Security fogging systems are no longer the novelty they were first considered when released onto the UK market place by Concept Smoke Screen in 1974. The systems have gone from this to a mainstay in defeating out of hours burglaries to more recently the critical defense of staff and cash in armed raid scenarios such as those commonplace in the banking and financial industry.

Defeating burglaries is something that Smoke Screen has excelled itself in, over a very long period of time. The premise is simple: when a bank-robber is confronted by an incredibly dense and rapidly expanding barrier of fog, his automatic reaction is to cut his losses and run before he gets apprehended by the police. We see this time after time. Literally seconds after activation, the whole burglary is finished with.

What has become apparent is that the simple act of confronting a thief is what turns things around. The speed of activation typically has little bearing on the reaction, it is more the fact that these criminals simply do not want to be confronted by anything and would rather look for an easier target.

This has led many customers to enquire into the possibilities of linking Smoke Screen to a panic button triggered system to defeat armed or violent attacks on bank-staff and property. Historically, this is an application that Concept Smoke Screen as a manufacturer has shied away from. Why??

Well some of the reasons were:

- An armed or violent bank raid is a highly volatile situation, and there are innocent people at risk.
Smoke Screen is an undoubtedly fantastic deterrent, but it is by no means bullet proof.

Put simply, the fear was that by triggering a Smoke Screen system in this kind of situation, the bank teller might raise the likelihood of a reprisal attack against them.

Whenever asked about the possibility of this kind of installation, Concept Smoke Screen was the first to raise these fears as potential issues.

That said, some customers were undeterred, and conducted their own risk assessments. Their risk assessments found that by triggering a Smoke Screen system on a panic button did not significantly enhance the risk to a member of staff, it was actually decreased!

The reasoning was that the member of staff was already in an incredibly high risk situation, and the Smoke Screen was serving to defend them from that risk, by confronting the assailant, removing the member of staff from his line of sight (hence severing his hold over his victim, if popular psychology is to be believed), and forcing him to leave with the same reaction as a burglar would experience.

In January of this year, armed thieves tied up a guard at gunpoint and ram-raided a site, with the intention of stealing broadcast quality video equipment (worth in excess of £60,000.00 per item). Six of them entered the building, and literally, 3 seconds after the Smoke Screen triggered, all six of them had fled empty handed and leaving the guard unharmed. They were so panicked by the events that all six of them attempted to get into the same 5-seat car (delaying their escape further).

More and more customers who are at high risk of this kind of attack are turning to Smoke Screen to defend their property and people in this manner. This year alone, we have seen several establishments in the financial sector, including high street banks, ATM providers and major cash handling facilities all insist upon installations of this nature.

As a result, Concept Smoke Screen have re-examined their stance on the suitability of Smoke
Screen for this application. The conclusion reached is that with thorough risk assessment, staff training and careful surveying, Smoke Screen is not only a viable defense, it is an effective one.