere bar



Fully functional dome camera

How the Sofitel, London Heathrow Terminal 5, protects guests and staff whilst reducing crime.



The Sofitel has 605 bedrooms and 45 meeting rooms

Fire prevention, life safety and tackling crime are the key priorities for the security team at the exclusive Sofitel London Heathrow Terminal 5. Led by experienced hotel health, safety & security manager, Ian Williamson, the security team at the flagship hotel, owned by the Arora Hotels Group, will react immediately and appropriately to all eventualities, from fire and theft to assault and terrorism. Health and safety are also the responsibility of the security team, with guest and staff protection a further concern.

The electrical contractor for the new build hotel selected the West Midlands based Security Design Centre Ltd (SDC), for all the CCTV requirements. SDC is a nationally recognised specialist CCTV installer. The company has years of experience installing effective systems in a wide range of business areas, including retail, commercial, leisure and the public sector. A National Security Inspectorate (NSI), Gold standard certified company, SDC is also "SafeContractor" and "Constructionline" accredited.

SDCs' integrated security services are at the forefront of security technology.

They include remote CCTV monitoring, automatic number plate recognition, video analytics, networks and deployable CCTV solutions. Their innovative website, www.securitydesigncentre.co.uk, provides a simple, visual explanation of these new security technologies in action.

"The integrated security system ensures we provide an excellent service to our guests. We monitor the system centrally and react quickly to any security or health and safety alerts. We receive an instant police call out when requested, because we are able to verify the nature and severity of each incident."

Ian Williamson Safety and Security Manager, Sofitel Heathrow

The Sofitel London Heathrow, Terminal 5, is striving to be the best airport hotel and conference centre in Europe and to this end is impressive in every respect. It has 605 exclusive bedrooms and boasts its own link bridge to Terminal 5. The hotel also has a retail mall with many exclusive shops. It is an

ideal place to meet and offers customers a selection of 45 meeting rooms, the largest of which seats up to 1700 people! Parking is not an issue. There is an underground car park over three levels, with spaces for coaches and 900 cars. The Sofitel operates around the clock to meet customer needs. It therefore comes as no surprise that the electronic security system used in the hotel is of an exceptional standard.

Providing effective security for such a large and complex building was a challenge that drew on Security Design Centre's 30 years of experience. All public areas, both inside and outside the hotel, are watched by over 160 CCTV cameras. The company's independent product selection policies ensure they only use the best products for each individual site. In the case of Sofitel London Heathrow, 360 Vision dome cameras protect the external perimeter and roads, with clear views of all the hotel entrances. The domes provide excellent CCTV image quality and can zoom in on suspects, for identification purposes, from up to 120m away. A structured cabling network carries all camera video images and

data to a secure control room. It is here that Dowshu digital video recording systems manage and control the entire site. They record at real time (25 frames per second) on critical cameras, in D1 resolution, providing evidential quality images that can be supplied to the police when necessary. A structured cabling network provides power to the more remote cameras and telemetry data to control the 360 Vision domes. Additional cameras may be added to the network later, if required, with little disruption to the hotel. Security Design Centre also provided CCTV at specific access control points, including staff only areas and emergency exit doors. The cameras at these points are set up to record and inform the hotel's CCTV monitoring team when any of these doors are used.

“Some criminals will target specific hotel chains because they are familiar with the credit card, room access and camera control systems they use.”



Ian Williamson explained, “The integrated security system ensures we provide an excellent service to our guests. We monitor the system centrally and react quickly to any security or health and safety alerts. We receive an instant police call out when requested, because we are able to verify the nature and severity of each incident. SDC has installed an appropriate, cutting edge system to meet the hotels’ diverse security and site management requirements.”

Ian is passionate about delivering a quality service. He is unfazed by the scale of Sofitel London Heathrow, putting his approach down to his extensive experience within the hotel security management sector. “I have worked in hotel security for many years and during this time have learnt a great deal from fellow colleagues and through the work I have done. The SDC security system is a valuable tool which we use to help create a safe environment. It also helps us to manage and communicate with security staff around the hotel. Our cameras are not obtrusive and I think the majority of our guests prefer to know they are there. I feel that our staff

and visitors can be very reassured that all areas of the hotel, from the car parks and grounds, through to the shops and restaurants, are all thoroughly protected”

Ian and his team carry out risk assessments on a regular basis, ensuring that the hotel environment is as safe as possible. Any issues, however minor, are addressed immediately, demonstrating the highest possible duty of care to staff and guests. Regular health and safety meetings drive continual improvement plans, designed to direct hotel resources most effectively. Self reflective learning plays a key role in the team’s internal development and on-going training ensures that all team members fully understand the security technology used in the hotel, maximising its effectiveness. Security officers in public areas are rotated each hour, keeping them fresh and alert and as a result each member of the team has a comprehensive understanding of how the whole hotel operates. Even contract workers are trained in a similar way before they conduct any site work.

Ian is a member of the Institute of Hotel Security Management (IHSM), an organisation which works with the police to provide security managers with details of crimes and criminals. Ian explained, “This allows me to provide my staff with specific information about criminals known to be in the area. They then use this data whilst on patrol or watching the screens in the CCTV control room. Some criminals will target specific hotel chains because they are familiar with the credit card, room access and camera control systems. We are able to identify these known individuals if they enter the hotel and can either prevent their access, track them or ask the police to remove them. We always try to be one step ahead.”

Crime prevention and reduction are at the heart of the work carried out by Ian and his team, “We strive to improve the quality of comfort for all our guests and staff and part of this is to remove the fear of crime. We also work to protect the company and its assets by developing loss prevention procedures aimed at minimising the opportunity for crime.” Central to achieving these goals is Security Design Centre’s integrated security installation. It is being used successfully for crime prevention, detection and prosecution whilst simultaneously identifying any potential health and safety issues. It would seem everyone in the Sofitel London Heathrow Terminal 5 is in good hands with Ian, his team and SDC. ●



Security Design Centre Ltd
Falcon House
Bloomfield Street West
Halesowen
West Midlands
B63 3RD

T: 0121 550 8847
F: 0121 585 6142
www.securitydesigncentre.co.uk
sales@securitydesigncentre.co.uk

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and sister company of REMAS Ltd**



Remote Management and Security Ltd.