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Standard Guide for Qualification, Selection, Training, Utilization, and Supervision of Security Screening Personnel¹

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INTRODUCTION

Security screening in some form or fashion has probably been around for most of the history of civilization, but routine security screening of all persons and all property going through a check-point first became visible to the general public on the national and international scene in the early 1970's to prevent the carriage of weapons, explosives, and other dangerous objects aboard scheduled airline aircraft.

The somewhat radical technique that just a short time ago was unique to air transportation, now is a common security practice accepted by the public for access to courtrooms, stockholders meetings, sporting events, prisons, seaports, rock concerts, and other locations or events involving significant numbers of persons and a concern for security.

The unprecedented and continuing spread of the practice presents a need for the establishment of minimum industry standards to guide the providers of security screening services, to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism of security screeners, and to safeguard the privacy and rights of the public.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide covers the qualification, selection, training, utilization, and supervision of personnel assigned duties at security check-points equipped with metal detection, X-ray inspection, and explosives detection equipment or systems operated to prevent the introduction of weapons, explosives, or other prohibited articles into secure or restricted areas, or to prevent the egress of valuable or sensitive materials from controlled facilities.

1.2 This guide provides criteria and methods relating to the qualification, selection, training, utilization, and supervision of personnel employed to perform screening functions at such security check-points.

1.3 This guide also addresses a broad range of considerations relating to specific screening functions, screener and supervisory utilization, security equipment, check-point environment, human factors, law enforcement support, record keeping, and testing and evaluation related to the operation of such security check-points.

2. Terminology

2.1 Definitions:

2.1.1 *consent search*—the hand search or other physical inspection of a person conducted with the consent of the person

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involved in lieu of detector screening, or to ensure that a detector alarm was not caused by the presence of a weapon, explosive, contraband, or other select article.

2.1.2 *explosives detection equipment*—equipment, systems, measures, procedures, or combination thereof, applied in the screening process to detect the presence of explosives or incendiaries.

2.1.3 *law enforcement support*—the police presence or response arrangements to support security check-point operations.

2.1.4 *metal detector*—walk-through or hand-held electronic equipment used to screen people to detect the presence of metallic prohibited articles.

2.1.5 *physical inspection*—the hand search or other physical examination of property to detect the presence of weapons, explosives, and other prohibited articles.

2.1.6 *screener*—a qualified and trained person assigned to duties related to application of the procedures and operation of the equipment used in the process of screening people and property.

2.1.7 *screening*—procedures applied by qualified personnel to inspect people and property to detect weapons, explosives, contraband, and other select items that may involve the use of equipment such as metal detectors, X-ray inspection systems, and related devices.

2.1.8 *security*—a systematic combination of measures, personnel, and equipment dedicated to protect an activity or area against criminal acts.

2.1.9 *security check-point*—a stationary location established for the positioning of personnel, equipment, and related procedures for the screening of persons and property to prevent the passage of weapons, explosives, contraband, and other select items beyond the check-point.

2.1.10 *shift*—the daily hours of duty that a screener may be assigned to screener duties, which may include the times that a screener may be assigned to specific screening functions.

2.1.11 *X-ray inspection system*—equipment for the radiological inspection of property to assist in detecting the presence of weapons, explosives, and other prohibited articles.

3. Significance and Use

3.1 This guide is intended for use by providers of security screening services involved with the establishment and operation of security check-points at locations such as transportation terminals, nuclear facilities, criminal justice premises, and at private sector events and facilities utilizing security screening equipment where the security risk warrants and where significant numbers of people are involved. It may not be appropriate for certain high security facilities such as certain military installations, intelligence agencies, and processors of very sensitive materials.

3.2 This guide may also be used by persons or organizations seeking or contracting for security screening services for the specification of services desired, or for the evaluation of offers received.

4. Qualification

4.1 To be eligible for selection and employment as a security screener, an applicant must possess the following qualifications:

4.1.1 *Age*—Applicant must be 18 years of age or older.

4.1.2 *Education*—Applicant must be a high school graduate or have been granted a general equivalency diploma, or possess equivalent experience.

4.1.3 *Experience*—Applicant must have significant public contact experience, such as retail sales, law enforcement, military or security experience, or equivalent experience.

4.1.4 *Citizenship*—Applicant must be a citizen of the country where screening operations are to be conducted, or possess appropriate alien employment authorization.

4.1.5 *Mental Demands*—Applicant must demonstrate self confidence and the ability to deal with stressful situations. Applicant should not exhibit nervousness, but appear calm and deliberate. Applicant should present an assured, resourceful, and professional demeanor.

4.1.6 *Physical Demands*—Applicant must be able to stand, stoop, bend at the waist, turn at the waist, and lift up to 35 lb from floor level to 30 in. above floor level. Assignments may require standing on station for entire shifts.

4.1.7 *Search Ability*—Applicant must be able to open and secure latches and fasteners, and effectively hand search all areas of baggage, briefcases, purses, and other hand-carried property.

4.1.8 *Vision*—Applicant's vision must be correctable to 20/20 in either eye and adequate to perceive shades of color (that is those that appear on certain X-ray screens, metal detector alarms, and communications, signals or buttons) and

be able to read credentials, travel documents, and labels on items normally encountered in the screening process. If glasses or other corrective devices are required to achieve the 20/20 correctable vision, such devices must be worn or used while assigned screening duties.

4.1.9 *Hearing*—Applicant must possess the ability to hear and respond to the spoken voice and to audible alarms generated by screening equipment in an active check-point environment.

4.1.10 *Language Ability*—Applicant must be fluent in both the written and spoken major languages encountered at the security check-point. They must be able to carry-out the following functions:

4.1.10.1 Read and understand written instructions regarding the proper performance of screening functions,

4.1.10.2 Speak the language well enough to understand and answer questions and give clearly understandable directions,

4.1.10.3 Read and comprehend identification (ID) badges, law enforcement credentials, travel and entry documents, and labels on packages, containers and the like, and

4.1.10.4 Write incident reports and statements and make entries in security logs.

4.1.11 *Appearance and Deportment*—Applicant must be able to project a professional security appearance, and also exhibit proper behavior and demeanor.

5. Selection

5.1 An applicant believed to possess the preemployment qualifications shall be further screened in accordance with the following criteria:

5.1.1 Testing as appropriate to verify basic mental, physical, vision, hearing, and language qualifications,

5.1.2 Verification of necessary communications and interpersonal skills,

5.1.3 Meet appearance and deportment standards, and

5.1.4 Completion of employment application or personal history statement.

5.2 *Aptitude Testing*—Prior to final selection, employers may desire that the applicant satisfactorily complete an aptitude test specially designed for the screener occupation that meets established psychological testing standards, and is documented and verified as not discriminatory with respect to race, creed, sex, age, national origin, or physical handicap.

5.2.1 Aptitude tests may be designed to select an applicant suitable for general screener employment, for specific screening functions, or for the selection of supervisory candidates. In the design of tests consideration should be afforded state-of-the-art techniques involving electronic scoring via computer and the application of interactive video concepts.

6. Background Investigation

6.1 To the extent permitted or required by law, an applicant shall be subject to a background investigation covering references submitted and employment records over a minimum of the previous five years, including a criminal record check on the basis of fingerprints taken in the application process when needed to resolve questions or discrepancies developed with respect to the applicant's background.