

Certification *Profile*

John Knight, CPP,

PSP, retired after 20 years of service with the U.S. Army, where he was an officer in the in-

fantry and special operations branches. His next step was to enter the private sector. But he recognized the need to build a bridge to smooth the transition.

“When I left the military, I realized that most civilian companies did not understand military job descriptions and skill sets,” he says. “I decided to become a member of ASIS and pursue the certification to ‘civilianize’ my military experience, so that private security organizations and commercial business managers could identify with that experience and those skills.”

In 1992, Knight was hired by Saudi Aramco of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, the state-owned national oil company, which is the largest oil corporation in the world. Knight came on board as a fraud investigator in 1992. Today, he is still with the company as a security consultant to the industrial security general manager, responsible for the security of gas and oil facilities both onshore and offshore, port facilities, and employee resident camps within the kingdom.

A typical day for Knight involves developing security programs and contracts, visiting security sites and facilities, and analyzing security information bulletins, and conveying that information to others with a need to know. “I routinely provide security information analyses and summaries to the general manager and also represent the interests of industrial security with staff representatives from executive vice presidents and executive directors,” he adds.

Additionally, Knight provides security coordination for VIPs from other oil companies and governments who visit Saudi Aramco on business trips, and he conducts security reviews of remote facilities in the desert. “Those trips have provided some memorable moments, from sitting around a camp fire enjoying sweet tea with government frontier guards to enduring daily heat that gets up to 130 degrees Fahrenheit,” he says.

There are challenges in working for such a large multinational corporation. “We have employees from 52 countries that work in oil and gas operations, management, and support services,” Knight explains. “Additionally, we work in the threat environment of terrorism and instability of the Middle East region. This puts ad-

ditional pressure on protecting our employees, resident camps, and vital facilities.”

Knight, who has a master’s degree in security management from Leicesters University in England, has been an ASIS member for more than 15 years and has served in a number of chapter and regional positions. He has been the chapter certifications representative and ASIS Foundation representative as well as the assistant regional vice president for the Middle East Region.

Knight credits the Certified Protection Professional® (CPP) designation he received in 1995 and the Physical Security Professional® (PSP) designation he earned in 2004 with giving him a sense of personal pride as well as status in his company.

“Each day, I strive to live up to the ethics associated with the CPP,” he says. “My company has gained a dedicated security professional who has its best interest always in mind.”

His bosses at Saudi Aramco wholeheartedly support certification of security professionals, Knight adds, and they incorporate certifications in the promotion system and in preferential assignments.

—By Vicki Moeser, ASIS public relations manager