



Welcome to this week's edition of Defuse News

A weekly briefing for individuals, families and the advisers who work alongside them — on protecting privacy, understanding exposure, and managing personal risk calmly, before problems escalate.

Each week, I draw on what I am seeing in my own work — behavioural threats, unwanted attention, fixation, reputational pressure, and the calls most people are never properly taught to make — and write about it plainly. Alongside the casework, I also write about the things that quietly hold the best adviser relationships together: trust, discretion, specialism, independence, judgement, and the personal connection that good advice depends on.

Serious situations very rarely arrive without warning. They build slowly, often in plain sight, and the most common mistakes are doing nothing when something is actually wrong and overreacting when nothing is.

The aim of Defuse News is to help the people around prominent clients recognise these situations earlier, respond to them appropriately, and reflect on the advisory relationships that underpin them.

Defuse Global has no commercial ties to close protection teams, technology providers or security firms. The judgement we offer is independent. Clarity, not protection, is the outcome that matters.

Philip Grindell MSc CSyP Founder & CEO Defuse Global

Trusted Adviser on Behavioural Threats and Risk Mitigation, Author, *Personal Threat Management: The Practitioner's Guide to Keeping Clients Safer*, Former Counter-Terrorism Security Coordinator, UK Government and Royal Family, Listed in the *Spear's 500* as Top Recommended in Security, Intelligence and Investigations

 **They won't come for you.**
They'll come for the people near you.

Two MI6 stories reveal a lesson every prominent individual should understand

In 2009, Sir John Sawers was about to become head of MI6, Britain's overseas intelligence service.

A career diplomat.

A security expert.

A man who understood risk better than almost anyone.

Yet sensitive details about his private life ended up on newspaper front pages.

✗ Not because of anything he did.

 The source was his wife's Facebook account.

With no privacy settings in place, her profile revealed:

-  Their home location
-  Family information
-  Personal photographs
-  Holiday pictures

- 🏠 Details of elderly parents
- 🤝 Friendship networks

One open account exposed information that one of the country's most security-conscious people had spent a lifetime protecting.

⚠️ **Threat Management Insight**

Your security is rarely determined by your behaviour alone.

It is often shaped by the behaviour of the people closest to you.



🏠 **Then it happened again**

A decade later, MI6 faced a completely different problem.

During refurbishment work at its Vauxhall headquarters: 📄 More than 100 sensitive floor plans disappeared.

These plans showed:

- 📄 Entry and exit points
- 🚒 Alarm locations
- ⚡ Electrical infrastructure
- 🗺 Office layouts
- 🏢 Internal building design

Eventually, most were found within the building.

The explanation? ⚠ Carelessness. The contractor involved was removed from the project.

But here's the interesting part.

Around 40 external contractors had access to those documents.

Imagine:

- 💰 Someone offered money
- 😠 Someone held a grudge
- 🎯 Someone had been deliberately placed there

The outcome would have looked the same. Only the intent would have changed.



The lesson hiding in plain sight

Put both stories side by side and the same pattern appears.

People who want information about you rarely come directly to you.

Instead, they go through:

-  A partner
-  Family members
-  Contractors
-  Social media accounts
-  Trusted third parties

The way in is rarely the front door.

Every threat starts with homework

Whether the outcome is:

-  Fraud
-  Harassment
-  Physical targeting
-  Impersonation

It almost always begins with research.

Before anyone makes a move, they ask four simple questions:

- 🔍 Who are they?
- 🔍 Where do they live?
- 🔍 Who are they connected to?
- 🔍 How can I reach them?

A determined individual can often answer those questions in a single afternoon using:

- 🌐 Search engines
- 📄 Data broker sites
- 🏠 Property records
- 📱 Social media platforms
- 📧 Public databases

The Sawers family unintentionally provided much of that information themselves.

The missing floor plans would have provided the rest.

🕸 The dark web isn't usually the real problem

Many people focus on whether their information appears on the dark web.

The reality is different.

The dark web often contains:

- 🔑 Stolen passwords
- 📄 Breached records
- 📧 Email addresses

But those pieces have limited value on their own. Their value comes from connecting them to a real person.

The dangerous work happens in the open:

- Name to phone number
- Phone number to address
- Address to family
- Family to daily routines

That's where targeting becomes possible.



Three practical takeaways

1 Assume the research is possible

Because in most cases, it is.

Ask yourself:

- What information about me is publicly available?

- What could a stranger learn about me in 30 minutes?
- What details could be pieced together from multiple sources?

2 Focus on breaking the links

Don't obsess over deleting every record.

Reduce the connections between:

- Names and addresses
- Phone numbers and family members
- Social media accounts and locations
- Professional profiles and personal lives

3 Look beyond yourself

Your exposure may sit with:

-  A partner
-  A teenager living online
-  A supplier
-  A trusted adviser
-  A contractor

Make yourself difficult to research

You do not need to vanish.

You simply need to become:

-  Time-consuming
-  Expensive
-  Frustrating

The harder you are to research, the less attractive you become as a target.

Because the way in is rarely the front door.

And the people looking for it are usually searching for an easier one.

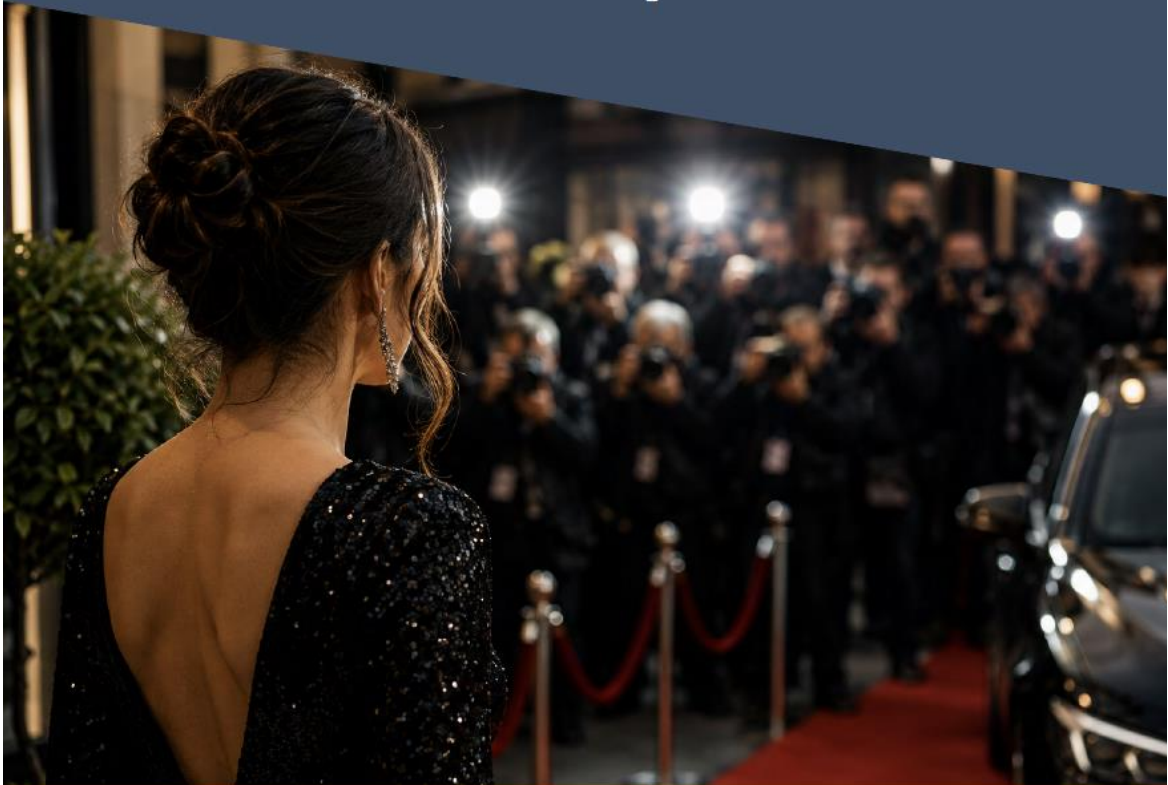
DEFUSE

FEEL SAFER IN PUBLIC LIFE

HIGH-PROFILE THREAT MANAGEMENT

HARD TO FIND. HARD TO TARGET.

A guide for high-profile individuals — in sport, music, entertainment and public life — and the agents, managers and advisers who protect them.



Helping prominent people reduce vulnerability without compromising their public lives.

Philip Grindell MSc CSyP | *Founder & CEO, Defuse Global*

*Author of Personal Threat Management:
The Practitioner's Guide to Keeping Clients Safer*

New guide: Hard to find. Hard to target.

If you are known for a living, your visibility is also your vulnerability. A footballer is recognised in every city. A tour schedule tells a stranger exactly where you will be, and when. An actor's home is photographed and mapped before the boxes are unpacked. None of that is carelessness. It is simply the cost of a public life, and most people in that position have learned to live with a low hum of feeling watched.

My new guide is written for high-profile people in sport, music, entertainment and public life, and for the agents, managers and advisers who look out for them. It sets out, in plain language and drawn from real cases, how people come to be targeted and what actually reduces the risk, without wrapping a life in measures that smother the freedom they worked so hard for.

There is very little here about guards and gates. The work that matters is reading trouble early and giving away less, so that you stay hard to find and harder still to target.

[Click her to request a copy](#)



If anything in this newsletter has caused you to think, you may benefit from our help. Contact us at info@defuseglobal.com

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