

## CALSAGA Member Profile:

# Paul Johnson, BSIS Chief

Each issue, *Observed & Reported* profiles a CALSAGA member. This month, we have a special profile, not of a member, but of new BSIS Chief Paul Johnson.

**Observed & Reported:** Prior to being appointed BSIS Chief, what were you doing?

**Paul Johnson:** Prior to my appointment as Chief of the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS), I was a DOJ Administrator III. This entailed 17 years in management in Fingerprint Identification, California Criminal History System and Applicant Processing Programs.

Specifically, for the last six years I was overseeing applicant processing for over 1.5 million California criminal history checks and 950,000 national FBI background checks with a staff of approximately 150 people in a two-shift operation in Licensing, Employment, Certification, Adoptions and Emergency Placement of Children.

Since 1997, I have represented DOJ as a Federal Bureau of Investigation Committee member on the National Identification Services Subcommittee and the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification Task Force. The purpose of the Subcommittee and Task Force is to provide policy recommendations to the National Policy Board on criminal identification and information issues.

**O&R:** What does your family think of you as the new BSIS Chief? Tell us about their response when you told them the good news.

**PJ:** One word – proud. Initially their reaction, I would say, was surprised. Like myself, they believed I would finish my career with DOJ, especially after nearly 30 years. They knew how much I enjoyed my assignment. However, eventually they realized, as well as I, that this was a great opportunity for me to bring my background and experience to BSIS and continue to learn and contribute to the various security industries.

**O&R:** Describe the feelings and thoughts going through your mind when

you were being sworn into office?

**PJ:** “Please don’t forget the words!” Actually, Charlene (the Director) made me feel quite comfortable and a very welcomed member of the DCA team. With a roomful of people (DCA, BSIS,

CALSAGA, etc.) and my family, I was humbled (and that has only happened a few times in my life). At the same time, I felt very positive about the acknowledgement I was receiving that I was being appointed to this position.

**O&R:** How has your new role at BSIS been so far? Has it been how you expected it to be?

**PJ:** My new role has been terrific. Over the last few weeks, the BSIS staff have been overwhelmingly supportive, patient and extremely helpful in providing me with valuable insight and background in their role as a regulatory agency over the various security industries. I have had the opportunity to meet with many of the security industry associations, as well as a training facility and some of the private patrol operators.

It’s what I expected and more. I feel that my experience and background has definitely been able to assist this organization and me in providing the security industries a close working relationship and partnership.

**O&R:** What advice has former BSIS Chief Steve Giorgi given you?

**PJ:** Aside from saying to keep doing what I’ve always done as an administrator, Steve gave me these few but critical pieces of advice. 1) consumer protection is not just the responsibility of government; 2) it is a collaborative effort with both industry and government and 3) we can regulate, we can guide, we can direct but in the end we must work together.

**O&R:** What has been the most exciting or most interesting thing that has happened to you since being appointed Chief?

**PJ:** After being on the job only a few weeks, I can’t point to any specific thing, however, it has been very exciting having an opportunity to meet with several members of my staff, to learn more specifically the roles of licensing, enforcement and the disciplinary review process within BSIS. Additionally, it’s also been enlight-

ening to have the opportunity to meet with CALSAGA and its Board of Directors and also members from the California Association of Licensed Repossessors, California Alarm Association, California Association of Licensed Investigators, California Institute for Professional Investigators and the Professional Investigators of California. Just going through the learning and understanding process has been exciting in and of itself and I look forward to continuing that experience.

**O&R:** What changes do you see happening in the future for BSIS?

**PJ:** In January we will be relocating, along with other boards, bureaus and programs of DCA, to the Natomas area of Sacramento. Logistically, it will lend itself to a better working environment since all of BSIS will be located on one floor. You will be notified in the near future of our move. The Bureau is also in the process of finalizing the creation of an Advisory Committee. We are expecting to have our first Committee meeting some time after the first of the year. Additionally, as I become more familiar with the activities of the BSIS staff, I hope to have the opportunity to further develop their skills through cross training. I would also like to expand our current outreach efforts to assist private patrol operators and other security industries with any problems or issues they may have.

**O&R:** Please give your opinion on using Live Scan versus fingerprint cards. What are the advantages?

**PJ:** It’s the only way to go. As you are aware, effective July 1, 2005, DOJ began accepting only electronic fingerprint transactions via Live Scan. In only rare occasions will they accept manual fingerprint cards through an exemption process, i.e., out of state applicants, no reasonable access to a Live Scan site, etc. However, based on the numbers I’ve reviewed, security guard submissions are exceeding 95% electronic, so you are pretty much there.

As far as advantages, you are basically taking out all of the manual processes involved with fingerprint identification and applicant processing through DOJ, thereby not only decreasing processing time but also eliminating human intervention in the vast majority of submissions.

**O&R:** What are your thoughts on the passing of SB 194? How do you see this bill benefiting the security industry?

**PJ:** I know that we have worked together on this legislation in the hopes of crafting something that works for all of us

and ensures protection for the California Consumer.

All of us at one time or another have advised our loved ones that if in danger, seek help from a person in uniform. Hopefully that advice doesn't put them in further danger.

Having all uniformed security officers undergo a law enforcement fingerprint check makes sense. However there are still questions relating to enforcement, access to employee records, accountability and responsibility and the creation of a new security guard card registration. Still work in progress.

**O&R:** What did you think of the last CALSAGA Board of Director's meeting you attended?

**PJ:** It being the fourth day on the job for me, it was a great opportunity to throw my hat out there as the new guy in town. I appreciated the warm reception and opportunity to initially be able to introduce myself and give at least a general overview of where I've been and hopefully, where I hope we are all headed philosophically. I extend my offer to making myself available for future meetings.

**O&R:** How do you plan on maintaining a close relationship with CALSAGA?

**PJ:** Maintaining a positive working partnership with CALSAGA or any of the industries BSIS regulates is based on communication and staying informed on any problems or issues we may face. If something isn't working or is broken, then let's focus on how to fix it – not complain about it. I have offered up my willingness to have discussions and/or meetings if for no other purpose than to insure those lines of communication are in place. I also have a very energetic and knowledgeable staff to provide you with any assistance or presenters for specific licensing or enforcement topics.

**O&R:** In your opinion, how do

you think private security members can successfully promote a positive image of the industry to the public?

**PJ:** The toughest thing to do in any culture is to try and change public perception about any one group or person. I think what is most important here is to focus on what tremendous steps we collectively have taken towards professionalism

and opinions.

**O&R:** Describe what your family life is like. How many kids do you have? Do you have any pets?

**PJ:** With a wife and two daughters, they pretty much keep me in line and make sure I keep my priorities in order. I'm a very lucky husband and dad to have them. They have always been there to of-



BSIS Chief Paul Johnson Shares His Thoughts with CALSAGA

in the industry. The next step is to transcend that message to the public. That step is yours to take -everything from uniform and consistent presentation to communication, visibility, and making that extra effort to make yourself available and accessible.

**O&R:** Are you looking forward to attending the upcoming Annual Conference? What about it are you most excited for?

**PJ:** I am absolutely looking forward to the conference. Hopefully, by October I will have had a couple months of experience with BSIS to be able to communicate some ideas and thoughts I may have on how to continue moving forward with private security or working on improvements or enhancements within BSIS to better serve the industry. I am also looking forward to meeting and having a chance to get to know more about its members. It will also be a great chance to share ideas

fer advice, encouragement and support in whatever my ambitions are or have been, while at the same time being extremely patient and understanding. When all else fails and they can't handle me anymore, I get sent out to the back-40 to discuss matters with the other member of our family, "Boo" the Golden Retriever.

**O&R:** Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies?

**PJ:** When we purchased our one-acre home some years ago, I really got into landscaping and all the labor of fun that goes into it. So most of my off duty time gets directed there. My father was a cabinetmaker so I also enjoy woodworking and general home improvement projects. I think the list will keep me busy for several years. The rest of my leisure time is spent with a little traveling and taking in as many sporting events as possible. I'm a big baseball nut.

## CALSAGA POLITICAL REPORT

### A fast-paced look at the world of politics.

The 2005 Legislative Session was clearly overshadowed by the looming November 8, 2005 statewide special election. With the Legislature pointing to legalizing same sex marriage and drivers licenses for illegal immigrants as their most important accomplishments, two bills that the Governor had clearly stated he would veto, it left nine months of work with little to show for...


The heralded "Year of Reform" continues to stumble as poll numbers come out on **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's** initiatives. In fact, the Public Policy Institute of California shows only one measure passing – Proposition 74. This is the initiative that would extend the waiting period for teachers to attain tenure to five years instead of two. The other two measures sponsored by Schwarzenegger seem to be further in the dumps than the Governor's personal poll numbers...

Proposition 76, dubbed the "Live Within Our Means" initiative, is tumbling, with support dropping from 62% to 28% in just four months. The real news is that the Governor is giving hints that if this fails the state will be forced to raise taxes...

The third and final initiative supported by the Governor is Prop 77, which would change the way legislative districts are drawn. While most Republicans are in support of not allowing politicians to pick their voters, a few Republican Congressmen are fighting against the measure. Why are they fighting the Governor leading their own party? They're afraid that the GOP will lose precious US House seats in California, which would threaten the narrow Republican majority in D.C...

While most media coverage has focused on the Governor's initiatives, political insiders across the country are focusing on the "Paycheck Protection Initiative," or Proposition 75. If passed, Prop 75 would require public unions to get their members' annual written permission before taking money from their paychecks for their political funds. Unions have pledged over 50 million dollars to defeat this initiative, which they see as a threat to the dominance they hold over the state. The California Republican Party has donated several hundred thousand dollars in support of 75, hoping to curb the influence of the powerful public employee unions. The Governor announced his support for Prop 75 at the CRP Convention in late September, rounding out his agenda...and unlike some of his early proposals, Prop 75 does lead in the polls...

In state legislative news, the death of freshman Democrat Assemblyman **Mike Gordon** leaves voters in the 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District (Torrance/El Segundo/Manhattan Beach) with a special election. As one of the few competitive districts in California, insiders thought it would be a close battle. GOP Manhattan Beach Mayor **Greg Hill**, who narrowly lost of Gordon last year, appeared to be the front runner, but Assembly Republican leadership decided instead to back **Mary Jo Ford**, who believed her moderate philosophy and background would better suit the district. But voter registration problems sunk her campaign. It seems she switched parties a few times in the 90's – and then denied it after the proof was published in the newspaper. On primary Election Day, Democrat **Ted Lieu** from Torrance was elected outright to replace his late friend, with over 59 percent of the vote. Three Republican candidates, including Ford, received only 39% total. Not a great showing...



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