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An Evening With...
Mark Johnson and Paula Kershaw
Captivating Conversations with Cybersecurity Trailblazers

In association with

WAVESTONE

Resilience is the watchword of this year. What does it take to be resilient in the face of adversity? What is it in our lives that helps us succeed? What can we learn from those who have? Join us for an evening in conversation with two remarkable individuals who will bring insight and inspiration by sharing their stories and thought-provoking perspectives.

We are remarkably privileged to be joined by Mark Johnson and Paula Kershaw; two leaders who have successfully navigated the professional world of cybersecurity whilst overcoming challenging circumstances. Mark's vivid account of resilience forged from a childhood marked by adversity and social exclusion, is complemented by Paula's reflections on navigating leadership, and helping her teams succeed whilst dealing with professional and personal challenges. Theirs are not your 'typical career stories'. In conversation with SASIG's own Martin Smith MBE and Liz Murray, expect raw honesty, moments of levity and practical wisdom that redefine what it means to thrive against the odds.

Hosted with the generous hospitality of Wavestone, who will provide delicious refreshments and a buffet supper, this promises to be more than an event: It's a celebration of experience, resilience and reflection... not to mention the opportunity make our five new friends too. All SASIG events operate under the Chatham House Rule, and there is no charge to attend.

Tuesday 24 March 2026
6pm to 9pm
London

Chairs

Martin Smith MBE Chairman and Founder, The SASIG
Liz Murray Chief of Staff, The SASIG

6pm **Registration and networking**

6.30pm **People of Colour: Resilience and Continuity**

Mark Johnson Founder & CEO, The Risk Management Group
in conversation with
Martin Smith MBE, Chairman and Founder, The SASIG

Mark shares a life story that is as profound as it is inspiring. Born in 1950s London to a Windrush father from Jamaica and a Dutch-Jewish mother whose family had largely perished during the Second World War, as a child, Mark witnessed the hostility and racist comments that their relationship evoked on the streets of London and Kingston. Due to constant harassment by a gang of children, Mark required a police escort to walk him home from secondary school, but this experience only served to steer him towards a remarkable career in uniform.

Twice married, twice divorced and a father of four, previously Mark has been a military intelligence officer, a drug enforcement officer in the Caribbean and Central America, a telecoms fraud investigator, a UK Home Office consultant, and a police trainer. In conversation with Martin, Mark talks about how important resilience and continuity have been both to his personal experiences and his career. He will describe the first-hand effects of social exclusion in childhood, and later of PTSD, and he will offer some lessons, he humorously notes, on how not to be a successful husband! Prepare for powerful insights on enduring resilience.

7pm **Female Security Leader: Personal Resilience**

Paula Kershaw CCO, Cyber & Resilience, Barclays
in conversation with
Liz Murray Chief of Staff, The SASIG

With over three decades of experience in financial services, Paula's career is a masterclass in navigating complexity, adapting under pressure and building resilience within the high-stakes world of cybersecurity, resilience and operational risk. From her most recent roles as Chief Controls Officer for Security and Resilience at Barclays, and serving as Regional CISO for UK & Europe at HSBC, Paula has focussed on transformation and resilience, building high-performing teams to deliver in an increasingly challenging risk and regulatory environment. But behind the professional achievements lies a much deeper story.

Resilience isn't just a corporate buzzword: It's personal and multifaceted, and the most mature organisations look at team and personal resilience in addition to their risk and control positions. In this candid conversation with Liz, Paula will share her insights into the leadership and personal challenges she has faced, and pivotal moments that have shaped her journey. She shares practical strategies that have helped her and empowered her teams to succeed in our challenging industry. Prepare to be enlightened, moved and inspired.

7.30pm **Networking supper**

8.15pm **Resilience Reimagined: The Common Threads in Uncommon Journeys**

Paula Kershaw CCO, Cyber & Resilience, Barclays

Mark Johnson Founder & CEO, The Risk Management Group

Martin Smith MBE Chairman and Founder, The SASIG

Liz Murray Chief of Staff, The SASIG

We draw to a close with a thought-provoking exploration of the shared themes and striking contrasts that emerge from the two extraordinary journeys we've heard. Paula and Mark may have walked vastly different paths - one shaped within the corridors of global finance and cybersecurity transformation, the other forged through the trials of social exclusion, intelligence work and personal reinvention. We consider how their stories converge in profound ways.

8.45pm **Q&A**

9pm **End of meeting**

About



The Security Awareness Special Interest Group (SASIG)

SASIG is a subscription-free networking forum, membership now represents thousands of organisations of all sizes from across the world and from all sectors, public and private. Its 11,200+ membership is drawn from CIOs, CISOs and their staff with responsibility for cybersecurity within their organisations. Professionals from other disciplines (risk, HR, legal, supply, etc.) and representatives from government, law enforcement and academia are also being increasingly welcomed at events. The Chatham House Rule is strictly enforced and universally respected at all meetings, and vendors and the Press are routinely excluded. Thus, the level of debate is extraordinarily revealing and rewarding.

SASIG has a members' website at www.thesasig.com. Please register here for membership.

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