

# SPECIAL REPORT

## Safety in numbers

Australia's private security guard force and counterterrorism



SECURITY

Anthony Bergin, Donald Williams and Christopher Dixon

A S P I

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# CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
INTRODUCTION	6
COUNTERTERRORISM PLANNING	8
SECURITY OFFICERS	10
COUNTERTERRORISM CAPABILITIES	20
THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY	23
PUBLIC-PRIVATE COOPERATION	27
THE WAY AHEAD	30
CONCLUDING REMARKS	33
APPENDIX 1	36
APPENDIX 2	39
NOTES	40
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	42

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The private security manpower sector plays a significant role in both preventing and responding to critical incidents, including terrorist attacks.

Private security staff provide the ‘eyes, ears and hands’ before any attack and an ability to be first responders after any security-related incident.

By observing non-routine behaviour and unusual objects, they provide a deterrent through their presence, maintaining checkpoints, conducting bag screening and so on.

They’re already on the spot and generally have an intimate knowledge of the normal comings and goings at each site. They’re uniformed and easily recognisable.

They’re trained, albeit to varying levels, and can provide a cordon or direct people away from dangers. They understand command and control and communications.

They’re used at large public gatherings such as major sporting events, community festivals, celebrations and special events, such as the Commonwealth Games. Private security also provides an important and significant presence at public transport hubs such as airports, railway stations and shipping ports as a line of defence and deterrence.

In manpower numbers, the private guarding industry is much more significant than the police or military. The security industry has more than double the personnel of Australia’s combined police agencies and permanent ADF.

National and jurisdictional forums for addressing counterterrorism (CT) include venue owners and operators, but the providers of guarding services aren’t always at the table.

Given the many thousands of men and women working around the clock every day in every type of private, business and community facility, it’s critical to recognise their efforts in helping to prevent attacks and responding to security incidents.

This report identifies the role of the private security sector in countering hostile threats—including terrorism—and the functions that the sector does or could provide in critical incidents and national CT planning.

The private security sector is a continuum, ranging from security guards to chief security executives of major corporations. This report’s focus is, however, specifically on the private security guarding sector.

While the guarding services workforce is expected and may even be contracted to carry out actions that relate to CT, the current lack of appropriate and consistent training, the lack of consistent ‘fit and proper person’ requirements, the poor pay, general low esteem and inconsistencies between jurisdictions limit its ability and full potential in this role.

Governments have failed to provide consistent definitions, ‘fit and proper person’ tests, training requirements and monitoring of training for the guarding sector, especially in the area of terrorism preparedness and response.

Based on wide stakeholder consultation, it's clear that clients (including government) of guarding providers tend to seek the lowest prices, often below award rates, without consideration of the quality of service provided.

There are, however, pockets of excellence where private security is fully integrated, trusted and delivering effective security outcomes, but multijurisdictional inconsistencies and poorly delivered training remain key problems for the security guarding workforce.

A nationally consistent vetting, training and licensing system would greatly enhance the ability of licensed security officers to identify, prevent and respond to critical incidents and hostile threats, such as terrorism.

We suggest that the way ahead is to establish a federal Security Industry Authority (SIA) responsible to the Minister for Home Affairs.

The functions of the SIA would include:

- the integration of the private security manpower sector into Australia's counterterrorism strategy
- 'fit and proper person' definition and assessment
- training development and monitoring of delivery standards
- external confirmation of testing and competencies
- the development and promulgation of additional CT awareness and training information.

Through a centrally coordinated SIA, Australia's licensed guarding services sector will be able to more fully contribute to Australia's capabilities to prevent and respond to terrorism.

## Recommendations

1. State and territory regulators should better monitor and enforce training standards within the licensed guarding sector.
2. Training courses should include material on recognising suspicious behaviour associated with pre-incident terrorism activities and how and where to report suspicious activities.
3. The security guarding sector should consider a career progression model for security officers.
4. Consideration should be given to formalising additional powers for suitably trained security officers to enhance their ability to contribute to CT capabilities.
5. The private security guarding sector should be engaged in relevant national and state forums that consider CT.
6. Law enforcement agencies should be encouraged to liaise with the private security sector and have representatives from the sector address training courses to explain their functions and powers.
7. A federal Security Industry Authority should be established as a statutory authority. The authority would control, record, monitor and enforce the licensing of identified elements of the private security sector.



# INTRODUCTION

On 13 November 2015, a wave of terrorism struck Paris. Suicide bombings and mass shootings at cafes, restaurants, a music venue and a sports stadium killed 130 and wounded more than 500 others.

Three suicide bombers attacked the national sports stadium, Stade de France, where the French President and almost 80,000 other people were attending an international soccer game.

One suicide bomber was stopped from entering the stadium by a private security guard who noticed the attacker's hurried behaviour and attempt to enter the stadium without a ticket.

The attacker quickly fled capture, but detonated the vest seconds later, killing himself and an innocent bystander.

It's believed that the bomber intended to detonate the vest inside the stadium, triggering patrons to flee in a panic into the street, where two other suicide bombers were lying in wait.

In the Manchester, UK, terrorist attack at a concert arena in May 2017, the denial of entry of the bomber to the auditorium reduced the number of fatalities due to panic and crowd crush. Security guards provided lifesaving first aid after the bomb exploded in the foyer.<sup>1</sup>

While these terrorist incidents occurred overseas, the guards' interventions were certainly reported in Australia, where the national terrorism threat level has remained 'Probable—a terrorist attack is likely' since September 2014.

The role and contribution of the private security manpower sector in both preventing and responding to terrorism has, with some exceptions, been a neglected issue in our national security planning.

This report examines the current and potential role of the private guarding services industry to contribute to a safer and more secure Australia by partnering with police and intelligence agencies.

The role of the private security industry in counterterrorism (CT) was usefully acknowledged for the first time in any national security planning document in last year's Australia – New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee guidance on protecting crowded places from terrorism:

Private security providers and professionals play a central role in protecting crowded places. In many cases, private security personnel— including security contractors, risk analysis experts, and private security officers—are directly responsible for strengthening the security of crowded places. They are often the first responders to a terrorist incident. Consequently, they must be well-trained and professional. Governments have a role in supporting the private security sector to achieve this, including by maintaining a robust regulatory regime around employment, training, and registration.<sup>2</sup>

The focus of this report is on the 120,000-plus licensed security personnel who provide myriad services across the country every day. We rely heavily on this workforce to protect critical infrastructure, defence sites, airports, government buildings, private-sector facilities and offices, and entertainment and licensed venues.

The security manpower sector observes and reports suspicious activity. It staffs monitoring stations and coordinates responses to security incidents by providing immediate control, first aid and direction when an incident occurs. Security guards are most often the first people on the spot after a terrorist attack.

Owners and operators of crowded places and critical infrastructure are increasingly being recognised by security agencies and police as playing an important role in CT planning, but what's often overlooked is that it isn't the owners and operators who protect those sites. It's the security personnel they employ who are responsible for implementing appropriate facility-level security plans, emergency response plans, crisis management and business continuity plans.

The challenge for owners and operators is in employing not only the right private security personnel with the skills to develop and implement such plans, but also the personnel behind the frontline staff who have the ability to exercise and train their people to activate and work to those plans.

Australia's guarding services workforce is generally poorly regarded by CT authorities. They're considered an unskilled workforce and not fit for purpose when it comes to preventing and responding to critical incidents such as terrorist attacks. That can and should change in ways that take account of the constraints under which this workforce performs and its great potential.

At the establishment of the Home Affairs portfolio in July 2017, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull observed that 'when it comes to our nation's security, we must stay ahead of the threats against us. There is no room for complacency. There is no room for set and forget.'

This paper argues that Australia's private security guarding workforce is largely the forgotten partner in CT.

But, with appropriate changes at the national level, there's now an opportunity to leverage that workforce to enhance the capabilities of police and security agencies to safeguard Australia from the risks of terrorism.

# COUNTERTERRORISM PLANNING

The scope of CT planning is outlined in Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy.<sup>3</sup> Most of the national CT functions are the responsibility of the federal and state governments: they have relevant assets beyond the technical or legal capability of the private sector.

Those functions include domestic and international intelligence, countering violent extremism programs, specialist law enforcement and military response options.

The public also has a role: it's been encouraged to support CT intelligence by observing and reporting through the national security hotline.

Some owners and operators of businesses and venues are involved in national security discussion via business advisory groups or other consultative bodies.<sup>4</sup>

Two of the five core elements of the national strategy are disrupting terrorist activity in Australia and effective response and recovery. The ability to counter terrorism includes activities that prevent incidents from occurring. It also includes incident response—providing an immediate, localised response when an incident occurs.

Both the prevention and response functions in CT can be and in fact are provided by the private security guarding workforce.

## The private security sector

The private security sector comprises private-sector individuals and organisations who, 'usually for profit, provide protective security functions: identifying, responding to and reducing the risk of harm from malicious acts'.<sup>5</sup>

The private security industry as a whole has an estimated annual turnover in Australia of more than \$8 billion: \$4 billion in the manpower sector, and \$4 billion in the electronics sector.<sup>6</sup>

The private security sector in some areas has resources and capabilities beyond those of government. It has the bulk of personnel responsible for guarding assets and events and for providing an immediate response to an incident. It has the majority of senior managers and advisers with formal qualifications and certifications in protective security.

It leads in the development and commercialisation of innovative security equipment, systems and engineering.

The private security sector is a continuum, ranging from a security officer holding a Certificate II to chief security executives of major corporations.

The focus of this report is, however, on the licensed security guarding and patrol elements of private security.

It's estimated that more than 210,000 individual security industry licences have been issued by the eight jurisdictions.<sup>7</sup> Of those, some 190,000 are for security guards and crowd controllers.<sup>8</sup>



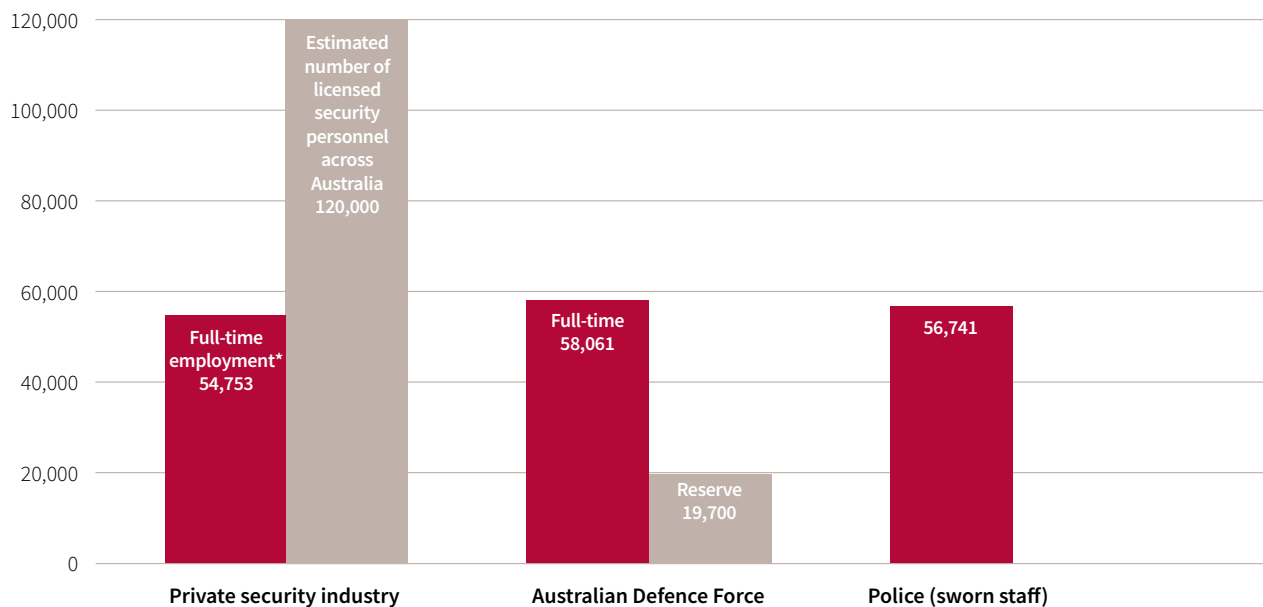
Many, if not most, operators hold multiple classes of licences, and some hold licences in two or more jurisdictions. Based on available figures, it's estimated that there are more than 120,000 licensed security guards and crowd controllers in Australia, of whom 54,753 were recorded as full-time workers in the 2016 Census.

Because of variations in definitions and terminology between jurisdictions, it hasn't been possible to distil more precise figures.

Some state and territory licensing regimes don't include 'in-house' security staff (that is, those employed directly by corporations or government agencies to provide security).<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the licensing numbers are at the low end of those employed as private security personnel.

By comparison, Australia has approximately 56,750 police and 58,060 permanent ADF personnel (Figure 1).<sup>10</sup>

**Figure 1: The size of the security industry, the ADF and the police**



\* Number of people who listed 'security' as their full-time occupation in the 2016 Census

Sources: ABS figures (2016) provided by Professor Tim Prenzler; police numbers extracted from the Productivity Commission's annual *Report on government services*—provided by the Police Federation of Australia; Australian Federal Police Annual Report 2015–16; Defence Portfolio Budget Statements 2018–19.

The private security sector supports and is supported by a number of industry and professional associations.

In addition to the Australian Security Industry Association Limited (ASIAL), most states have a local security association. ASIAL is the only security association registered under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*.

Associations such as ASIS International, the International Association of Venue Managers and the International Association of Protective Structures use their global reach to research and publish measures for preventing and limiting the effects of terrorist incidents.<sup>11</sup>

# SECURITY OFFICERS

Guards are entrusted with identifying unusual behaviour and reporting it—two critical steps in countering terrorism.

The terms ‘security officer’, ‘security personnel’, ‘security manpower’ and ‘guard’ are often used interchangeably. They are those employed to observe and report activity with the intent of protecting the assets and functions of the client, which usually involves a static or patrolling presence. The terms can also include those who monitor sites remotely using CCTV, alarms or other systems.

The relevant Australian Standard defines ‘guard’ and ‘guarding’ as follows:

Guard—a person employed by a company to carry out static or mobile guarding duties. Security officers who carry out mobile guarding duties are also known as patrol officers.

Guarding—the provision of trained personnel to a defined location for a determined period for the protection of people and assets.<sup>12</sup>

Western Australian legislation succinctly defines a guard as ‘a person who for remuneration watches, guards or protects any property.’<sup>13</sup>

NSW has a wider definition of security activities, which include:

patrolling, protecting or guarding any property, by physical means (which may involve the use of dogs or the possession or use of firearms) or by electronic means, including, but not limited to, in any one or more of the following circumstances:

- (i) carrying on control room operations,
- (ii) carrying on monitoring centre operations,
- (iii) carrying on retail loss prevention,
- (iv) patrolling, protecting or guarding cash (including cash in transit) or other valuables,
- (v) patrolling, protecting or guarding an airport or any other infrastructure.<sup>14</sup>

In this report, the term ‘security officer’ is used for those who provide guarding and related services.

Security officers’ employers range from large security service companies, which are mainly foreign owned (see box), through to small family businesses. Additionally, in some jurisdictions those employed ‘in-house’ aren’t required to be licensed.

## The major security manpower companies operating in Australia

Most major providers of security guarding services are owned by overseas interests:

- MSS Security—SIS Group (India)
- SNP Security—Certis Group (Singapore)
- Securecorp—Guardforce (Hong Kong / China)
- Wilson Security (Hong Kong / China)
- Securitas (Sweden)
- Prosegur (Spain)
- ISS Security (Denmark)
- Armaguard (Australia).

Protection for major Australian assets, ranging from airports to defence facilities, has been provided by overseas-owned companies for many years.

Operations are conducted by Australian managers who are responsible for providing returns to the owners and shareholders.

For those working in secure areas, additional national security checks are conducted.

The primary concern relating to foreign ownership in the sector is potential access to sensitive information and equipment.

If foreign ownership is considered a concern at specific sites, the owner can employ an in-house guard force.

The workforce has a significant casual element, estimated at about 47%.<sup>15</sup> Some casual security officers don't always develop an understanding of the security ethos.

Because the security officer role is seen as an entry-level position, it has a large unskilled element. This issue is considered below, under 'Training'.

At one level, guarding is high-volume, high-turnover employment.<sup>16</sup> There's a conflict between selection that's too prescriptive on the part of employers trying to maintain a workforce of at least 120,000, and regulators that seek to ensure that only 'fit and proper' people are licensed to protect assets and functions. Because the private security industry lacks clearly defined career pathways, it has been a challenge to attract high-quality candidates to the industry.

Under the current system, an applicant must undergo necessary probity checks, such as of their criminal history, and fingerprinting. The ethnic background of the guarding sector is diverse, and the workforce has cross-cultural and multilingual skills. The industry is overwhelmingly male.

## The role of security officer

The security industry is vital to the continuous operation of Australia's economy. Without security officers, there would be no screening at airports; hospitals, shopping centres and sports stadiums would be easy targets; cash deliveries and the restocking of ATMs would cease; and licensed venues would be forced to close. The security industry permeates every part of Australia's society and economy.<sup>17</sup>

Security officers aren't law enforcement personnel. Protective security and law enforcement have different, although related, roles.



Police offer advice on protective security, but they're often not well qualified or experienced to do so outside of very specific fields.

Private security officers, particularly senior and more experienced ones, may have an understanding of offences relevant to their employment and the site at which they work, but they don't have powers beyond those of ordinary citizens.

At its most basic, the role of a guard is to observe and report. Other duties, such as checking passes and intervening to prevent trouble, are usually defined in the contract and detailed in the officer's 'post orders'.

Ideally, security providers should be in regular contact with their staff to communicate concise and up-to-date information that affects their protective security role.

There's little practical difference in the duties, responsibilities and public expectations of individuals carrying on 'guarding' activities at crowded places and those performing 'crowd control' duties at entertainment and sporting venues. Indeed, there's some crossover between those roles.

## Locations

Security guards are employed across the country, from major cities to small communities.

In relation to terrorism, while major cities are recognised as attractive targets, regional and rural towns can also be targets for politically motivated violence.

Crowded places are key areas of concern, so there are often security officers at those locations, but they're not the only targets.

Private security may be found in towns where there's no immediate or even close police presence. Of Australia's 174 regulated airports, for example, only nine have a permanent Australian Federal Police presence, while 52 have permanent security screening infrastructure.<sup>18</sup> Others are patrolled by private security officers.

Security officers, foot and vehicle patrols, and alarm and CCTV monitoring staff have visibility over large areas in the cities and in regional and rural Australia.

Security officers report back through control rooms, which can then forward information to police and other agencies if the appropriate relationships and systems are in place.

## The multijurisdiction issue

Jurisdictional inconsistencies in security and poorly delivered training are key problems for the licensed security guarding sector.

Elements of the sector are regulated under state and territory legislation (see Appendix 1).

Each jurisdiction's private security industry legislation seeks to control the guarding, electronic installation and monitoring elements. But each has different inclusions and exclusions, although all exclude the IT/cyber element and most exclude in-house and government employees.<sup>19</sup>

The legislation has a common aim: to ensure that the person protecting the assets and functions of the client is clearly identified, is a 'fit and proper' person and has appropriate training. However, for the most part, the legislation fails those metrics.

It's worth noting that legislation governing private security was largely drafted to address social problems, such as violence in licensed premises, before our current age of mass-casualty terrorism. Moreover, terrorists' methods of attack will continue to evolve.<sup>20</sup>

In some cases, the ‘fit and proper person’ test can’t be validated because people holding student visas are allowed to hold security licences but accurate background checks aren’t always possible.

Jurisdictions have differing requirements for what elements (if any) should be delivered as part of the minimum qualification to be licensed as a security officer (usually the Certificate II in Security Operations).

Some jurisdictions exclude security functions that are required in others. For example, South Australia defines alarm and security equipment installers as ‘security agents’—the same category as guards and crowd controllers—while in NSW security technicians are placed in their own class and require a Class 2 licence.

There are also different approaches in the methods of auditing licence holders and training organisations.

Because of Australia’s mutual recognition arrangements, a person with a licence in one jurisdiction can transfer it to another.<sup>21</sup> This has resulted in ‘licence shopping’.

The lack of consistency in defining who must be licensed, the training required, and the vetting of the person are significant constraints on the ability of the guarding element to provide a cohesive, reliable and trustworthy CT capability.

Previous reports have recommended a standardisation of security licensing.<sup>22</sup> The issue was put before the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in July 2008. COAG agreed to adopt a nationally consistent approach to the regulation of the private security industry, ‘focusing initially on the guarding sector of the industry, to improve the probity, competence and skills of security personnel and the mobility of security industry licences across jurisdictions’.

COAG asked the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management to undertake further work on minimum regulatory standards for the technical sector of the industry by mid-2009, as well as proposals for a possible national system for security industry licensing by mid-2010.<sup>23</sup>

While there may have been some alignment of legislation between the ACT and NSW in the decade since the COAG request, it appears that significant changes have failed to materialise.

Given the current rate of progress and the absence of COAG leadership, it would be unfortunate if change were to occur only in the wake of a crisis.

Those working in aviation security under a Certificate II in Aviation Transport Protection need a state or territory security licence if they’re required to perform duties other than screening. The aviation security qualifications and vetting process are federally managed. This was, in part, to avoid issues caused by mutual recognition, but without local licences they’re unable to work as security officers in other locations.

Where specific locations of national security are of concern, the federal government has instituted national requirements, such as the maritime security and aviation security identification cards. Maritime security guards must be licensed by the relevant jurisdiction, but the maritime security identification cards are issued by the Aviation and Maritime Security Division within the Department of Home Affairs.

## Training

The training requirement for a security officer is a Certificate II in Security Operations.<sup>24</sup> (In NSW, however, the requirement isn’t the qualification but units of competency from within the certificate.)

For the current (2012) Certificate II, there are seven core units, including ‘apply first aid’. There are also five elective units, enabling registered training organisations (RTOs) to select competencies that are the easiest to deliver and least challenging. Some jurisdictions require specific competencies to be achieved, but there’s no commonality.

The Certificate III in Security Operations is offered for advanced security officers, such as those employed in control rooms and monitoring stations.

The related Certificate IV and Diploma is in 'Security and Risk Management'. This is used as the basis for the issuance of security adviser/consultant licences in some jurisdictions. There's no ongoing training or career development in the guarding sector.

A new Certificate II, which is currently before the Minister for Education and Training, has 14 mandatory competencies (see box and Appendix 2).

### Counterterrorism competencies

The Certificate II competencies don't specifically address skills required to identify and report upon potential terrorist activity or on appropriate response measures.

The competencies could be modified to include the relevant skills. For example, the 'CPPSEC2012A Monitor and control individual and crowd behaviour to maintain security' competency could include proficiency in behavioural awareness using the Behavioral Observation and Suspicious Activity Recognition system or a similar system.

The training issue isn't helped by some RTOs offering the Certificate II in a few days.<sup>25</sup> The My Skills website indicates a duration of two weeks for this course.<sup>26</sup> Some RTOs deliver high-quality courses, but the courses tend to be more expensive and longer.

Online training is offered by some RTOs, but that means there are no guarantees that the person who did the training is the one applying for a licence.

Some jurisdictions have sought to separate themselves from mutual recognition. Some states require specific competencies not addressed in the other jurisdictions. Western Australia, for example, requires additional confirmation of language skills.

The training compliance issue should be of concern to federal, state and territory training regulators. Some RTOs have had their registrations revoked and issued certificates cancelled, but that's been a rare occurrence.

Progress in delivering high-quality training will be impeded until a common set of licensing requirements is ratified, as pointed out by the Australian Skills Quality Authority in its *Training in security programs, 2016* report.<sup>27</sup>

The ability to communicate in English verbally and in writing is a fundamental requirement for a security guard, but some of those interviewed for this study expressed concerns about the effectiveness and willingness of some RTOs in assessing and supporting language skills. We were informed that, in some cases, verbal testing was offered to those unable to produce written responses.

The assessment is conducted by the trainer, but there's little incentive to fail students: it might risk the trainer being perceived as placing an insurmountable hurdle to employment.

For skills critical to the protection of public- and private-sector assets and functions, independent external testing should be implemented.

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) model of authorised testing officers provides objective validation of competency, but in most jurisdictions there's no requirement for ongoing or maintenance training for security officers. It's left to the employer to identify and promulgate information relating to changes in legislation, work practices, terrorist attack methods and appropriate preventive and response measures. In most cases, that doesn't happen.

A few, usually major, employers offer additional client- or site-specific training and refresher courses.

As the threat landscape is ever changing, there's a requirement for ongoing training for skill retention and improvement. Some clients do require periodically updated training if they can build a business case around improved security.



There's a real need to ensure commonality of training, monitoring and enforcement of both in all jurisdictions.

If the new Certificate II competencies are delivered properly and adequate assessment is maintained, the capability of the average security officer to counter terrorism will improve, but for that to happen training regulators must monitor and enforce the standards.

All security officers require the basic skills to identify, report on and respond to terrorist activity, but their current training doesn't specifically address CT.

Security training is part of the 'property services' package in the Australian Industry and Skills Committee structure.<sup>28</sup> The package also includes cleaning and other building maintenance functions. It would be better positioned within the 'public safety' package, which addresses law enforcement, emergency responses and related skills.<sup>29</sup>

The new competencies for security officers, if approved, will include basic behavioural and environmental observation skills, basic search skills and the ability to deliver an accurate witness report.

Central control over the detailed content of each competency would ensure that adequate and appropriate skills and capabilities are taught and developed.

## Recommendation

State and territory regulators should better monitor and enforce training standards within the licensed guarding sector.

## Recommendation

Training courses should include material on recognising suspicious behaviour associated with pre-incident terrorism activities and how and where to report suspicious activities.

## Cost

Security officers are among the lowest paid people at most sites. From July 2018, the base rate for a permanent full-time Level 1 security officer is \$21.26 per hour. Most security officers are Level 2, with a base rate of \$21.88 per hour. Depending on shifts, a full-time security officer on guard duty can earn, without overtime, between \$43,000 and \$63,000 per year.

While the hourly rate is low, the overall cost to the client can be quite high because there are often multiple security officers on site and they may be there 24/7.<sup>30</sup>

This leads to clients seeking the lowest bids and providers seeking to minimise overheads. As a result, additional training and other add-on costs are avoided.

Low hourly pay attracts those who are unsuited for higher paid, more technically challenging positions or those who are seeking to support a primary income. For some, low wages are offset by the available work hours, which may support their study or primary employment elsewhere.

Additional penalty rates are provided for after-hours and weekend work, resulting in the younger and fitter employees being the ones working the shift hours when they're less visible to the clients and public.

As quotes from the industry show, low pay doesn't engender a sense of worth in the security officer (see box). This may produce a poor work ethic. This is compounded if the employing company doesn't foster a sense of worth and respect for the guard force.

## Observations from those interviewed for this study

'Getting a taxi licence is seen as a step up from being a security guard.'

'If you pay peanuts you get monkeys.'

'Don't change the individuals—change the industry.'

'The police treat us like idiots.' (a senior security manager)

'Private security weren't involved in the planning; they just provide the workforce.'

'For some, having security on site is a tick box check for insurance purposes rather than for protection.'

'State enforcement of licensing, pay and training isn't working.'

'Some security providers work on the theory of "stack-em high and sell-em low", making small margin from high turnover.'

'Security is a "gap" industry between real jobs.'

'The guarding sector will improve when there is regular reliable work at a decent pay rate.'

'It's dangerous if you have a casual workforce with no certainty of what training has been delivered.'

'The reason a client gets poor security is because they chose it.'

'The security officer isn't there to respond to the attacker. They are there to respond to the victims—first aid and evacuation.'

'Currently, the security industry is not fit for purpose.'

The low hourly rate results in low expectations by the client, who may be willing to accept poor capability on the grounds of 'What can you expect when you pay peanuts?'

A contributing factor is the use of 'multi-tiered subcontracting'. A major and usually reputable provider may be engaged to provide services. Many then provide the required personnel through subcontracting to smaller firms that may then subcontract again to smaller, sometimes family or single-person, operators. This lowest tier may be willing to or even forced to pay security officers below award rates to gain the work.

Underpayment stemming from multi-tiered contracting is endemic throughout the industry. A recent report by the Fair Work Ombudsman found that companies contracted by local councils to supply security services failed to pay workers the legal minimum award rates.<sup>31</sup> The inquiry found noncompliance with workplace laws in the supply chains of 14 of 23 local councils investigated across the country. It found that the 'further away' a business was from the council in the supply chain, the greater the levels of noncompliance. Sixty-three percent of council security subcontractors were found to be noncompliant, compared to 42% of principal contractors who had a direct relationship with the council.

State and territory regulators, along with Fair Work Australia, are supposed to ensure that this doesn't occur.<sup>32</sup> Most of the smaller providers aren't unionised and avoid union oversight. As in other industries, multi-tiered subcontracting is a significant factor in contributing to the image of poor pay and conditions in the security manpower sector.

Active investigation and enforcement would assist in overcoming this feature of the sector. Clients and providers should be held responsible for implementing minimum standards and improving the skills and capabilities of security officers so that the officers achieve higher levels of remuneration, based on better delivery of security.

Some clients are willing to pay additional rates if that brings a demonstrable increase in security officers' ability to protect their assets and the functions and value of the site.

There's a common view that 'Nothing ever happens, so why pay more when the existing (low) level of guarding appears adequate?' In other words, this is a case of underinsuring in the hope that an adverse event, such as a terrorist attack or other security incident, doesn't occur.

There's a strong case for a more national approach to increase the capability, confidence and trust in the security guarding workforce. This matter is taken up in the final section of this report.

## Surge

The licensed guarding element has some surge capacity for pre-planned major events, but it doesn't have the capacity to respond to a large-scale security incident such as a terrorist attack.

There's not a large pool of underemployed security officers. While 54,735 of the estimated 120,000 licensed security personnel in Australia work full-time, those in casual and part-time employment are largely happy with their level of employment and either don't want or aren't able to commit to additional hours. At several major special events, there's been some difficulty in obtaining the required number of security officers.<sup>33</sup>

This has resulted in temporary exemptions to cross-border employment, importation from New Zealand and even training long-term unemployed people.<sup>34</sup> The last option has produced limited returns (see box). There's also been reliance at some special events on the casual element of the security officer employment pool.

### Special events

Special events are 'special' in that police, owners and operators are obliged to work together.

In some cases, special legislation, such as Queensland's *Major Events Act 2014*, reduces the normal powers of security officers by limiting the authority to remove a person only to police, whereas a security officer acting on behalf of the owner can normally do that.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games established a recognised tiered approach that used general security officers, team security supervisors and venue security supervisors.

Dividing the provision of security services under a multi-enterprise bargaining agreement, as happened for the Commonwealth Games, appears to provide a good balance of responsibility and capability. It also ensures common pay rates and stops staff from 'shopping' among prime contractors.

Because there's little surge capability within the full-time security officer workforce, a large percentage of casual staff will respond. To provide the best outcome, security contracts should be established as far out from the event as possible.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games were required to train local long-term unemployed people and others in security as part of the games' legacy.

Training and selection of security is too important to be subjected to social engineering experiments.

The course provided was the Certificate III senior course, rather than the entry-level Certificate II.

Government agencies are blessed with the ability to redeploy personnel from unstressed areas, leaving those areas understaffed while meeting surge demand elsewhere. However, private security firms are constrained by defined ongoing contracts that must be fulfilled each week, which limits their ability to send personnel to one-off, short-term or *ad hoc* events.<sup>35</sup>

This isn't to say that it's impossible for the security industry to staff major events. However, any special event that requires many security personnel demands long lead-time planning, significant funding and the direct involvement of the service providers. If the numbers aren't available, that's likely to place demands on state and federal agencies such as the police forces and the military to deploy people, resulting in both opportunity and direct costs.

## Perceptions

National security planners and police generally view the guarding sector as low-paid, entry-level employment that anyone can do with minimal training.

CT planning values the input of the general public, as demonstrated in campaigns such as 'If it doesn't add up, speak up', but there's been little outreach to the security industry, whose guards and officers are trained to observe and report.

The guarding sector is generally held in low regard partly because governments have failed to provide consistent definitions, 'fit and proper person' tests, training requirements and the enforcement of training and licensing standards.

There's a lingering perception by police that the security industry can't be a trusted partner: the shadow of organised crime involvement still hangs over the sector, despite the considerable effort undertaken by jurisdictions to eliminate that influence.

The application of the 'known associate' test has assisted, but variations between jurisdictions again hamper efforts to remove all criminal elements from the sector.

As noted above, it's also because clients seek the lowest prices, often below award rates, without considering the quality of service provided. That's not to deny in any way that there are pockets of excellence in which security officers are paid above the award, are provided with additional and ongoing training, and are respected and trusted.

Low pay results in low expectations on the part of clients, undermining the guards' mission to protect the assets and functions of the site.

Many full-time security officers develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for the site at which they're employed and take their responsibilities seriously. The low expectations held by some aren't a fair reflection of the skills, attitudes or commitment of most security officers. Indeed, we were informed by several industry representatives that private security personnel are more often seen by the public as keen, polite and effective.

Security and law enforcement agencies appear to have a perception that because of low pay and poorly delivered and inconsistent training private security officers aren't valuable.

Part of the image of the private security sector is based on reports of injuries and deaths caused by crowd controllers, but security officers or crowd controllers are far more likely to be injured than the public with whom they interact. A survey of security personnel found that 57% of crowd controllers had experienced a major physical assault once or more in the past year, while 86% of crowd controllers had experienced a minor assault at least once.<sup>36</sup> Injuries to security officers aren't as newsworthy as those inflicted by security officers, who are expected to protect us.

All these factors combined mean that more often than not there's an unwillingness by CT agencies to engage with individual security officers and the companies employing them.

Where direct discussion between law enforcement and private security providers has occurred, it's been about special events planning, but even then it appears that the involvement of private security personnel is often late in the planning process. Input from those who plan and deploy protective security on a daily basis is generally neither invited nor welcomed.

Despite this poor perception, private security officers are entrusted to guard national infrastructure such as defence sites, government buildings, airports, retail and industrial sites, entertainment and sporting venues, and other public and private assets. It therefore makes sense to make them able to do so more effectively by targeted investment and planning.

# COUNTERTERRORISM CAPABILITIES

The expectation is that a security officer has the behavioural and environmental observation skills to detect people and activities that aren't normal for the operating environment.

The reporting of such detections to the police provides valuable information for investigators to follow up and assess for intelligence. Individual reports might not always yield intelligence, but a combination of reports may be pieced together as something to flag.

Private security personnel can play an active role in feeding information to police and security agencies, potentially deterring an attack at the planning or reconnaissance stage.

At the execution stage, it's far more difficult to prevent some level of harm occurring. Despite the screening of personnel and carried items, many crowded places are still vulnerable to severe levels of harm at screening points.

The security officer can detect and report on terrorist reconnaissance activity and on the approach of a terrorist to the site. As noted above, the denial of entry by a suicide bomber to the Stade de France in November 2015 was a good example of this.

There's an expectation that security staff will act as the first responders. The actions taken by licensed security personnel in the first 10–15 minutes could determine the extent, impact and duration of an occurrence and either enhance or detract from the police or emergency service responses when they arrive.

Private security officers are on site and are seen to have a degree of authority. They're a uniformed force. It should be noted, however, that they aren't recognised in emergency management legislation as having the capability to provide a 'first response'. That's despite their being 'Johnny on the spot', with communication systems and command and control structures.

During a terrorist incident, there's an expectation that security officers will assist by directing the emergency evacuation, whether they're nominated wardens or not. This requires them to have a sound understanding of the site's emergency management plan.

Guards will apply first aid, for which they're all trained as part of the Certificate II. They'll cordon and control movement into and out of the site and advise others (the chief warden, security control centre and management) of what's happened.

Security guards will maintain an accurate record of events and actions and work with the emergency services.

Whether any of these expectations is embodied in the security guarding contract or part of the on-site training (if any) and post orders is a matter for each site.

On some sites, the security officers are an integrated part of the emergency control organisation (ECO). The ability of the security officer to act as an emergency warden depends on their site-specific training, their familiarity with the site, and leadership from both the security provider and the site's ECO.



In practice, private security officers will be the first responders: there's a greater likelihood that they, rather than the emergency services, will be on or near the scene of the incident. They're familiar with the site and its exits. They see this as part of their role of protecting the site.

These expectations of the security guarding workforce aren't formalised in national or state CT planning documents. It will be critical in an emergency response to a terrorist attack that all the response elements are well joined up.

## Current capabilities

Security officers are engaged to observe and report preliminary or suspicious behaviour, primarily for criminal and disruptive acts.<sup>37</sup> The quality of current training for this requirement depends on which RTO delivers the training and in which jurisdiction that training is delivered.

Private security personnel have the ability to report suspicious behaviour and incidents. They observe people and, when appropriately trained, can engage them in conversation as an element of behavioural analysis.

In the retail and entertainment sectors, security officers are often employed with a concierge function to assist shoppers and visitors as part of providing security.

There are cases where clients are willing to pay above award rates to ensure that appropriate security officers are deployed to the site and to invest in training that delivers additional and site-specific skills.

In such situations, the standard of capability is increased, as is mutual respect between the client and the provider. But, as argued above, these cases are exceptions: most clients seek the lowest cost service.

Security officers have no specific training in responding to a mass-casualty event.

There's a conflict of duties between securing the site during an incident and offering immediate first aid and assistance. The requirements should be addressed in the site's emergency plans and rehearsed.

Some security officers, mainly those involved in 'cash in transit' duties, are armed, but additional arming of guards isn't warranted.

The identification of appropriate people to be armed, the increase of the number of firearms in the public sphere (with associated storage and 'loss of weapon' issues) are of concern, as are the requirements for initial and ongoing training. Should there be a specific need to arm a security officer, the existing protocols for seeking the approval of (usually) the commissioner of police in the relevant jurisdiction are appropriate.

## Potential capabilities

While security officers are expected and may even be contracted to carry out actions that either prevent a terrorist attack or respond to such an attack, the lack of appropriate and consistent training and the lack of consistent 'fit and proper person' requirements limits their ability to satisfactorily fulfil those roles.

The ability of private security to respond to incidents shouldn't be constrained to just terrorist attacks but also include emergencies and critical events, such as disasters. The training would be almost identical.

Additional training, in alignment with the new Certificate II competencies, will enhance security officers' ability to respond to incidents, preserve life and assist with any subsequent investigation. The Behavioral Observation and Suspicious Activity Recognition program is an example of formal training that would enhance a guard's skill set.

Another example of additional training is the recently released US Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative, which assists private-sector security personnel to recognise suspicious behaviours associated with pre-incident terrorism activities and understand how to report suspicious activities while protecting civil liberties when documenting information.<sup>38</sup>

The role of security staff must be integrated into each site's emergency plans, and the functions of security during an emergency, specifically a terrorist incident, must be practised in drills.

Currently, security guards are among the last to learn of a nearby security incident, such as the Lindt Café siege, as they're usually prohibited from accessing their phones and other devices while working.<sup>39</sup>

The ability of police to communicate information about an ongoing incident to the control rooms of the major providers would enable on-site security supervisors and guards to know what's happening, to advise the site's management and ECO, and to assist with a secure and safe site response.

As noted above, we're not suggesting that the private security sector use armed response: an increase in the number of firearms in the community wouldn't help. Armed response is the responsibility of the state, which has the necessary resources and legislative authority.

As suggested above, the primary response of private security officers to an armed assailant is to report the event, remove people from the area, isolate the offender where possible, render first aid, and provide accurate witness statements.

However, there's a strong case for allowing more security guards, with appropriate training, to use (plastic) cuffs to provide safe restraint while reducing, and possibly eliminating, the risk of positional asphyxia. This approach would also release some of the apprehending security officers for other duties.

A nationally consistent vetting, training and licensing system will greatly enhance the ability of security officers and hence Australia's ability to prevent and respond to terrorism. We return to this issue towards the end of this report.

# THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

## Lack of tiered employment

One of the restricting factors within the guarding element of the private security sector is that there's little opportunity for career progression.

A security officer usually starts with an entry-level Certificate II as a basic guard or crowd controller. Once they have gained sufficient experience, they may be appointed as a 'supervisor' and be responsible for a number of guards or for a shift.<sup>40</sup>

Supervisors often work in or out of control rooms or may manage a monitoring station. While there are pay scales depending on the exact role,<sup>41</sup> there's no real recognition of prior experience or knowledge in the private security personnel sector.

There's also no formal training or educational pathway from security officer to management within the sector. The relevant Certificate IV and Diploma relate to risk assessment, not administrative skills.

Some of the major employers provide additional in-house periodic training, including management training.

Revision of the licensing and training regimes would provide an opportunity to consider a tiered employment structure in which additional training and experience could be recognised through the creation of a level such as 'senior security officer'.

Such a person would have not only attained a Certificate III, but training in sector-specific security relating to critical infrastructure, retail, residential, hotel, local councils, community, major events and transport and specific skills in countering and responding to terrorism. They might have additional management and leadership training.

The creation of a Certificate III would provide the basic guard with an educational pathway to senior security officer and eventually supervisor. Additional skills learned in the Certificate III would be consolidated on the ground before the senior security officer is promoted to the position of supervisor.

A new Security Industry Authority (proposed below; see 'The way ahead') could consider mandating that critical infrastructure sites be protected only by senior security officers or higher. This would reflect the level of trust and additional skills required to protect our nation's most important sites.

Better educational pathways to the positions of senior security officer and supervisor would help to make the guarding manpower sector a more attractive career prospect. Such a tiered approach to the sector would potentially allow it to make a stronger contribution to our overall national CT capabilities.

## Recommendation

The security guarding sector should consider a career progression model for security officers.

## Powers

The current legal powers of a security officer stem from acting on behalf of the owner under 'enclosed lands', 'licensed premises' and similar legislation. In fact, a security officer has no additional powers to those of the normal citizen.

Consideration could be given to providing some powers to selected senior security officers to assist in the ability to counter terrorism. Some of those suggested powers may be controversial. For example, current community perceptions might not support providing security officers with the power to detain on suspicion. In the long term, professionalising the industry may lead to changed perceptions.

Powers to be considered here might include:

- the ability to require proof of identification to assist with identifying prohibited persons
- the power to detain on suspicion, in addition to the existing power of detaining to prevent the commission of an offence
- the power to release someone from being detained, which is currently the sole reserve of the police
- 'move on' powers in areas immediately surrounding the client site and under specific conditions
- extending power to clearly defined areas external to the site (a security guard has no authority to act on behalf of the owner outside the footprint of the site, whereas the action of concern may be on the footpath or approach to the site)
- formalised authority to deny entry (currently, the 'conditions of entry' may permit denial of entry but the authority to do so can be vague)
- the power to control the behaviour of those on site, similar to that power already in licensed premises laws
- the authority to evacuate people and to cordon an area during an incident, again extending beyond the footprint of the building and whether or not the security officer is a member of the ECO.

Consideration should be given to being able to make security officers 'authorised officers' to fulfil specific roles. For example, we were informed that security officers at one site were made authorised officers of the surrounding park by the local council so they could extend their security duties into the immediate area.

At the same time, security officers are often not aware of their powers under existing legislation. This creates a risk that they'll under- or over-respond. This problem relates partly to the quality of the training provided, but also to the differing standards and requirements across jurisdictions. This confusion needs to be reduced, as it creates physical and legal risk to the security personnel and to the members of the public with whom they interact.

The ability to appoint security officers as authorised officers would assist when they are needed. They'd be 'force multipliers' for the police in cases where traffic control, cordon and other non-law-enforcement duties could be delegated. As an example, maritime security guards, although licensed by the local jurisdiction, have additional powers under the *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003*.

Law enforcement officers aren't always aware of the powers of security officers in relation to operating as agents of the landowners. One way to overcome this problem is to invite the private security sector to brief police courses, as occurs in South Australia.

## Recommendation

Consideration should be given to formalising additional powers for suitably trained security officers to enhance their ability to contribute to CT capabilities.

## Monitoring, control and communication

Monitoring stations and control rooms are critical elements of the private security guarding sector. A monitoring station monitors CCTV, alarms and other sensors and coordinates responses. It's usually off-site, but may be on site and provide a communication and control base for security officers. The local security supervisor may be located in the control room.

Both play a critical role in centralisation, assessment, communication, internal and external coordination, control, and the passage of information to external agencies, including real-time video and other sensor or surveillance data. Advances in technology will improve the ability of private security control systems to inform and assist government resources.

Other than in capital cities, control rooms and monitoring stations aren't integrated into the jurisdictions' CT plans.

## Technology

The private sector leads in developing technological advances for protective security, including detection of and protection from terrorist acts.

Communication between control (management) and security officers on the ground goes to the core of the job. Simple and instantaneous communication allows both security officers and management to respond to events in coordinated and pre-arranged actions.

Areas where significant changes affecting the capabilities of the guarding services are occurring include surveillance and communication; robotics and drones; analytical software; improved clarity and precision in visual surveillance systems; and the use of virtual and augmented reality (see box).

### Technological developments

The security industry relies heavily on technology, and its future will be closely linked to the evolving technology and innovations that will emerge in the next 30 years. Prior to the introduction of CCTV and security cameras, the only way to monitor the security of a site was with manned patrols—a costly, labour-intensive process with gaps owing to the periodic nature of patrols.

The widespread rollout of security cameras changed the nature of the security industry: one security officer in a control room is now able to do a job that previously demanded significant manpower. Future technological innovations have the potential to revolutionise the industry in a similar way.

Drones are likely to have the biggest impact on the industry in the coming years. They can best be used as mobile surveillance cameras that can provide previously unavailable, continuous views of a site or major event. The portability of drones will allow security companies to provide their own surveillance capability for major events at locations where the cost of installing traditional security cameras is prohibitive.

It's been suggested that advances in artificial intelligence software may eventually lead to it performing the role of the security officer, or at least complementing and enabling that role. For example, researchers at the UK's University of Cambridge and India's National Institute of Technology and Institute of Science found that surveillance drones equipped with artificial intelligence software can accurately distinguish between potentially violent subjects and those simply moving normally within a crowd.<sup>42</sup> While the technology is still in its infancy, it's a significant development in crowd management, surveillance and monitoring.

Although facial recognition is believed to be the next big leap in technology for police and the security industry, it's got a long way to go before it can be considered reliable. There are obvious questions about where human decision-making begins and ends with such technologies. Perhaps the 'golden rule' will be that decisions about humans that impinge in any way on their rights and liberty need to be made by humans (that is, 'human in the loop' or 'human on the loop' approaches).

Newly developed ground, aerial and aquatic mobile remote sensors allow closer monitoring of a site and are already available.

Surveillance robots are being trialled in Australia. When fitted with multi-spectrum sensors and analytical software, they have the potential to provide a significant enhancement to area surveillance. After capital costs, the hourly rate for a robot may be considerably lower than that for a security officer.

Drones and robots can be used to provide the initial response to alarms and other indicators, providing a safe initial reconnaissance capability. In public areas, robots can be fitted with microphones and speakers so that either they or the operator can converse with the public.

Robots, drones and sensors may take over some of the roles of private security personnel, but interpreting and reporting their observations will remain in the domain of the security officer for the foreseeable future.



# PUBLIC-PRIVATE COOPERATION

Australia's national, state and territory forums for addressing CT include government agencies, law enforcement organisations, and site owners and operators, but they do not always include the providers of guarding services. This exclusion was a strong source of complaint by those in the guarding sector whom we spoke to in preparing this report.

Apart from the 2017 crowded places guidance produced by the ANZCTC, the private security guarding services sector isn't mentioned in national security documentation. That's despite the fact that the government relies on the sector to secure many of its own key premises. Nor does the sector appear to have been involved in national CT exercises.

There's no formal relationship between the sector and those responsible for national security planning for CT. For example, the Industry Consultation on National Security, a CEO-level consultative body chaired by the Attorney-General to engage directly with Australia's business leaders on key national security issues, hasn't included representatives from the sector.

The private security industry is an untapped resource that, with the right oversight and guidance, could significantly contribute to Australia's CT planning.

## Recommendation

The private security guarding sector should be engaged in relevant national and state forums that consider CT.

## Jurisdictional level

The Security Industry Regulators Forum meets as necessary, typically twice a year, with regulators from the various jurisdictions and ASIAL, the national peak body for security providers. The relevant regulatory agency varies widely across jurisdictions, from the Security Licensing & Enforcement Directorate of NSW Police, to Consumer and Business Services in South Australia, or the Office of Fair Trading in Queensland.

Despite these meetings, the underlying issues of disparate definitions, vetting, training standards and licensing continue to pose challenges.

State committees such as the Victorian Police Community Consultative Committee, the Victorian Security Industry Advisory Committee and the NSW Security Licensing & Enforcement Directorate Advisory Board primarily relate to the management of the private security sector (specifically, the guarding element), not to the involvement of the sector in CT.

State event planners, including the police, appear reluctant to seek security advice from the licensed guarding sector, either because of a lack of respect for the sector or because they don't understand the sector's scope and capabilities.

On a positive note, however, and as cited above, South Australia Police have invited ASIAL to address police courses to explain the role, capabilities and powers of the private security sector.

There's a concern by some law enforcement officers that there may be risks in engaging private security personnel in any CT briefings, but that concern could be addressed by ensuring that those approved to attend high-level briefings are appropriately vetted.

In addition to routine security operations, the guarding sector can also protect assets during critical incidents and emergencies. There have been thefts of emergency services equipment during and after natural disasters that might have been prevented in this way.

The ability to call on security manpower providers at short notice and to budget from emergency funds for payment for a defined period could be built into emergency planning at the state level.

### Recommendation

Law enforcement agencies should be encouraged to liaise with the private security sector and have representatives from the sector address training courses to explain their functions and powers.

## City and precinct level

It's at the local level that cooperation between site owners and operators and the private security sector occurs.

There's good liaison between police and owners and operators of sites, but rarely with the suppliers of the private security guarding personnel.

There are excellent examples of fully integrated, trusted and effective site security. They are usually sites where the client is willing to pay above-award rates and to invest in additional training, including site-specific requirements. The mandated airport security committees are examples in which private security knowledge and capability are integrated into the site's plans.

Where the manpower of the security sector is of particular value is when precinct security plans are developed. Owners and operators are often limited by their geographical boundaries. However, private security advisers, including the guarding sector, can assist with broader plans and work with local councils and others to provide security across the precinct, especially by integrating surveillance and communication technologies.

Some examples of this are occurring, such as the Martin Place Security Forum in Sydney and information sharing around transport hubs and sporting venues in the Melbourne Docklands precinct.

## Project Griffin

Some overseas programs are designed to integrate the private security sector, including guards, with the jurisdiction's CT plans. Two examples are Project Griffin<sup>43</sup> in the UK and the City of New York Police Department's Shield program.<sup>44</sup>

The intent is to harness the additional observation capability of the jurisdiction's numerous security officers and to use trained security officers as a force multiplier during and after an incident.

The Project Griffin approach was briefly trialled in Victoria in the lead-up to the 2006 Commonwealth Games. A handful of industry leaders and trainers undertook a two-day train-the-trainer program and then passed on their learnings to security personnel on a cost-recovery basis.

After several years, Victoria Police abandoned the program in favour of the ANZCTC framework. However, we understand that Victoria Police is now looking at overseas CT-related security models engaging public-private partnerships. For example, Oxford Street in London has around 300 shops and half a million visitors daily. There are more than 2,000 private security officers engaged every day, helping to keep the 1.9-kilometre street safe, working with a scale and focus not possible from police.

South Australia has maintained an active Project Griffin program in which major businesses (including shopping centre operators and major venues), security providers and police meet on a regular basis to be briefed on security threats and challenges.

Project Griffin has contributed to a well-established working relationship between South Australia Police and the private security sector. Key personnel on both sides of the fence are usually well known, enhancing interoperability at events by removing barriers, re-establishing contact points, and ensuring timely information sharing and response when the need arises.

National guidance on the development and establishment of precinct security information-sharing programs within the states and territories would be of value.

A good start here is being made here with the creation by state and territory police of ‘crowded places forums’, through which they can share information and advice with site owners and operators. It will be important to include representatives of the guarding sector in such forums. The same point applies with respect to including security providers and ASIAL on the business advisory group that provides advice to the ANZCTC’s Crowded Places Advisory Group.<sup>45</sup>

# THE WAY AHEAD

## A Security Industry Authority for Australia

The private security manpower workforce isn't currently able to apply its full capability in CT. Having it do so will enhance public safety and increase incident prevention and response capacity.

There's a lack of consistency between jurisdictions in training, monitoring and the enforcement of both. The jurisdictions haven't been able to agree on consistent definitions, vetting, training, licensing, monitoring and enforcement.<sup>46</sup>

We suggest that there's now a need to move to a national framework for security licensing and training, which aims higher than a lowest common denominator national or 'floor' minimum standard.

A national Security Industry Authority (SIA), which would be a statutory body, could fulfil the required functions of centralising and controlling the identified elements of the private security guarding sector.

The SIA, responsible to the Minister for Home Affairs, could be structured along the lines of national authorities responsible for marine resource management or aviation and maritime safety.<sup>47</sup>

Making the SIA a statutory authority would enable government to set long-term policy requirements and expectations and remain at arm's length from the detailed management of the sector.

Defining the elements to be nationally controlled would be essential. The IT/cyber element of the private security sector is currently unlicensed and could be considered for inclusion.

## Purpose and functions

The functions of the SIA would include:

- the issuing of national security licences
- the enforcement of licensing compliance
- the integration of the private security manpower sector into Australia's counterterrorism strategy
- 'fit and proper person' definition and assessment
- training development and monitoring of delivery standards
- external confirmation of testing and competencies
- the development and promulgation of additional CT awareness and training information
- policy development.

The SIA would develop consistent terminology and definitions for those providing protective security services and consistent licensing criteria and standards, including training content and delivery.

It would, as appropriate, work with the Department of Education and Training, especially on the need for additional training of security officers in state and territory laws relating to enclosed lands, licensed premises, citizens' powers and so on.

The SIA would be responsible for setting consistent pre-employment criteria for those seeking to provide protective security services. This could include standards for proof of identity, ‘fit and proper person’ checks, criminal and security checks, and language skills.

With access to national information databases, the SIA could identify and investigate those who breach licence conditions.

The SIA would be able to develop consistent standards for the delivery of training and assessments and externally validated training and verification of competency (similarly to the CASA authorised testing officer program).

Over time, the SIA would become a centre for development and dissemination of ongoing training and information relating to protective security, such as changing terrorist attack methods and on-the-street preventive and response options and expectations of security officers.

The authority would be the host of a central register of those licensed, providing accurate data that would include what levels of additional training and capability individuals have obtained. It would maintain an accurate record of the number and location of licensed security officers.

The SIA would examine career development models for security officers, including the utility of additional powers that may be required to enable security officers to assist with CT, balancing additional powers with the public’s rights and expectations.

With appropriate legislation, the authority might request security officers to deploy to protect emergency service equipment and sites during critical incidents and emergencies.

The SIA could provide a central point of contact for the private security manpower sector on contributing to national security.

As a federal agency, the SIA would work with relevant national agencies to secure the personal information of Australia’s guard force.

The SIA could work with state agencies to investigate breaches of national standards through the provision of states’ compliance and enforcement services as part of an agreement between the states and the SIA.

Resources to establish the SIA could be drawn from jurisdictional licensing fees. Given the impact of terrorist attacks or other major security incidents, improved incident prevention and response is a cost-avoidance measure that’s likely to exceed the implementation costs of these proposals.

## Implications

While the jurisdictions may object to the loss of regulatory responsibility and income, some funding could be returned for the development of state-specific legal training for security officers and to assist with monitoring and compliance.

It’s also possible that some law enforcement organisations may resist an SIA model if it’s perceived as detracting from their advisory and protective roles, particularly those for which payment for services is obtained.

Centrally controlled, coordinated and consistent licensing and training should result in better pay for private security sector workers if there are higher levels of capability, respect and trust.

Increases in standards of vetting, training and competency may also result in an initial reduction in the number of security officers, particularly casual employees, but this should be balanced by increased full-time employment numbers and better quality candidates entering the industry as the opportunity for better pay and a formalised career structure are identified.

The states should retain responsibility for licensing related to firearms and other weapons.

## Potential structure

An Australian Security Industry Act would underpin the creation of the SIA. A full-time CEO to manage the SIA would be responsible to the Minister for Home Affairs, who would set the broad directions for and policies of the authority.<sup>48</sup>

Part-time commissioners to the SIA should be appointed for their high level of expertise in one or more of the fields of security management, security industry operations, national security or corporate security management.

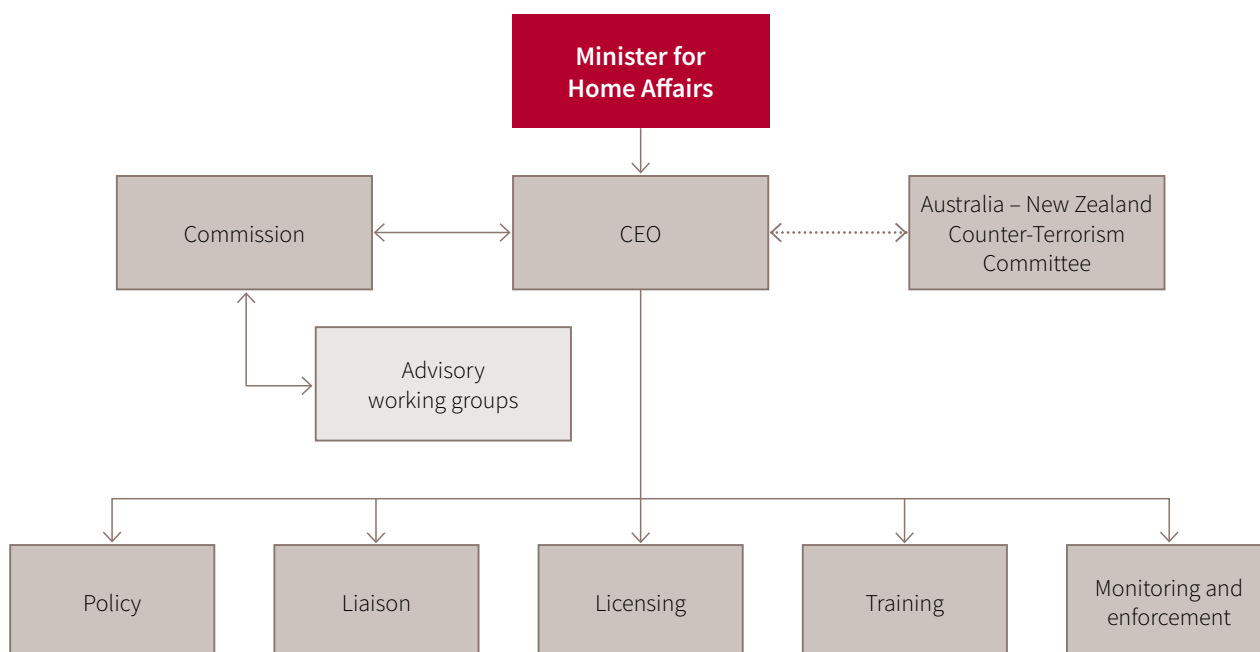
SIA commissioners shouldn't hold any position in any security industry body or company. A senior member of a national security agency should be an appointed commissioner.

To fulfil the legislated functions of the SIA, there would be assistant directors responsible for:

- policy, including pre-licensing selection criteria and the development of a tiered security career pathway
- liaison with stakeholders, which are primarily the private security sector but also the relevant law enforcement, intelligence and national security agencies
- licensing, including the processing of applications and recording and monitoring of licences
- training, including content, standards of delivery and external validation
- monitoring and enforcement of training and licensing compliance.

The authority would be supported by issue-specific advisory working groups, which may include representatives from the security guarding industry and police (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Potential model for a Security Industry Authority



## Recommendation

A federal Security Industry Authority should be established as a statutory authority. The authority would control, record, monitor and enforce the licensing of identified elements of the private security sector.



# CONCLUDING REMARKS

The goal of the recommendations in this report is to increase public safety by realising the potential of the extensive private security workforce and presence, focused on incident prevention and response.

Australia's national terrorism threat level has been 'Probable—a terrorist attack is likely' since September 2014; in 2017, that level was reaffirmed. Despite the persistent risk of a terrorist attack on Australian soil, the nation's 'eyes and ears'—the private security industry—has been excluded from national CT plans.

Most funds allocated to CT measures have been solely for police and related official emergency responders. There's no policy directive framework identifying the roles and responsibilities of the guarding services in CT.

Licensed security officers are engaged in many business, entertainment and social environments, but private security personnel aren't formally recognised as a vital resource and first responders in CT identification and response, critical incidents and emergencies, especially at sites and venues where they're commercially engaged.

There are challenges in the guard force stepping up to play a fuller role in our CT plans. It's an industry with a high turnover and operates on minimal profit margins because of market competition. Minimal training is often provided by training organisations that are focused on financial survival rather than on producing quality. It's dominated by casual and part-time workers.

The wholly state-based model, with light COAG coordination, has failed. Only through a national approach can the security industry be strengthened and professionalised to provide police and intelligence agencies with an invaluable partner in CT.

The private security guarding workforce is expected and may even already be contracted to carry out actions that assist in preventing and responding to a terrorist incident, but the current lack of appropriate and consistent training, the lack of consistent 'fit and proper person' requirements, the poor pay, the general low esteem, and the inconsistencies between jurisdictions limit security guards' ability to perform those roles.

A nationally consistent vetting, training and licensing system will greatly enhance the abilities of security officers to contribute to our overall national efforts to prevent and respond to terrorism.

To enable private security to undertake CT functions, there's a need for improved training and recognition of the role as a career with a clearly defined educational pathway and accreditation of skills. The selection and background screening of personnel must be far more rigorous.

Significant numbers of private security personnel are already being asked to provide services and operational outcomes well beyond their base level of training, competence, contractual engagement and remuneration.

If this sector is to contribute to national security capabilities, it's critical that there be up-front and ongoing training. Otherwise, we're not only setting private security officers up to fail, but also putting at risk the many whom they're charged to protect from possible security incidents.

A federal SIA would allow for the development of a career progression model for security officers, professionalising a highly casual industry.

A centrally coordinated, developed, monitored and enforced national approach to our licensed guarding services sector through an SIA will, over time, improve our ability to safeguard Australia from terrorism.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During this study, the authors spoke with private security sector providers, including manpower, technology, engineering and consulting companies; federal and state government officials and police; and senior security executives from the corporate sector.

The authors also spoke with operators and security managers from venues and other ‘crowded places’; emergency managers and consultants; security industry and professional associations; and venue, retail and related industry and professional associations. All those who spoke to us did so on the condition of anonymity.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Australian Security Industry Association Limited for this study.

# APPENDIX 1

## Overview of security licensing requirements in Australian jurisdictions

<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	<p><i>Security Industry Act 2003 (ACT)</i></p> <p>Regulator: Access Canberra (Office of Fair Trading)</p> <p>Security employers must hold a Master Licence, and security industry employees must hold licences when conducting the following security activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• patrolling, guarding, watching or protecting property</li><li>• acting as a crowd controller</li><li>• acting as a bodyguard</li><li>• giving advice about security equipment</li><li>• selling security equipment</li><li>• installing, maintaining, monitoring, repairing or servicing security equipment</li><li>• acting as a security consultant</li><li>• carrying out surveys and inspections of security equipment.</li></ul> <p>From 31 August 2017, applicants for the following security employee licence subclasses no longer needed to have training qualifications in order to apply for a licence in those subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• selling security equipment (2B)</li><li>• carrying out surveys and inspections of security equipment (2C)</li><li>• giving advice about security equipment (2D)</li><li>• installing, maintaining, monitoring, repairing or servicing security equipment (2E).</li></ul> <p>This change brings the ACT in line with most other jurisdictions regarding the requirements for these subclasses.</p>		
<b>New South Wales</b>	<p><i>Security Industry Act 1997 (NSW)</i></p> <p>Regulator: NSW Police, through the Security Licensing &amp; Enforcement Directorate</p> <p>Security providers (whether individuals, corporations or government agencies) must hold a Master Licence, Security industry employees must hold either Class 1 or Class 2 licences, depending on the security activities they perform:</p> <table><tr><td data-bbox="387 1758 815 2024"><p>Class 1</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unarmed guards</li><li>• bodyguards</li><li>• crowd controllers</li><li>• guard dog holders</li><li>• monitoring centre operators</li><li>• armed guards</li></ul></td><td data-bbox="823 1758 1410 2024"><p>Class 2</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• security consultants</li><li>• security sellers</li><li>• security equipment specialists*</li><li>• security trainers</li></ul><p>*Class 2C includes locksmiths and former classes 2E (barrier equipment specialists) and 2F (electronic equipment specialists).</p></td></tr></table>	<p>Class 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• unarmed guards</li><li>• bodyguards</li><li>• crowd controllers</li><li>• guard dog holders</li><li>• monitoring centre operators</li><li>• armed guards</li></ul>	<p>Class 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• security consultants</li><li>• security sellers</li><li>• security equipment specialists*</li><li>• security trainers</li></ul> <p>*Class 2C includes locksmiths and former classes 2E (barrier equipment specialists) and 2F (electronic equipment specialists).</p>
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Victoria	<p><i>Private Security Act 2004 (Vic.)</i></p> <p>Regulator: Victorian Police Licensing and Regulation Division</p> <p>Security employers engaging in manpower services (guarding, crowd control, investigations etc.) must hold a Private Security Business Licence; security employees must hold a Private Security Individual Operator Licence.</p> <p>Businesses providing security advice or security equipment installation services require Private Security Business Registration; business employees—security advisers and security equipment installers require Private Security Individual Registration.</p>	
Queensland	<p><i>Security Providers Act 1993 (Qld)</i></p> <p>Regulator: Office of Fair Trading</p> <p>Security employers must hold a Security Firm Licence; security employees must hold either a Class 1 or Class 2 Security Firm Licence.</p> <p>Note: If a tradesperson is performing the general functions of a locksmith in their day-to-day job they must hold a Security Provider Licence (Individual—Class 2).</p>	
	<p>Class 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bodyguard</li> <li>• private investigator</li> <li>• crowd controller</li> <li>• security officer (cash in transit)</li> <li>• security officer (unarmed)</li> <li>• security officer (monitoring)</li> <li>• security officer (dog patrol)</li> </ul>	<p>Class 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• security adviser</li> <li>• security equipment installer</li> <li>• security equipment repairer</li> <li>• security equipment servicer</li> <li>• security equipment maintainer</li> <li>• locksmith</li> </ul>
Northern Territory	<p><i>Private Security Act 1995 (NT)</i></p> <p>Regulator: Department of Business (Gambling and Licensing Division)</p> <p>Security employers (whether sole traders, partnerships or corporate entities) must hold a Private Security Firm Licence; security industry employees must hold a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Security Officer Licence—which allows a person to work as a private security officer</li> <li>• Crowd Controller Licence—which allows a person to work as a crowd controller</li> <li>• Combined Crowd Controller / Private Security Officer Licence—which allows a person to work as both a crowd controller and a private security officer.</li> </ul>	
South Australia	<p><i>Security and Investigation Industry Act 1995 (SA)</i></p> <p>Regulator: Consumer and Business Services</p> <p>Individuals, partnerships and companies supplying investigation agent or security agent services must all be licensed.</p>	
	<p>Investigation agent means a person who does one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• repossessing goods</li> <li>• debt collection</li> <li>• executing court orders</li> <li>• recovery of rates, taxes or money</li> <li>• private investigation</li> <li>• searching for missing persons</li> <li>• obtaining evidence for legal proceedings.</li> </ul>	<p>Security agent means a person who does one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protects, guards or watches people or property</li> <li>• provides dogs or other animals to protect or guard people or property</li> <li>• prevents, detects or investigates offences in relation to people or property</li> <li>• controls crowds</li> <li>• provides advice on security alarm or surveillance systems</li> <li>• hires out or supplies security alarm or surveillance systems</li> <li>• installs or maintains security alarm or surveillance systems.</li> </ul>
Tasmania	<p><i>Security and Investigations Agents Act 2002 (Tas.)</i></p> <p>Regulator: Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading</p> <p>Security employers must hold an Agent's Licence; security employees must hold an Employee Licence.</p>	

Western Australia	<p><i>Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996 (WA)</i></p> <p>Regulator: WA Police Licensing Enforcement Division</p> <p>Businesses and individuals providing security services must hold the appropriate licence.</p> <p>Holders of Agent licences aren't permitted to perform the duties of the other (non-agent) licence classes unless they also hold the appropriate non-agent licence. They're only permitted to supply the holders of other licences. A self-employed alarm installer, for example, would need to hold both an Agent and a Non-agent licence.</p>	
	<p>Agent (Business) Licences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security Agent Licence—authorises the supply of security officers, security consultants or security (equipment) installer's services</li> <li>• Crowd Control Agent Licence—authorises the supply of crowd control services</li> <li>• Inquiry Agent Licence—authorises the supply of investigation services</li> </ul>	<p>Non-agent (Individual) Licences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security Officer Licence—to watch, guard and protect property</li> <li>• Security Consultant Licence—to investigate and advise on matters relating to the watching, guarding and protection of property; includes security service and equipment sales</li> <li>• Security Installer Licence—to install security equipment (doesn't apply to installers of security equipment in vehicles, vessels or aircraft)</li> <li>• Crowd Controller Licence—to monitor or control the behaviour of persons, screen persons for entry or remove people from premises; required for licensed premises, places of entertainment and public or private events or functions</li> <li>• Investigator Licence—to investigate the conduct of individuals or corporations or the character of individuals, perform surveillance work or investigate missing persons</li> </ul>

Source: Australian Security Industry Association Limited, *Who needs a security licence?*, 2018, [online](#). This information is a summary only of the licensing requirements in each state and territory. For full, detailed information, visit the website of the relevant regulator.



# APPENDIX 2

## Certificate II competencies

Proposed compulsory Certificate II modules at July 2018 (subject to approval by the Department of Education and Training)

Unit code	Unit title
CPPSEC2101	Apply effective communication skills to maintain security
CPPSEC2102	Apply legal and procedural regulations to work effectively within a security team
CPPSEC2103	Apply WHS, emergency response and evacuation procedures to maintain security
CPPSEC2104	Apply risk assessment to select and carry out response to security risk situations
CPPSEC2105	Provide quality services to a range of security clients
CPPSEC2106	Protect self and others using basic defensive techniques
CPPSEC2107	Patrol premises to monitor property and maintain security
CPPSEC2108	Screen people, personal effects and items to maintain security
CPPSEC2109	Monitor and control access and exit of persons and vehicles from premises
CPPSEC2110	Monitor and control individual and crowd behaviour to maintain security
CPPSEC2111	Apply security procedures to manage intoxicated persons
CPPSEC2112	Apply security procedures to remove persons from premises
CPPSEC2113	Escort and protect persons and valuables
CPPSEC2114	Monitor electronic security equipment and respond to alarm events

# NOTES

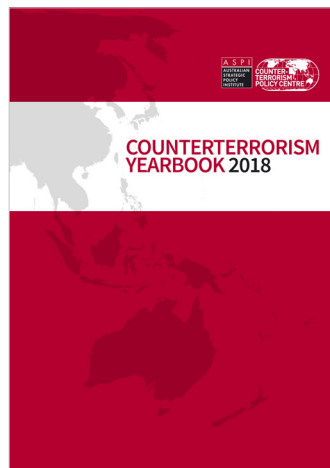
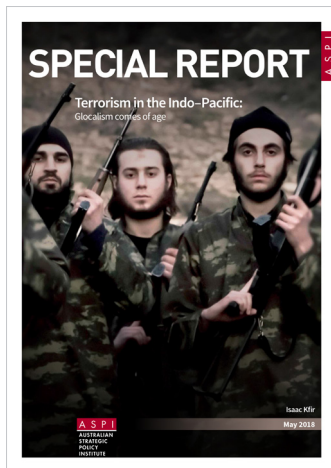
- 1 *The Kerslake Report: an independent review into the preparedness for, and emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack on 22nd May 2017*, paragraph 5.267, [online](#).
- 2 Australia – New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), *Australia's strategy for protecting crowded places from terrorism 2017*, [online](#).
- 3 Council of Australian Governments (COAG), *Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy: strengthening our resilience 2015*, [online](#).
- 4 For example, *Australia's strategy for protecting crowded places from terrorism*.
- 5 International Organization Standardization, Technical Committee 292, Working Group 6. The purpose of Working Group 6 is 'to build relevant standards for public and private sectors to improve protective security in a globalized world'.
- 6 Figure provided by ASIAL.
- 7 Based on information provided by the state and territory regulators to ASIAL in June 2018. The 210,000 figure may overstate the number of security licence holders: some individuals hold multiple licence classes.
- 8 This figure doesn't include master/company licences, trainers, installers, cash-in-transit, investigators, or dog handlers where it has been possible to identify and exclude them.
- 9 NSW has a specific master licence application form for government agencies, as they, and corporations that don't provide commercial security activities, must also hold licences if they employ individuals to carry on defined security activities. Those individuals must also hold the relevant security licence.
- 10 Police numbers don't include other law enforcement agencies, such as the Border Force; ADF figures include regular and reserve personnel.
- 11 ASIS International, [online](#); International Association of Venue Managers, [online](#); International Association of Protective Structures, [online](#).
- 12 AS/NZS 4421:2011, 'Guard and patrol security services'.
- 13 *Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996* (WA), part 3, section 12(1).
- 14 *Security Industry Act 1997* (NSW), part 1, section 4(c).
- 15 Census of 'full-time' security compared to number of guard security licences issued. R Sarre, T Prenzler, 'Privatisation of police: themes from Australia', in A Hucklesby, S Lister (eds), *The private sector and criminal justice* (97–134), Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2018; ABS statistics (2016) provided by Tim Prenzler.
- 16 A significant proportion of the workforce nominates security as its full-time employment, as reflected in the 2016 Census data.
- 17 B McCall, 'Australia—72 hours without security', *Security Solutions Magazine*, 1 August 2013, [online](#).
- 18 Submission 1 to Inquiry into the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities. Senate standing committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport, March 2018.
- 19 For a summary of licensing requirements, see Appendix 1 and ASIAL, *Who needs a security licence?*, 2018, [online](#).
- 20 Recent methods of mass-casualty terrorism have included vehicle attacks, marauding firearms attacks and single aggressors armed with knives assaulting those in a crowd.

- 21 Under the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Cwlth), people registered to practise an occupation in one Australian jurisdiction are entitled to practise an equivalent occupation in other Australian jurisdictions. Department of Education and Training, *Mutual recognition*, Australian Government, 15 May 2018, [online](#).
- 22 ASIAL paper on entry-level training, May 2016.
- 23 COAG meeting agenda, 3 July 2008.
- 24 'CPP20212: Certificate II in Security Operations', release 3, *Training*, 18 January 2017, [online](#).
- 25 A Harvey, 'Sham security courses putting lives at risk', *ABC News*, 24 September 2012, [online](#).
- 26 Department of Education and Training, 'Certificate II in Security Operations', *My Skills*, Australian Government, [online](#).
- 27 Australian Skills Quality Authority, *Training in security programs, 2016: strategic review*, Australian Government, [online](#).
- 28 Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC), *Property Services Industry Reference Committee*, 12 February 2018, [online](#).
- 29 AISC, *Property Services Industry Reference Committee*.
- 30 It would cost \$247,000 per annum to employ one security officer at a site 24/7 (8,760 hours/year) at the Level 2 federal award rate, excluding operational expenses or profit.
- 31 Fair Work Ombudsman, *An inquiry into the procurement of security services by local governments*, Australian Government, June 2018, [online](#).
- 32 NSW is the only jurisdiction that has controls in place for subcontracting in the security industry.
- 33 Sydney 2000, Melbourne 2006, Gold Coast 2018, etc.
- 34 N Fergus, 'Security at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games: bronze, silver or gold?', *Security Solutions Magazine*, 19 May 2018, [online](#).
- 35 B McCall, 'Harmonisation of the security industry: is it a national disaster?', *Security Solutions Magazine*, 2 August 2016, [online](#).
- 36 Sarre & Prenzler, 'Privatisation of police: themes from Australia'.
- 37 It's noted that a terrorist incident is also a criminal action. This report doesn't discuss the difference in motive and reward between a terrorist and a criminal action.
- 38 National Protection and Programs Directorate, Office of Infrastructure Protection, *Security of soft targets and crowded places: resource guide*, US Department of Homeland Security, April 2018.
- 39 The use of mobile phones while on duty is prohibited, as they're viewed as a major source of distraction. Additionally, using a mobile phone while in uniform and visible to the public is widely viewed as unprofessional.
- 40 The terminology and structure vary by employer.
- 41 For example, cash-in-transit and armed security guards have a higher pay rate.
- 42 A Singh, D Patil, SN Omkar, 'Eye in the sky', 3 June 2018, [online](#).
- 43 City of London Police, *Project Griffin*, 31 August 2017, [online](#); National Business Crime Centre, *Project Griffin*, 2017, [online](#).
- 44 NYPD Shield, [online](#).
- 45 The Crowded Places Advisory Group advises the ANZCTC on protecting crowded places from terrorism.
- 46 It's worth noting that some years ago concerns about poor outcomes in commercial vessel safety (regulated by the states) led to the federal and state governments agreeing to a national system for domestic commercial vessel safety. In July 2013, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) assumed the role of the national regulator for commercial vessel safety. Under the national system, eight regulations for domestic commercial safety were replaced with one set of national rules. AMSA, 'Modern navigation laws commence today', media release, Australian Government, 1 July 2013, [online](#).
- 47 Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Civil Aviation Safety Authority, Australian Maritime Safety Authority.
- 48 A report on governance frameworks for these types of statutory bodies is set out in Department of the Environment and Energy, *Independent review of governance of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority*, Australian Government, July 2017, [online](#).

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADF	Australian Defence Force
ANZCTC	Australia – New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee
ASIAL	Australian Security Industry Association Limited
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CT	counterterrorism
ECO	emergency control organisation
RTO	registered training organisation
SIA	Security Industry Authority

## Some previous ASPI publications





# WHAT'S YOUR STRATEGY?

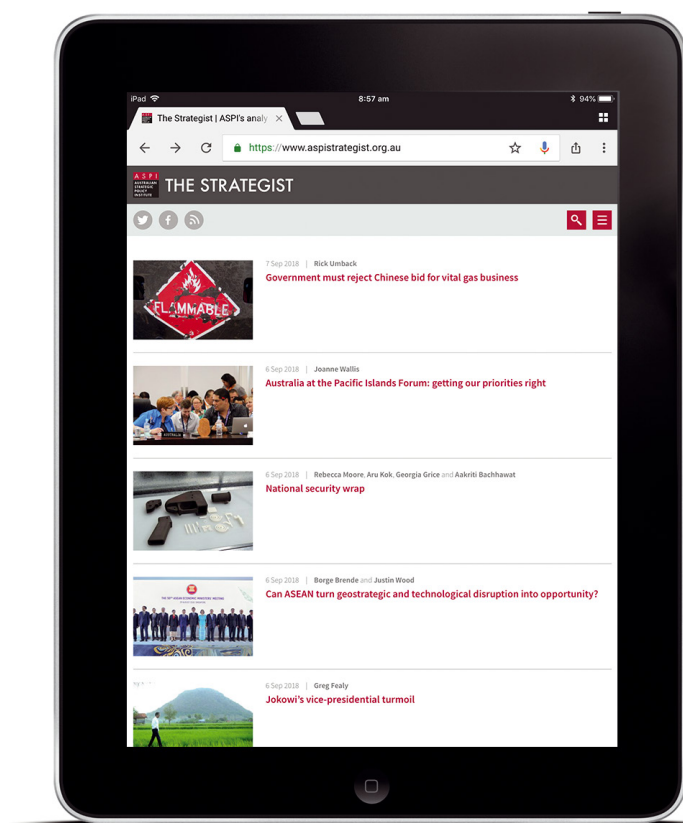


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