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In October 2010, the Government announced a “phased transition to a new regulatory regime” for the private security industry. This factsheet outlines the latest proposals.

Formal proposals will go out to public consultation in 2012 and will be subject to final approval from the Home Office - future regulation in Scotland and Northern Ireland will be subject to decision by the devolved administrations. A separate consultation on the position of future regulation in Northern Ireland will be undertaken by the Department of Justice; the SIA's draft plan will form part of this consultation.

**What's happening to the SIA?**

At the moment it's business as usual and there will be no major changes to SIA regulation or the Approved Contractor Scheme before the London Olympics 2012.

**Who will regulate the private security industry in the future?**

The Government intends to pass legislation in order to set up a new regulatory body, independent of state control. Legislation is expected to be passed in late 2012. It is suggested that the new body should retain ownership of the name SIA to recognise and protect industry investment in the brand.

The Board of the new body is likely to be made up of an independent Chair, other independent members, and representatives from the industry, the Home Office, Scotland and Northern Ireland administrations.

**So what's the difference between the current regime and the future proposals?**

The big difference is that the regulator will license businesses operating in designated areas of the private security industry. It will be a criminal offence for a business to provide a security service – no matter how small a part of their business the service is - unless the business is licensed.

To be licensed, businesses will need to demonstrate that they meet the licensing criteria and comply with the licensing terms and conditions which will include conformance with the relevant British Standards. There will be a single, generic security business licence.

The new body will also maintain a register of individuals authorised to undertake regulated activity within the private security industry. The terms and conditions of business licensing will include a requirement for the business to ensure a registration process is carried out for employees that will confirm their identity, address history, right to work, qualifications etc.

Self-employed workers who have no contract with a buyer or deploy only themselves under contract, will not need a business licence – just an individual registration. There will be special considerations for small businesses.

**What else will the new body do?**

The regulator will set and ensure registration standards for individuals and will run an online register, but the regulator will not manage the application process. Individuals will be able to access the registration system via a web portal to enter/update their details, but will need to complete their registration through authorised businesses and other partners – potentially the Post Office. The regulator will set the standards for assessing individuals, and apply the standards for qualifications set by an industry-led skills organisation.

The regulator will still have powers to enforce the law and will still work closely with partners such as the police.

**How much will it cost?**

Businesses will pay a licence application fee and an annual subscription fee.

Individuals will pay a registration application fee followed by annual subscriptions – there will be no need to renew a licence. Our plans are that when the new system is introduced credit will be given for any time remaining on an existing licence. For example, if your licence still has one year to run you will be transferred to the new system for one year without incurring any further cost.

The rates have yet to be determined, but they will be worked out in consultation with the industry. The cost for individual registration is expected to be lower than the current levels.

**What will happen to the ACS?**

No significant change is expected until Business Licensing is established. The industry has invested a great deal of time and effort in the ACS, and buyers (including many government organisations) specify ACS approval. Therefore, there is an expectation that an approval scheme will continue and existing approved contractors will be well placed to participate in this.

**What happens during the move to a new system?**

Licensed individuals will automatically be entered on the new register. For businesses, we are suggesting that the current ACS criteria should be divided into fit and proper criteria, and quality criteria. The fit and proper criteria, including British Standards, must be met to gain a compulsory business licence. The quality criteria could be met voluntarily to gain a recognised industry hallmark. Licensing requirements will be published and there will be a period during which businesses will need to meet requirements and apply for a licence if they want to continue to trade. The offence date will be after the end of March 2014.

**What do I do now?**

Nothing. Until you are notified by the SIA, everything remains the same – regulation by the SIA is still in place and must be adhered to. We will inform individuals and businesses what needs to be done nearer the time.

Meanwhile, visit our website [www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/future](http://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/future), find us on Facebook by searching for **Security Industry Authority** or follow us on Twitter by searching for **SIAuk**.