

BRITISH STANDARD

Keyholding and response services – Code of practice

ICS 13.310



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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard was published by BSI and came into effect on 30 September 2008. It was prepared by Technical Committee GW/3, *Manned security services*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes BS 7984:2001, which is withdrawn.

Information about this document

Attention is drawn to the Private Security Industry Act 2001 [1], which contains provisions for regulating the private security industry, including security guarding and keyholding. A person falling within the definition of providing security industry services under the Private Security Industry Act [1] is required to be licensed in accordance with this Act. This Act can be found online at <http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010012.htm>.

Use of this document

As a code of practice, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It should not be quoted as if it were a specification and particular care should be taken to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

Any user claiming compliance with this British Standard is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

Presentational conventions

The provisions in this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

The word “should” is used to express recommendations of this standard. The word “may” is used in the text to express permissibility, e.g. as an alternative to the primary recommendation of the clause. The word “can” is used to express possibility, e.g. a consequence of an action or an event.

Notes and commentaries are provided throughout the text of this standard. Notes give references and additional information that are important but do not form part of the recommendations. Commentaries give background information.

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

1 Scope

This British Standard gives recommendations for the management, staffing and operation of an organization providing keyholding and response services on a contracted basis.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS 5839-1, *Fire detection and alarm systems for buildings – Code of practice for system design, installation and servicing*

BS 5979, *Remote centres receiving signals from fire and security systems – Code of practice*

BS 7858, *Code of practice for security screening of personnel employed in a security environment*

BS EN 50131 (all parts), *Alarm systems*

BS EN 50131-1, *Alarm systems – Intrusion and hold-up systems – Part 1: System requirements*

BS ISO 10002, *Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations*

PD 6662, *Scheme for the application of European Standards for intruder and hold-up alarm systems*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 assignment instructions

operational document detailing specific contractual duties

3.2 check call

routine communication to verify the location and status of a keyholding response officer on an assignment

3.3 controller

person designated to manage, control and report on keyholding and response services

3.4 customer

individual or body retaining the services of the organization

3.5 event

incident requiring entry or attendance at a customer's location as determined by contractual requirements

3.6 keyholding

holding, by an organization, of keys to a customer's premises or equipment and, where contracted to do so, attending a customer's premises in response to an event

NOTE Keyholding may involve dual key systems. One key is held by the customer and another (different) key to the same premises or equipment is held by the organization. Both keys are required to gain access to the premises or to operate the equipment.

3.7 keyholding response officer

trained person who attends a location (as determined by contractual requirements) in response to an event and when required provides guarding services

NOTE Attention is drawn to the PSIA 2001 [1] and the need for private contractors to hold the appropriate licence to undertake designated activities.

3.8 key(s)

instrument or data allowing authorized access to a customer's premises

3.9 organization

sole or main provider of keyholding and response services to a particular customer

3.10 principal

owner, partner, board director or other top executive in the private sector, or an executive officer in the public sector or a not-for-profit organization

3.11 response centre

secure location from which a controller operates

3.12 secure facility

facility in which keys and/or assignment instructions are stored and from which they are provided in responding to an event

NOTE See 6.8 for further information.

3.13 supplier

individual or company (and the persons employed, including all levels of subcontractor, by that individual or company) that supplies the organization with equipment, material and/or labour which is used in providing the service to the customer

4 The organization and documentation

4.1 Structure

The organization should possess a clearly defined management structure showing control and accountability at each level of operation.

Details of the ownership of the organization should be established and the principals' curricula vitae made available. Any unspent criminal convictions or undischarged bankruptcy of a principal or director should be disclosed on request.

The organization should operate a documented complaints management system in accordance with BS ISO 10002.

NOTE Attention is drawn to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 [2], whose provisions govern such disclosure.

4.2 Finances

The organization should have sufficient working capital for its requirements. The fixed capital of the organization should be sufficient for current and planned needs.

The organization should be able to present two years' audited trading accounts, except if starting as a subsidiary of an established organization, and/or if staff experience and adequate financial backing are evident.

The organization should prepare annual accounts.

The accounts should be certified by an accountant or solicitor with complete details of expenditure and income. Accounts should be available for examination on request.

NOTE Where the organization is solely providing a service in-house (and not contracting out such services), some of the recommendations given in this subclause might not apply.

4.3 Insurance

The organization should possess insurance cover commensurate with the business undertaken and the number of persons employed, e.g. public liability, contractual, efficacy, employer's liability and vehicle insurance.

NOTE Where the organization is solely providing a service in-house (and not contracting out such services), then efficacy insurance and some other types of insurance mentioned in this subclause might not be needed.

Fidelity guarantee should be available up to limits required by the customer, e.g. loss of keys, wrongful arrest and product liability.

5 Resources

5.1 Premises

The organization should have an administrative office(s) and/or operational centre(s) where records, certificates, correspondence, files and other documents necessary for conducting business transactions should be kept in a secure manner. The location of records and documentation, both local and centralized, should be clearly defined by the organization.

5.2 Staff

5.2.1 General

The organization should ensure that it has employed sufficient keyholding response officers to fulfil its contractual obligations and sufficient supervisory staff to manage those contracts.

5.2.2 Selection and screening

All persons undertaking, or having access to details of an assignment, keyholding and response duties should be selected and screened in accordance with BS 7858.

If employees are acquired through a takeover, the organization should satisfy itself that the recommendations of this subclause have been fully met.

They should also be able to demonstrate good reading, writing and verbal communication abilities.

Only persons of competence and integrity should be employed and a personal interview should be conducted to assess suitability.

Full pre-employment enquiries should be carried out to confirm an applicant's identity and to ensure that they are suitably qualified.

Where night-time working is involved, prospective employees should be asked to confirm that there is nothing in their circumstances which would be detrimental to their working night shifts. Night-time workers should be offered the opportunity of a medical assessment.

NOTE Attention is drawn to the Working Time Regulations 1998, part 2 sec 7 [3].

Procedures should be in operation to monitor the health and physical ability of employees throughout their employment to ensure that they remain fit for the work for which they are being employed. A person whose duties are changed should undergo further physical tests as appropriate.

Employees whose duties involve driving should be required to demonstrate that they are licensed to handle all relevant vehicles. Drivers' licences should be inspected every six months and the most up-to-date copy of the licence kept on file.

5.2.3 Health

Prospective employees should be required to submit details of their medical history prior to employment and should be able to demonstrate:

- a) good general health;
- b) good eyesight (including colour vision), hearing and sense of smell.

In order to ensure that the physical condition of keyholding response officers remains compatible with the duties to which they have been assigned, documented procedures should be in place for performing routine health checks and reports. When the physical demands of a person's duties change their physical condition and suitability should be reassessed as appropriate.

NOTE Where health and safety risk or medical concerns of personnel are raised, it is reasonable for a company to ask that person to undergo a medical examination to ensure fitness for duty.

5.2.4 Terms and conditions of employment

Employees should receive a written statement of the terms and conditions of their employment, which should include details of the following:

- a) job title;
- b) effective start date;
- c) probationary period, if required;
- d) provisional period subject to vetting, if applicable;
- e) pay and allowances;
- f) hours and days of work;
- g) leave entitlement;
- h) conditions of payment during absence through illness;
- i) pension entitlement;
- j) industrial injury procedures;
- k) address of the organization;
- l) equipment and uniform supplied;
- m) disciplinary and appeals procedures;
- n) terms of notice of termination of employment.

Persons should not be required to work hours that could be detrimental to their health, safety or efficiency.

NOTE Attention is drawn to statutory requirements relating to employment and in particular to the Working Time Regulations [3].

5.2.5 Disciplinary code

Employees should be instructed that the following (including the aiding and abetting of others) constitute a breach of the terms and conditions of employment:

- a) neglecting to complete a required task at work promptly and diligently, without sufficient cause;
- b) leaving a place of work without permission, or without sufficient cause;
- c) making or signing any false statements, of any description;
- d) destroying, altering or erasing documents, records or electronic data without permission or through negligence;
- e) divulging matters confidential to the organization or customer, either past or present, without permission;
- f) soliciting or receipt of gratuities or other consideration from any person;
- g) failure to account for keys, money or property received in connection with business;
- h) incivility to persons encountered in the course of duties, or misuse of authority in connection with business;
- i) conduct in a manner likely to bring discredit to the organization, customer or a fellow employee;