

Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard
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Security

Security is one of the biggest service areas covered by facility managers. The protection of an organisations physical, information and human assets is one of the key contributions that the FM function traditionally provides. This role has become increasingly complex in pace with the changing nature of work and the development of new technologies.

Physical security solutions may be as simple as the management of keys and locks as part of a basic access control system. The provision of manned guarding either fixed or mobile provides an additional layer of security. This is now frequently combined with an array of technical solutions ranging from movement controlled lighting and intruder alarms to more sophisticated computerised card access systems, CCTV or even biometric personal access mechanisms.

The owners and occupiers of buildings and property and employers have common law and statutory duties to protect staff and others who enter the premises or who come into contact with the organisation. There may also be contractual duties to protect goods and premises. An organisations security policy and management systems should address these requirements.

The private security industry is regulated under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. This regulation is managed for the Home Secretary by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) who issue licenses to individuals working in specific security roles. They also manage the Approved Contractor Scheme, which measures private security companies against a set of independently assessed criteria. The licensing requirements carry the force of law and are intended to prevent unsuitable or poorly trained people from working within the private security industry.

The roles that need an SIA licence include the contracted provision of Manned guarding, Cash in transit, Close protection, Door supervision, CCTV surveillance, Vehicle immobilisation and Key holding. It is the activity undertaken that defines the need for a licence, not the job title. Those security operatives who are SIA licensed are easy to identify because, when on duty, they are required to wear their licence. There is a 24-hour online register of licence holders on the SIA website where employees and the public can instantly check the validity of an SIA licence.

At present most security activities carried out by in-house staff do not require licensing. This has been challenged by the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) which is the trade association for the professional security industry in the UK. The SIA has committed to a review of this decision in 2012.

For more information on the SIA and to view the Register of License Holders and of Approved Contractors visit www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk

For more information on the BSIA and to browse their Members register visit www.bsia.co.uk