FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES TRAINING COUNCIL
INCORPORATED

Public Order, Safety and Regulatory Services 2020

Industry Developments and Workforce Issues[1]

Investigation and Security Services

Demand. The manpower security industry is predominately split into three distinct sections: a number of very large multi-national companies each employing in excess of 5,000 permanent part-time and full-time officers, not involved in event security; other multi-national businesses which operate in selected markets, directly employing between 500 and 1,500 permanent part-time and full-time staff, with top-ups of casual staff as needs arise; and state-based businesses characterised by a transient workforce with security organisations utilising staff across their operations and contracts, including those which deploy several hundred casual crowd controllers for event-based security. Despite a significant proportion being employed on a casual basis (an estimated 47% nationally),[2] rostering arrangements allow for sharing of trained staff across industry, enabling security officers to supplement their incomes by working multiple jobs. Predominantly male, security officers and crowd controllers play an important part in preventing and responding to incidences, while supporting a network of security alarm monitoring centres. The most recent national labour market outlook estimates a 9.9% employment growth for security officers and guards over the five years to 2023.[3] (It should be noted that these projections have not taken into account any impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and are therefore no longer reflective of current labour market conditions) There are currently in excess of 31,000 approved individual security licenses with over 22,000 of them Security Officer or Crowd Controller licensees.[4] With many working in the industry holding multiple licenses, it is estimated there are 15,000 people licensed to work for the 1,679 security firm/master license holders.[5]

Licensing Requirements. Occupations in the security industry are licensed with WA Police Licensing Services operating at the industry regulator under the Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996. While all licenses require applicants to provide proof of identity, character references and pass probity checks, each have unique training requirements which draw from qualifications within the CPP Property Services Training Package. Entry level occupational licenses for the industry, Security Officers and Crowd Controllers are required to hold a Certificate II in Security Operations. This qualification is also a prerequisite for the additional batons and guarding with a dog endorsements as well as the Armed Security Officer (Cash in Transit) license. The more specialised licenses of Armed Security Officer (Cash in Transit), Unarmed Bodyguard and Investigator have the a higher level training requirement of Certificate III in Security Operations, Certificate III in Close Protection Operations and Certificate III in Investigative Services respectively. Armed Security Officer Licenses also hold the unique requirement of six-monthly reassessment of firearm skills. The Certificate IV in Security Risk Analysis is the requirement for a Consultants and Agents license with Agents also having to pass an open book test ensuring sound knowledge of the Act. Some industry operatives have noted concerns around agent licensing, believing the application process, screening and operating governance should be more

---

[1] Parts of the report are consistent with the 2019 submission.
[2] Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Safety in numbers: Australia's private security guard force and counterterrorism*, October 2018.
[3] Australian Government, Department of Jobs and Small Business, Labour Market Information Portal, Employment Projections, *Occupation projections five years to May 2023*.
[4] Data provided by WA Police Licensing Services, 30 March 2020
[5] Australian Security Industry Association Limited, ASIAL Security Industry Licensing Report 2020

stringent to strengthen attainment of licences and practice integrity. Those working in the technical security side of industry as Class 2 installers or consultants are also required to complete training offered in two streams; stream one drawing from units in the Certificate II in Technical Security and stream two drawing from units in the UEE Electrotechnology Training Package.

Training. Seen for its entry-level employment opportunities, the security manpower industry has a large unskilled element[6] and attracts people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Upon Certificate II completion, few seek further study other than to gain additional license or endorsements. Discussions with industry indicate that while companies recognise additional training can provide growth opportunities for selected security officers into roles requiring more leadership skills, the majority of security companies employing security officers have a small portion of staff with a Certificate III or higher. With the exception of Crown Perth who deliver Certificate III traineeships as an enterprise RTO, higher qualifications are acquired through a training provider delivering institutionally, predominantly completed in the employee's own time, with training costs covered by the employer when these are required by clients and can be absorbed into pricing structures. While some employers provide additional in-house, client and site-specific training to complement nationally accredited qualifications applicable to the context of their business, other organisations rely on having access to trained operatives. According to national NCVER figures, 7,898 participants completed the CPP30411 Certificate III in Security Operations qualification in 2017.[7] In Western Australia, from 2014 to 2018 a total of 503 people enrolled in the qualification either as a traineeship or via institutional delivery: 223 of these were enrolled as trainees which equates to 64% of all enrolments in that 5 year period.[8] A report prepared by the WA industry association, Security Agents Institute of WA identifies lack of clearly defined pathways and poor opportunity for career progression as key barriers to attracting high calibre candidates to the industry, suggesting the security guard sector should consider a career progression model for security officers. They argue better pathways to more senior positions would make the guarding manpower sector a more attractive career prospect.[9] Attempts are being made to address this. In the last review of the security operations qualifications a clear pathway was created for security officers wanting to move into supervisory and leadership positions. The Certificate IV in Security Risk Management was split into two qualification, with the Certificate IV in Security Management specifically designed to develop skills for security supervisors to lead teams to coordinate and implement operations and includes the Security Supervision Skills Set.

Traineeships. As with the superseded qualification, the new Certificate III in Security Operations CPP31318 is available as a traineeship in WA however following consultation, the duration was increased from 6 month to 12 months. This brings the traineeship duration in line with that in other states and reflects the considerable changes to the qualification, broader Training Package packaging rules and supervisory requirements. Crown Training Academy operate as an enterprise RTO and are the only RTO participating in traineeship arrangements for this qualification in WA. Crown Perth's infrastructure and size enable capacity to enter into a traineeship contract with their employees. Discussions with other employers within the sector indicate lack of such capacity which is why other organisations and individuals use the institutional study option for further training. The Certificate II and III in Technical Security continue to be available as traineeships following the release of the updated qualification in late 2019 following industry and union support.

Technology and Automation. Adoption of technology such as CCTV, access control systems and online security platforms continue to shape the security industry and increasingly support the role of security officers. As this increases, gradually roles will move towards an integration of traditional manpower skills with technological and digital capability. The impact of technology will require greater technical literacy from entry level workers, while training providers will need to work with industry to ensure they are able to provide suitable, equipment specific training. Use of computerised central alarms and the widespread rollout of security cameras are reducing heavy reliance on manpower numbers.[10]

---

[6] Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Safety in numbers: Australia's private security guard force and counterterrorism*, October 2018.
[7] Artibus Innovation, *Property Services IRC Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work*, 12 March 2019.
[8] Department of Training and Workforce Development, COGNOS, *All VET (WA) – Course Enrolments – CPP30411 Certificate III in Security Operations*, received from DTWD on 21 May 2019.
[9] Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Safety in numbers: Australia's private security guard force and counterterrorism*, October 2018.
[10] Ibid.

Discussions with industry already point to staff re-allocation into new work opportunities as some manpower roles reduce due to such technology. In their 2019 Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work, Artibus Innovation identified growth in consumer demand for the adoption of new technologies as a key driver for change. Security businesses are no longer only providing security solutions for the home, but are also providing home energy management solutions and are developing and adopting security solutions from smart technologies which gives consumers control and oversight of their home security at the touch of a button.[11] The growing use of technologies such as CCTV and online security platforms and their application in crime prevention have led to a review of technical security qualifications to ensure graduates have the skills and knowledge to operate, install and maintain these technologies. These vocational qualifications have also incorporated training for digital skills and knowledge for emerging technologies within the security industry.[12] Electronics, ID scanning, 3D imaging, biometrics, visual authentication, cloud-based dispatch systems and implementation of smart devices and lone worker technology to maintain safety continue to enhance the sector and improve its operating capabilities. While still in infancy, drones, sensors, artificial intelligence, facial recognition software, behaviour analysing technology and robots will affect crowd management, surveillance and monitoring into the future.[13] Static guard roles are at risk of displacement due to increasing automation processes, particularly as these become more affordable and are combined with access controls, such as swipe cards. Although already in limited commercial use, high costs prohibit broad industry application of biometric technology. Long term, this technology will transform static or repetitive job roles which rely on tasks that can be automated.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy. Due to the high number of migrants and underqualified workers employed in this sector, LLN and customer service deficiencies are an area of concern for industry and stakeholders. The security industry and WA Police Licensing Services continue to express concerns about the lack of basic English skills held by those wishing to enter the industry upon completion of a Certificate II in Security Operations. The introduction of the mandatory pre-licensing competency test for new entrants is preventing people entering the workforce with limited English proficiency. Developed and implemented by FAPSTC, the pre-licensing test is administered by the Security Agents Institute of WA Security Testing Centre and in excess of 7,400 participants have completed the test since its inception in February 2017.[14] While the regulated test has alleviated some of these concerns, it continues to be monitored and analysed to ensure its effectiveness and rigour.

Licensing Review. The Security and Related Activity (Control) Regulations 1997 have governed the security industry for over 20 years. Some industry stakeholders would like to see a review of the regulatory requirements for licensing in the security industry, believing the current Regulations do not fully reflect the industry as it is today or where it is likely to be in the future.

Identifying Human Behaviours and Movement. With growing concerns in the community of terrorism, it will become increasingly important for those in the industry to up-skill to be able to identify suspicious or criminal behaviour while still treating customers with respect and without discrimination. Although currently lacking the appropriate and consistent training in the area of terrorism preparedness and response,[15] deployed security officers are well placed to assist in the recognition and deterrence of threatening situations. In line with this, review of the security operations qualifications have incorporated elements related to counterterrorism, including competencies around recognition of anomalies and suspect behaviour, identifying security risk situations, appropriate reporting and procedures.

Industry Workforce Priorities

Quality of Training. Industry continues to express concern about the depth, breadth and duration of

---

[11] Artibus Innovation, *Property Services IRC Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work, CPP Property Service, 2017*.
[12] Artibus Innovation, *Property Services IRC Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work*, 12 March 2019.
[13] Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Safety in numbers: Australia's private security guard force and counterterrorism*, October 2018.
[14] Financial, Administrative & Professional Services Training Council Incorporated. Figures reported as at April 2020.
[15] Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Safety in numbers: Australia's private security guard force and counterterrorism*, October 2018.

training provided by some organisations delivering training in WA. In response to this, WA Police Licensing Services have mandated the minimum number of face to face training hours required for training delivered for licensing purposes, which, after the release of the updated security qualifications in 2019 are currently set at 120 hours for all licenses. There is particular concern around training providers delivering the Certificate II in Security Operations to those wanting to obtain a Security Officer or Crowd Controller license and so a mandatory pre-licensing competency test was introduced. The test was well received by industry who, along with WA Police Licensing have indicated there has been a marked improvement in the quality of new entrants.

Skills Development. The security industry in Western Australia provides services across three key areas: personnel, electronic and physical security.[16] Security officers have evolved into brand ambassadors for the companies which employ them, providing various forms of base-line security. Progressively, innovative technologies are moving security personnel from physical guarding to remote and virtual guarding[17] as they observe and report activity, protect client assets and monitor sites and events both physically and remotely. The development of soft skills are critical to the manpower security industry. Security officers rely heavily on their interpersonal, communication, emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills in order to assess and respond to situations in a professional manner. Excellence in customer service together with the ability to interact with people and build rapport are fundamental to the role and will become even more important in the coming years. These skills, although essential in many security roles, are often flagged as lacking by employers. While the mandatory pre-licensing competency test screens potential new entrants, English proficiency continues to be a challenge as a significant portion of existing staff come from non-English speaking backgrounds (anecdotally between 40 to 45%). The need for computer literacy is also on the rise as use of smart technologies are integrated into day-to-day operations.

Professionalism and Career Progression. While the completion of a Certificate II may be sufficient for many of the manpower roles being performed, experienced and well regarded security workers who complete additional training have greater work options (including roles that require leadership skills) and the ability to increase their earning potential, driven by higher paying clients requiring further qualifications from contracted staff. Some larger organisations invest in the development and training of their security staff as a means of recognition and retention of talent. Their aim is to lift the professionalism of the workforce and produce quality security officers with broad capabilities integrated across their varied business security needs. Overall, however, relatively few security officers hold higher level qualifications with training in the industry largely accessed for licensing purposes rather than skill development. The industry is traditionally seen as a stop gap and attracts a very transient workforce. To improve the community's perception of the industry it will become increasing important to improve the professionalism and earning opportunities in the industry and ensure those entering can see a long-term career path. This will help to attract people into the industry that want to stay and develop skills while embracing new training that is available.

Counterterrorism. The risk of terrorism is impacting the security industry. State security discussions and counterterrorism planning around emergency response and consequence management are incorporating private security manpower into their strategy, recognising their potential to help prevent attacks and ability to respond to security incidents. The move to integrate additional manpower in case of threat escalation and emergency response[18] will require companies to develop existing staff with counterterrorism awareness, terrorism preparedness and response training. While new licenced entrants into the industry will cover units related to counterterrorism, recognition of anomalies and reporting of suspicious behaviours, a gap in knowledge will become increasingly apparent between the existing workforce and new entrants having completed the updated training. A security officer's ability to respond to critical incidents and hostile threats such as terrorism will be reliant on continued and appropriate skill development and procedural competence, underpinned by consistent vetting, training and licensing.[19] Similarly, developing strategic plans collaboratively with security, Police, hospitality and event management sectors, shopping centre and venue management is becoming increasingly

---

[16] The Security Agents Institute of Western Australia, *Security Industry & WA Police Service Emergency Response & Consequence Management*.
[17] MA Services Group, *Rapid Rise of the Security Industry in Australia and Where It's Going in the Future*.
[18] The Security Agents Institute of Western Australia, *Security Industry & WA Police Service Emergency Response & Consequence Management*.
[19] Ibid.

important to ensure all staff are suitably trained and capable of preparing for and responding to lock down or evacuation situations.

Upskilling in New Technology. With the increased use of technology in the industry, ensuring employees are adequately trained and skilled in using new technology is becoming a key priority. Industry will need to work with training providers to deliver specific training outside of the CPP Property Services Training Package to ensure staff maintain current skills and are suitably positioned to take on board emerging innovations.

Industry Response to COVID-19 Security services are considered "essential" and as such businesses offering patrol or guarding services continue to operate during the increasing restrictions put in place by the Australian Government. With businesses closing their doors and people working from home, patrols are essential to ensuring properties are kept safe and offering owners peace of mind during these uncertain times. However, the restrictions have had a devastating effect on businesses offering crowd controller services. With the cancellation of events such as concerts and sporting games, and the forced closure of nightclubs, casinos etc., companies have been forced to stand down large portions of their workforce. The national industry association, Australian Security Industry Association (ASIAL) have advised they have made contact with all levels of government to explore how the available capacity and capability in the industry can be harnessed to support law enforcement in responding to the unfolding pandemic.[20]

Regulator Response to COVID-19 The WA Police Licensing counter remained open to applicants and license holders only during Government restrictions in response to COVID-19, and license renewals were able to be completed and paid for via post to limit face to face interaction.[21] As a largely transient industry, new entrants are critical to ensuring workforce demand is met and so, to avoid having a gap in training delivery with an exclusively face to face model, WA Police Licensing is considering applications by approved RTOs to offer flexible and online learning. Each application is assessed to ensure the quality of training doesn't suffer however, to date, these requirements are yet to be released publicly.[22]

---

[20] Australian Security Industry Association Limited, A message to members, 20 March 2020
[21] Western Australia Police Force, Licensing Update – 23 March 20202 COVID-19
[22] Discussions with WA Police Licensing on 1 April 2020