



Security Industry Authority

The Security Industry Authority



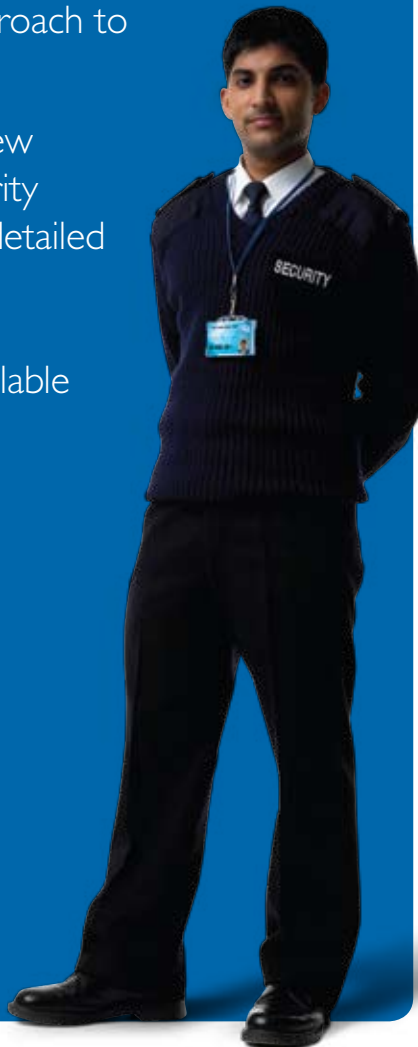
DELIVERING
HOME OFFICE
OBJECTIVES

Introduction

Before 2004 anyone could work in the private security industry. Sometimes this meant that those holding positions of trust and responsibility held criminal records, or had no training to do their job properly. The security industry had a poor reputation and few regarded working in security as a worthwhile career choice.

It was acknowledged by the public, the government and the industry itself that the criminal element in private security needed to be removed and standards of professionalism raised. In 2001, the Private Security Industry Act addressed these issues by allowing for the regulation of licensing the industry through a new regulator, the Security Industry Authority. Since then, some of the benefits of regulation to the private security industry have included increased levels of professionalism and probity, the reduction of staff turnover, and greater involvement in the Government co-ordinated approach to national security.

This leaflet gives a brief overview of the Security Industry Authority and our responsibilities. More detailed information can be found on www.the-sia.org.uk and in our publications which are also available from our website.



About Us



The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry. We are a small independent government body established in 2003, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. As a non-departmental public body with the sponsorship of the Home Office we contribute to the overall aims and objectives of that department.

We have two main duties. One is the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities within the private security industry; the other is to manage the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme which measures private security suppliers against independently assessed criteria.

We work with many different organisations, sharing information, ideas and knowledge which helps us maintain high standards in the work that we do. We have strong relationships with the Home Office, courts in England, Wales and Scotland, local authorities, police forces and the Association of Chief Police Officers in England, Wales and Scotland.

Our active partnerships with awarding bodies and Qualification Regulation Authorities have been very useful in our efforts to combat training malpractice. We also provide intelligence and support to police operations which target organised crime.



Our vision, mission and objectives

Our **vision** is to work with others to create a safer environment for the public and better opportunities for the private security industry.

Our **mission** is to regulate the private security industry effectively; to reduce criminality, raise standards and recognise quality service.

Our **objectives** are to:

- Reduce criminality within the private security industry
- Raise quality standards within the private security industry
- Continually improve and develop our organisation and our performance
- Meet financial targets and demonstrate value for money to the Home Office and fee paying customer
- Build on our credibility with stakeholders
- Review the application of the Private Security Industry Act 2001.

What we do

Licensing

The SIA licenses those working in specific sectors of the private security industry in England, Wales, and Scotland, and we will be regulating Northern Ireland in 2009.

Licensing ensures that those working in private security are the right people for the job and that they are properly trained and qualified. Whether a licence is needed or not depends on the duties and activities undertaken and not the job title. The activities defined by the Private Security Industry Act 2001 are:

- Manned guarding, which includes:
 - Cash and valuables in transit
 - Close protection
 - Door supervision
 - Public space surveillance (CCTV)
 - Security guarding
- Immobilisation, restriction and removal of vehicles – which includes wheel clamping
- Key holding.

The Private Security Industry Act 2001 also allows us to license private investigators, security consultants and precognition agents, but at the moment these sectors are not licensed.

To get an SIA licence, an applicant needs to be over 18, hold a recognised qualification relevant to the security sector, and pass a criminal record and other fit and proper person checks. There is no legal responsibility for the SIA to carry out right to work checks – that is the role of the employer – but we are continually improving our processes to ensure as far as we reasonably can, that SIA licence holders are not illegal workers.

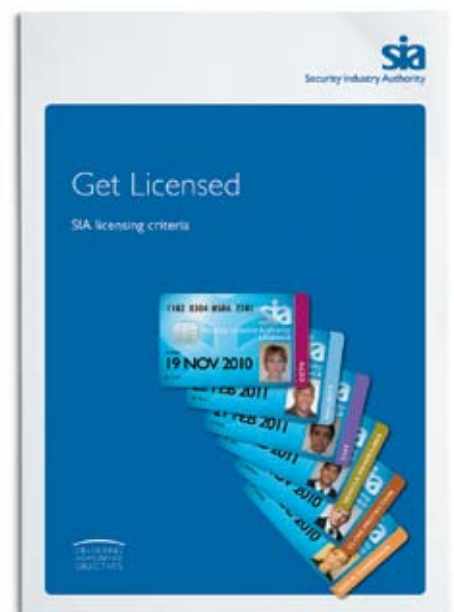
For more detailed information on our licensing criteria, read **Get Licensed** available on our website. And you can keep up to date on licensing by signing up for information on our website www.the-sia.org.uk.

Training and qualifications

It is important that everyone working in the private security industry has the right skills and knowledge to do their job well and safely. In the past training was a hit and miss affair of varying quality and standards – if any training was taken at all. The SIA, in consultation with the industry, awarding bodies, other government departments and training organisations, set up the criteria required for the courses and qualifications.

We do not deliver training courses, provide funding or award qualifications but we do endorse a number of awarding bodies, to approve training providers, oversee standards and award qualifications recognised by the SIA.

A recognised qualification is needed before an application for a licence. This will normally involve knowledge and practical skills training, including role play, followed by exams. Check out the training pages on our website or in **Get Licensed** to find out which training course and qualification is needed to get a licence and whether any previous training and experience would be exempt from part of the training. You can also find out about approved training organisations from **Get Licensed** or call our contact centre for further details.





The Approved Contractor Scheme

We also manage the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS), which security companies can join if they pass our criteria. The objective of the ACS is to raise performance standards across the whole business model and to assist the private security industry in developing new opportunities. The scheme is voluntary and was developed in consultation with representatives from across the industry. It covers only those sectors of the industry that are regulated by the SIA.

Buyers of security can look to ACS to provide a recognised hallmark of quality within the private security industry and security staff who are amongst the best.

Our online registers

All licence holders have their name and licence details published on a public online register of SIA licence holders – and www.the-sia.org.uk/rolh. You can search the register by licence number or by a combination of personal information such as the name of the licence holder and their role. This register also contains details of licences that have been revoked or suspended and is a useful tool to check that security staff are SIA licensed.

Our Register of Approved Contractors lists all of the organisations that have met the requirements for the Approved Contractor Scheme. If you are looking for an ACS organisation or need to check that your supplier is a bona fide ACS member, then use this register.

All our registers are available online at www.the-sia.org.uk

Compliance and enforcement

We expect compliance with the law at all times and try to help organisations and individuals meet their licensing requirements. However, we and our enforcement partners do have the capability to prosecute offenders, and to apply to the courts to confiscate any assets that have been obtained as a result of criminal activity.

If an individual works without the correct SIA licence, or if unlicensed people are being supplied to carry out licensable activities, then the penalties are:

- For those working in a licensable role without an SIA licence; upon summary conviction at a Magistrate's Court, Sheriff Court or District Court, a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5,000.
- For those supplying unlicensed staff; upon summary conviction at a Magistrate's Court, Sheriff Court or District Court, a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5,000. If upon conviction on indictment at Crown Court, High Court of Justiciary or Sheriff and jury trial, an unlimited fine and/or up to five years imprisonment.

We publish our enforcement strategy, activities and code on www.the-sia.org.uk/enforcement

SIA and Crimestoppers

We work in partnership with the charity Crimestoppers. If you know of any illegal activity regarding licensing, such as unlicensed door supervisors or undisclosed convictions, call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**. All calls are treated with absolute anonymity and cannot be traced.

You can also report illegal activity using our online forms on the SIA website www.the-sia.org.uk



If you need a licence

You can apply for a licence through the website www.the-sia.org.uk or by completing an application form available from our call centre (0844 892 1025) or security and training suppliers.



Further Information

Write: Security Industry Authority
PO Box 1293
Liverpool
L69 1AX

Phone: 0844 892 1025 (contact centre)
Email: info@the-sia.org.uk
Website: www.the-sia.org.uk

The publication **Get Licensed** gives details on licensing and who needs a licence. It is available on our website or phone the SIA contact centre for a copy.

Printed on paper containing minimum 75% recycled fibre content