

# Case Study – RWE npower, Isle of Wight

All projects have their challenges, but providing security protection from the myriad potential threats to a power station takes particular skills.

## The Project

The project in this case is RWE npower in East Cowes on the Isle of Wight. RWE npower is a leading integrated UK energy company and is part of the RWE Group which produces more than 10% of the electricity used in England and Wales. By integrated RWE mean that their sites include coal, gas and oil-fired power stations, onshore and offshore wind farms, hydro schemes, offices and technology services sites. These sites are spread across the length and breadth of the UK from the north of Scotland to the East Cowes on the Isle of Wight.

Client confidentiality and security being paramount, it is necessary to be a little circumspect about the amount and range of data we can provide. Suffice to say there is an ever increasing risk of loss from theft, vandalism and terrorism and the security system had to recognise this.

The system supplier was Sightguard Security, arguably the longest established security systems supplier on the Island... but more of them later. The specification called for a full systems package from design, though installation and commissioning, to maintenance of the new monitored intruder alarm system solution. The systems, installed to current industry standards, needed to compliment a number of other security measures already in place around the large site. The system has all of the latest up-to-date features you would expect for a large corporate client and it took almost two months to complete. Sightguard believe that it may actually be the largest monitored intruder alarm system currently on the Isle of Wight.

## The Challenges

One of the primary challenges faced by the system designer was the highly variable and harsh environmental conditions between the various out-buildings on the site and the main control block; the latter being located on top of two 70 mega watt turbine generators that are used to support the National Grid network in times of high demand.

Cowes is an open cycle gas turbine (OCGT) power station which has been in operation since 1982. It is operated by three island based staff and receives engineering support from the nearby Fawley Power Station. OCGT plants have the advantage of being able to produce large amounts of power very quickly. From shut down, it is capable of achieving full load in five minutes, under emergency conditions within 3 minutes. For Sightguard this presented an additional challenge in preventing false alarm conditions from sudden changes in temperature in the turbine halls, to varying levels of potential radio frequency and high voltage interference in close proximity to these buildings. These factors had to be considered during the risk assessment process and given due consideration in the system design, screening and filtering on the cabling and data network.



*Vic Lewis and Chris Teague*

## The Supplier - Sightguard in Profile

Founded in 1971 by Vic Lewis, Sightguard initially provided mobile patrols and static guarding services. In 1974 the company expanded its range of services following an approach from a Government department to supply a transportation service for data reports and cash. Vic designed the required security features into the vehicle himself to the satisfaction of one of the UK's largest insurance companies. Within twelve months a second van was purchased, with a full upgrade in the design and installation of security equipment.

The cash in transit side of the business continued to grow as the company was entrusted to carry cash, documents, collection of passports and most impressively, paintings worth at the time between £40,000 and £95,000.

This aspect of the business is still going strong today. Each business is individual and unique and Sightguard treat them as such, offering personal consultations and risk assessments face to face.

Whilst dominating the Island from a physical security perspective, Sightguard was at the same time branching out into electronic security and fire and now boasts to be a leading Island player.

Chris Teague, Sales and Operations Manager, runs the electronic, fire and security divisions at Sightguard and has in the last five years completely overhauled these to meet the ever changing industry standards that regulate the business and the industry. Interestingly, Chris noted that there are more SSAIB registered installers on the Island than companies registered with any other Certification Body.

At 37 years of age Sightguard is a mature and established provider of security services and believes it is the most successful SSAIB registered company on the Island.

For more information visit [www.sightguard.eu](http://www.sightguard.eu)

