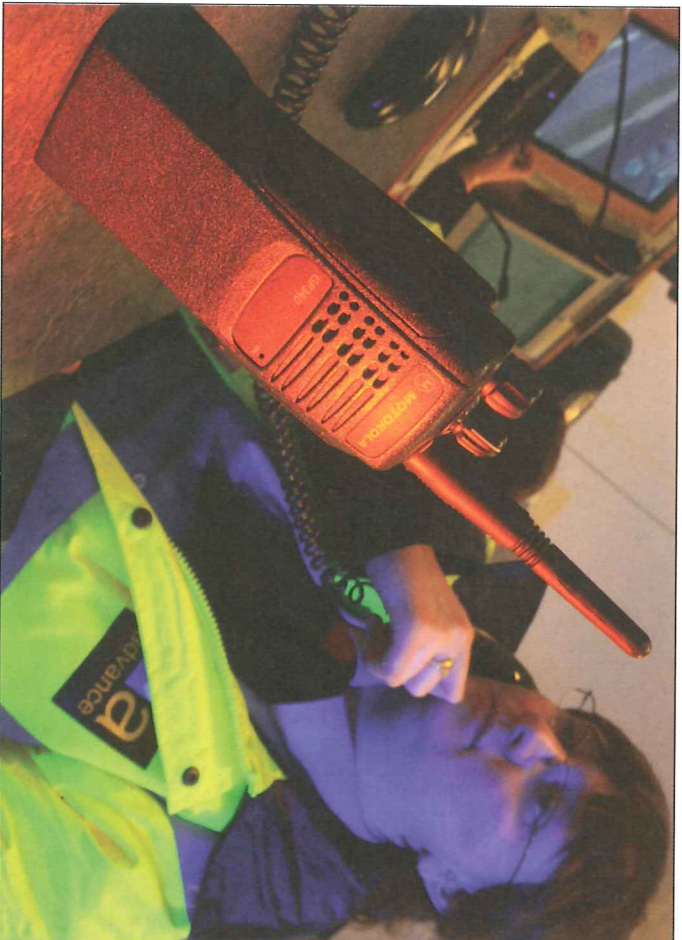


Dedicated to development



however when we discussed this with our insurers they were hesitant to provide cover given the potential implications if such techniques were misused. To address this we invited a representative from our insurers to sit through our three day programme, which not only resulted in complete approval but also at no additional cost!"

Another key expansion throughout 2007 was the range of consultancy services made available to Advance customers in the shopping centre market. The most widely adopted was the desk-top exercise, which places the security team, centre management and external providers, including the emergency services, in real life scenarios such as a terrorist attack or pandemic flu outbreak and monitors their actions, team work and leadership in controlled conditions.

As Richard Bailey, sales and marketing director of Advance explains, this resulted in an improved focus on disaster recovery and business continuity from key shopping centres: "Many management teams welcomed the chance to thoroughly assess the potential impact that a major incident could have on their centre, as well as testing the key communication channels that would be vital should such an incident occur. The desktop exercise clearly addressed these issues and helped our customers to develop local and national strategies in this regard."

With its consultancy services offered outside security and centre management teams via tenant seminars and training, Advance is bringing key security tools such as crime profiling, bomb and suspect awareness and the use of CCTV and other technologies to the wider shopping centre community, thereby placing security at the forefront of its clients' day to day operations.

This holistic approach has been vital in meeting customer requirements. "Shopping centre security has developed rapidly over recent years and Advance stands at the vanguard of this progression. However, it is vital that we continue to work alongside our customer base to further enhance our service offering. We are already planning the introduction of a range of new policies for 2008 and have ambitious plans for further growth in this sector."

Advance is also aware of the financial implications that a security provider can bring to a shopping centre. Richard Bailey continues: "We realise fully that the provision of a security team forms a major element of any tenant charging scheme. Advance has invested heavily in the shopping centre sector but our efficiencies in terms of contractual support ensure that our charging remains in line with expectations. In short, commitment to innovation and development does not translate to an unrealistic pricing structure."



"Shopping centre security has developed rapidly over recent years and Advance stands at the vanguard of this progression"

In early 2007 Advance Security announced the launch of a new shopping centre division, dedicated to dealing with the ever changing and unique security threats facing this sector. The move was the result of sustained development in Advance's shopping centre portfolio over a number of years and was formed with the intention of developing a range of innovative solutions specific to the sector and transferring best practice between centres across the UK

So now that 2007 is nearly at a close how successful has Advance been at achieving its aims and what plans does it have for the future expansion of this division? Barry Dawson, managing director of Advance, explains: "Innovation is only possible when the basic elements of service delivery are clearly in place. Advance takes pride in its centralised support services and operational management team and has built upon this strong grounding in the shopping centre sector by developing bespoke guidance and advice for officers to refer to in day to day situations. Separate policies have been developed to deal with the use of knives, lost children, truants and applying and monitoring ASBOs."

He continues: "After establishing these policies we then considered how we could further enhance the training of our teams beyond the BTEC in Shopping Centre Security which was launched alongside our new division at the beginning of 2007. Following extensive consultation with our customer base we identified key areas where further bespoke training would enhance our service delivery including control room, traffic management and counter terrorism, where we adopted the lessons already learnt from a similar project in the defence industry."

A further innovation saw Advance work alongside its insurance provider to address a contentious training issue within the industry. As Barry elaborates: "We wanted to ensure our officers had a thorough understanding of safe and lawful hold and restraint techniques when facing flashpoints on the malls,