

# Vetting boost for risk management

**A** Brierley Hill-based company is introducing a new service to the UK which it claims could save firms thousands of pounds in insurance claims, training costs and employment tribunal costs.

Forensic Vetting are trained and licensed polygraph testers. The company was formed in October 2008 by two retired Wolverhampton senior detectives, Andrew Armstrong and Patrick Mulligan.

Polygraph testing, sometimes called lie detector testing, is widely used in the US and is a method of testing for evidence of fraudulent behaviour and can be beneficial when interviewing candidates for critical positions, employment reappraisals and screening.

"Prospective employers will see that polygraph testing is a useful recruitment tool and part of the interviewing process," said Mr Mulligan. "We explain exactly what takes place, demystify the process, and give our client and their subjects scenarios where they can see the benefits. It works both ways.

## Benefits

"Forensic Vetting carry out two types of testing; screening and diagnostic. Screening is initially carried out across a broad framework of questions. This is then followed by a diagnostic test, which tightens up the accuracy of the procedure.

"The benefits to employers and prospective employers are clear. When screening for pre-employment, it is possible to save an employer a lot of time, money and stress when attempting to find the right candidate by discounting unsuitable candidates at an early stage. When carried out under controlled conditions this test carries an accuracy rate of up to 98 per cent with an average of 87 per cent, enabling a professional sector company who will have many high calibre people applying for key positions, to be very selective and make informed decisions from the outset. This reduces risk within the company.

"Security companies like Brinks Mat already use it, and we are working with Group



Patrick Mulligan and Andrew Armstrong of Forensic Vetting, based in Brierley Hill

4 at present. At the outset, we have a written agreement with our client", says Mr Armstrong.

"The client could be the person who is going to be tested. We will carry out a sensitisation process and a consent process with both the client and the subject, so that they can ask any questions. Everything is done voluntarily and transparently."

"At Forensic Vetting we are highly experienced in testing and enhanced interviewing. We formulate the questions depending on the techniques we decide to use, and these techniques depend on the circumstances of each case.

"We then explain the procedure and the context of the questions fully to the applicant before conducting the polygraph test."

"We also act for the aggrieved, with the subject becoming our client", says Mr Mulligan. "In the case of a specific allegation mag-

ainst an existing member of staff, for example if an employer suspects that our client had engaged in theft or internal fraud, we could help them prove their innocence.

"The most valuable asset to any company is their human resources. Polygraph testing can become an on-going policy for the organisation, so that new staff will be aware that, if they ever wish to apply for a critical post, they will be expected to be tested. We can advise and tailor a package designed around the needs of the organisation.

"Polygraph testing is a sophisticated valuable tool for recruitment and risk management, enabling a business owner to make an informed decision. Compliance has a massive role in today's professional sector. It is important to consistently and frequently update records on existing key staff who occupy critical posts, and vetting is a very thorough way to carry this out."