



Another new product, also from Selectamark is e-Plate, an electronically tagged licence plate that emits the vehicle's vehicle identification number (VIN) every second, using battery-powered radio frequency identification (RFID) tags embedded in the plates.

With the UK government preparing to test high-tech plates, and administrations worldwide looking at replating schemes, e-Plate offers numerous applications for security, congestion monitoring, deterring terrorism and tracking wanted or stolen vehicles.

Vehicles fitted with e-Plate can be tracked around towns, cities and along motorways, whether stationary or mobile, and in all weather conditions. According to Jim Brown, e-Plate was developed to provide companies and public authorities with a more reliable way to identify a vehicle. He said: "The e-Plate looks like a standard plate, is tamper proof and has an embedded chip which cannot be seen or removed. It is self-powered with a battery life of up to seven years and is designed to shatter if anyone tries to remove or tamper with it."

Another area of security that is becoming increasingly popular in the wake of identity theft and leaked company information is secure document destruction. This service is provided by companies such as Papersafe UK that has offices in Kent and Hampshire (website: www.papersafe.co.uk).

The company provides businesses with specially designed security-sealed boxes, polypropylene sacks with security seals, and lockable wheeled bins in order that staff may deposit confidential paperwork safely. Papersafe can then collect and transport documents that need to be disposed of – eliminating the risk of confidential information falling into the wrong hands.

Despite the huge variety of elements that make up the UK security industry, one thing the sector prides itself on is maintaining product standards and high levels of customer service.

In order to keep a close eye on these matters, there are two main trade associations for the industry. The British Security Industry Association (BSIA) is the professional trade body whose aim is to help its 500-plus member companies, responsible for more than 70 per cent of UK security business, to succeed in an ever-changing and highly competitive environment.

The Association of Police & Public Security Suppliers (APPSS) represents companies providing products and services to police forces and other public security agencies at home and overseas. There is also the Joint Security Industry Council (JSIC) that is the umbrella organisation for associations, inspectorates and other organisations with an interest in security.

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