

Site Security Briefing Note

Manned guarding



INTRODUCTION

Unlike other security products and services which rely on physical or technical measures, manned guarding, also known as security guarding, relies chiefly on the human attributes of assigned personnel. In practice however, the best use of guards is usually made when they mesh with a premises' physical and technical measures. So, for example, a perimeter fence contributes to security only as long as it is successful at excluding intruders, but it becomes more valuable if monitored at a frequency geared to the predicted time required for penetration. This monitoring can be undertaken by electronic intrusion and surveillance installations or guards, but more often by guards monitoring the outputs of any electronic intrusion and surveillance installations.

Guard services may be provided 'in-house' (i.e. as direct employees) or, more usually, by external providers (contracted).

Note: This guide focuses on property protection whilst services such as close protection, door supervision and vehicle clamping, usually viewed as coming within the commercial guarding sector, are not considered nor are the activities of personnel working in monitoring centres such as alarm receiving centres (ARCs) and remote video response centres (RVRCs). Other activities, where very specific requirements must be met, that are outside the scope of this document are attendance services for public events, licensed premises, museums, exhibitions etc.

Types of manned services

Static guarding

In principle, there is currently no technical solution that can assess and react to a security threat quite as comprehensively as a human being in the role of a guard – 'a person who protects, keeps watch or acts as a sentinel'. Static guarding in the context of this guide entails the guarding of premises against theft, damage or destruction of property arising from unauthorised access or occupation. Such services provided in-house or by a security firm can be employed as the principal form of site security or to supplement and support other measures as illustrated in the introduction above.

A static guarding service may be required to be continuously present at a location around-the-clock or only during specified periods. Guarding services required other than on a 24-hour basis might, for example, be assigned solely to non-business hours or times of reduced activity on site. The exact assignment will be determined by reference to the security risk assessment.

There should preferably be at least two guards on site when the premises are unoccupied or sparsely attended. Continuous guarding on this basis overnight and over weekends is likely to require employment/assignment of at least six guard personnel (working reasonable hours) plus cover for absences and holidays, etc – which is partly why contracted guarding is more common than 'in-house' guarding.

Assignment of a single guard at times of high dependency on the manned presence is questionable as being not only unsafe for the guard but of diminished security value.

Good practice requires that one guard remains in a suitable base whenever the other guard is on patrol around the site. Subject to a site's size and layout, the base should ideally be located close to areas where other manning is (at times) present, be an alarm protected building and with good sightlines across the site – or at least the entrance and/or frontage. Locating the guard in a security post isolated from the main building may leave the guard unduly exposed.



The presence of an alert, well-trained guard may be the optimum solution

The guards should be in continuous radio contact with each other whilst patrols are conducted, monitored by an electronic clocking system which tracks the route taken around the site. Location of the points to be 'clocked', the frequency of the clocking tour, whether it follows a pattern, or is made on a random basis, should be determined by the risk assessment and the judgement of a manager familiar with the site. Both base and patrolling guards should have access to fixed or portable (radio-based) hold-up devices. These devices should connect to an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) or off-site control office/base with whom a secure system of passwords and protocols needs to be agreed. As well as, or alternatively, mutual aid arrangements can sometimes usefully be agreed with a guarding service at another suitable (nearby) site whereby the two guarding services check on the well-being of each other at agreed intervals.

If the premises are protected by on-site security guards out of business hours, it is imperative for their security/safety, and that of the site, that they have no means to access (even under duress) any part of the building containing target assets or sensitive material. Just as importantly, their presence must not in any way restrict the coverage of, or hinder the operation of, a premises' monitored intruder alarm/ CCTV system.

Customers of static guard services are recommended to consider using only those firms conforming to *BS 7499 Static site guarding and mobile patrol service – Code of practice* and those registered by one of the regulatory and approval bodies (further information below).

Mobile patrol services

Customers with locations contracted to receive this service are visited a certain number of times by security guards over an agreed period according to a programme or on a semi-random basis.

Agreed assignment instructions detail the scope of the guard(s) inspections and duties during the time on site. This type of service has a certain, but limited, deterrent value and might succeed in confronting unskilled intruders found on site but more experienced and better equipped criminals would normally be able to evade the patrol. In selected cases however such a service could be viewed as an



Visits by a mobile patrol service may be an acceptable compromise

acceptable compromise e.g. the periodic inspection of a temporally unoccupied building. Large operations with multiple sites may well operate such a service in-house but contract services are much more common. Customers of mobile guard services are recommended to consider using only those firms conforming to *BS 7499 Static site guarding and mobile patrol service – Code of practice* and those registered by one of the regulatory and approval bodies (further information below).

Keyholding and response services

Commercial responders are often engaged to perform as first keyholders to a premises, thus relieving the customer of the task of attending after an incident such as the activation of an intruder alarm system. Delegation of this task to a commercial service is popular, due partly to the health and safety issues arising when responding to an activated security system, particularly those activations that are unconfirmed.

Where the keyholding service attends but finds nothing untoward, they will usually re-secure the premises and reset the alarm system. If the premises cannot be re-secured and/or the system cannot be reset in its entirety, arrangements must be put in place for the commercial response company to contact other nominated keyholders or representatives of the system owner, who must then attend and take appropriate remedial action in accordance with any legal, police or insurer requirements. Alternatively, they may undertake to have the premises attended by a guarding service until such time as the premises can be re-secured in full.

In addition, a number of those firms offering keyholding services also offer to respond in place of the police as the 'first response' to a security alarm activation. In the majority of cases the reason customers have resort to such a service is that their police response to the security system has been withdrawn following an unacceptable incidence of false alarms.

Before contracting with a commercial response service, either for keyholding or first response, customers should consult their insurer. Failure to do so may mean that relevant insurance protection is lost. Customers should also check that the response firm complies with *BS 7984: Keyholding and response services. Code of practice.*

Crucially, keyholders should be able to attend the premises within 20 minutes of an alarm activation as failure to do so may result in withdrawal of police response to the system. The target attendance time is the issue that presents the biggest challenge to a commercial response operation and the majority have significant difficulty with such an exacting attendance standard.

No data has been collected on how quickly those offering a first response service generally attend but it is assumed that in the majority of cases they struggle to match the target times for emergency response in police charters or policy statements. Added to which the responder will have no more than the powers of arrest available to any ordinary citizen and the credibility of their service in terms of a deterrent must be questionable.

Instead of keeping customers' keys in their premises or vehicles, commercial response companies increasingly rely on the keys and alarm unsetting device being available in a key box at the protected premises. Potential intruders gaining access to the key box, either by opening it in situ or removing it from the wall (then opening it elsewhere and returning), will have the means both to unlock the entry door and turn off the alarm system. There is no requirement for the security quality of the key box or its installation and, consequently, the security of the entire premises is reduced to that of the key box. As a result, the insurer may not sanction site key storage, particularly if it is in clear violation of the policy condition that all keys and unsetting devices are removed from the

premises when left unattended. It is therefore vital that insurance approval is obtained before key box storage is agreed to.

There is more information on keyholding issues in RISCAuthority Document *S6 Electronic security systems: guidance on keyholder selection and duties.* (RISCAuthority members will also find additional information on the use of key boxes in the 2017 bulletin on that subject.)

Cash and valuables in transit (CViT) services

The role of a CViT service is to securely move cash and valuables from one place to another. The transportation of significant sums of cash is a potentially hazardous process which is best undertaken by a professional CViT carrier. To ensure that the CViT contractor complies fully with the current edition of the applicable national Code of Practice, BS 7872 Manned security services – Cash and valuables in transit services (collection and delivery), customers should select only those companies approved by the NSI.

When surrendering cash and valuables into the custody of the CViT service, this should take place



Use of an approved CViT service is unavoidable for significant values

behind closed and locked doors inside a physically secure area/cash office, free of unprotected glazing to the outside of a building. Only at this point in the transaction should safe collection of cash/valuables be signed for by the customer's representative, noting that an insurer may impose specific requirements for this process.

Note: The transfer of modest values in cash or valuables by members of the staff is considered in the RISCAuthority guidance document *S19 Security guidance for defence against robbery*.

Supplementary services

The purely security driven tasks of the static guard have over the years been expanded, such that guards assigned to a site often perform roles beyond just watching over it and being responsible for the admission of suitable persons. This is often done to make security guarding more commercially attractive and can see guards undertaking non-security roles such as meeting and greeting arrivals, escorting visitors, directing and assisting parking, first aid, health and safety inspections and monitoring contractors etc.

Regulatory and approval bodies

Recognised industry credentials for firms operating in the keyholding and response sector include membership of the Security Industry Authority's (SIA) 'Approved Contractor Scheme' and recognition by either the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) (under their Guarding Gold or Guarding Silver approval schemes), or by the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB).

Legislation exists to cover guarding (the Private Security Industry Act), the implementation of which has been assigned by the government to the Security Industry Authority (SIA). This law requires that contracted guards (not in-house guards), hold a so called front line licence, and that key company personnel also be suitably licensed.

The most reliable means to ensure that a guarding contractor complies fully with SIA licensing rules and the current edition of *BS 7499: Static site guarding and mobile patrol services. Code of practice*, is to only appoint companies that are approved by one or other of the industry specific bodies accredited

by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) namely the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) and the National Security Inspectorate (NSI).

If the customer has as a strong preference for using a provider that is not approved under a guarding scheme operated by either of these inspectorate bodies, they should at least ensure that the guarding firm meets with approval under the SIA's Approved Contractor's Scheme (ACS). For a company to achieve ACS status, it must be independently audited to a list of assessment criteria and pass 'fit and proper' checks relating to both the business owners and the business. An audit of the company's operating standards and methods is conducted by one of five SIA approved assessment bodies and the company itself is also checked out by SIA auditors. These audits cover service delivery, staff welfare, management standards and responsible business practices and include (except for agreed 'minor deviations') conformity to relevant British Standards.

All ACS companies are required to meet a baseline minimum standard. However the audit also allocates points for specified optional criteria. Whilst the points system was created to encourage development and improvement within the business, it is not publicly available. Nevertheless, some customers ask for this information and use it when comparing potential contractors.

However, given that a large number of companies have now achieved ACS accreditation, and the consequent difficulty for buyers of security services to differentiate between them, the ACS scheme now embodies so-called 'Pacesetters membership' which is restricted to the 15% top scoring ACS approved security companies. Pacesetter membership places emphasis on the annual ACS benchmarking score thus allowing customers inviting tenders to feel confident that they have approached companies currently performing to a superior standard.

Another operation with an audit function is 'Silver Fox'. This is an independent, commercially based service that carries out on-site audits of contract and non-contract guarding services, mainly through testing the quality of the contracted or retained



Regulatory bodies ensure that certificated firms observe recognised standards

service by making unannounced visits at which the auditor attempts to gain unauthorised entry through (e.g.) presenting a false ID card, tailgating or masquerading as a career or member of the utility or emergency services. These audits may be one-off or part of a regular programme. The Silver Fox auditors are individuals with experience at senior level of the contract manned guarding industry.

Membership of a trade association also provides a level of reassurance, as both of the security industry associations for this sector, the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) and the International Professional Security Association (IPSA), require their corporate members to demonstrate compliance with industry standards. Membership also means that companies are more likely to be better informed about current industry best practice. The associations' websites provide further details about the requirements and benefits of membership.

Contract versus in-house

At the present time there is nothing to prevent an organisation from setting up its own static or mobile patrol security service, and in-house staff assigned to this are not required to hold a SIA licence. Before coming to a decision on whether to employ contract services or provide services in-house, a range of factors must be carefully considered.

Obviously, prominent amongst these will be cost and management resources. Integrity, efficacy, professionalism and training are also critically important and in some organisations there can be a sensitivity attached to the fact that guards will have access to valuable assets and information.

This can influence the decision if management feel more comfortable that the selection, vetting and diligent monitoring of their own employees will be to a higher standard than can be expected from a commercial service.

However, prospective users frequently conclude early on that, in the age of the minimum wage and the living wage, and allowing for the inevitable costs as an employer, the highly competitive rates quoted by contract services in a price driven industry make directly employed personnel seem a luxury difficult to justify. The customer organisation may aspire to special performance and a high degree of control but the rigorous selection, training, briefing and resourcing of an in-house team is demanding of a significant amount of management time.

For these reasons the vast majority of customers are users of contract guarding services in the knowledge that companies, especially those approved by the NSI or SSAIB and/or via the SIA ACS, are thoroughly assessed and subject to ongoing surveillance to ensure they continue to conform to all relevant industry standards in their sector. Another advantage of using contractors is their ability to provide extra or relief staff at short notice.

Conclusion

Whether use is to be made of guarding services where other types of security can claim to do as good a job is a difficult and subjective decision to take. The frailty of human beings (fear, fatigue, distraction, dishonesty etc) is, unavoidably, a factor. However, the particular security challenges of the location as brought out in the risk assessment may lead to the inescapable conclusion that, irrespective of whatever other measures are proposed, vulnerabilities would remain without a human presence.

Equally, there may be a case for a manned guarding solution (e.g. where the site is large or complex) based purely on cost benefit. At a high risk site, one seen as critical in terms of national infrastructure for example, there is a 'belt and braces' dimension and, in all cases, the deterrent value of guarding should not be discounted since the intruders' enhanced risk not only of detection, but also of apprehension and arrest, is real.

For more information see RISCAuthority guides:

BDM10 Code of practice for the protection of empty buildings - Fire safety and security

S10 Guidance for the protection of premises against attacks using vehicles (ram raids)

S20 Essential principles for the protection of property

S21 Measures for the control of metal theft

S23 Guidance for specifiers of CCTV in security applications

S29 Guide to electronic access control systems

S30 Terrorism – sources of guidance and support

S31 Unauthorised occupation of non-residential premises – guide to managing the risk

Site Security Briefing Note: security lighting

Site Security Briefing Note: site layout

Site Security Briefing Note: external alarm protection

Site Security Briefing Note: fences, walls and gates



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