



# Local Community Roped In to Enhance National Safety and Security

By Sgt Muhammad Juffry Bin Joihani

Private security agencies in Singapore will have a greater role to play in crime deterrence and counter-terrorism. 'Project Guardian', aimed at tapping the potential of security guards to help in handling crises, was introduced to the private security sector on 9 June 2008 during the National Safety and Security Symposium 2008 held at the Rock Auditorium in Suntec City.

Adapted from the City of London Police's 'Project Griffin', the Singapore Police Force (SPF) implemented a similar initiative which will see private security personnel equipped with the necessary skills to undertake greater emergency functions during a national crisis.

Three private security companies, namely Certis Cisco, Aetos Security Management and G4S Security Services, have come on board the programme. They hope that through 'Project Guardian', their security guards can learn to manage crowds, divert traffic and cordon off disaster sites.

Security guards will also receive police crime briefings fortnightly by the SPF via a conference call system. Investment bank JPMorgan's round-the-clock operations centre has also been roped in to assist in disseminating messages through the Short Messaging System or e-mails immediately during emergencies.

Another pilot project launched during the symposium was the Industry Safety and Security Watch Group (iSSWG). Instead of just getting the

business community to share their concerns on safety and security matters under the current Safety and Security Watch Group (SSWG), iSSWG pools resources at the industry level. This complements SPF's current outreach that is localised at the geographic-based SSWGs, hence resulting in a more expansive safety and security coverage for the business community. The financial and hotel sectors will be involved in the pilot stage.

Speaking at the symposium, Guest-of-Honour, Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Mr K Shanmugam said, "Terrorism is ultimately defeated by the people, not just governments. The local community plays an equally vital role in preventing terrorism." *plm*

Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Mr K Shanmugam making his address at the symposium ▶

