



What makes your security provider **special?**

Selecting a security provider for your organisation is not a lucky dip. Conducting appropriate due-diligence is a client responsibility and buying on price alone will not ensure that you get the appropriate level of security to meet your needs.

Good security providers are members of a professional association, are adequately insured, train their employees well, use only licensed guard/technicians and provide wages and conditions in accordance with a lawful industrial instrument and have a good reputation.

The Australian Security Industry Association Limited (ASIAL) is the peak national body for the Australian Security Industry. Since its establishment in 1969, ASIAL has grown from a network of security companies to one that today represents approximately 85% of the security industry in Australia.

ASIAL recommends clients develop selection criteria to review and establish the credentials of a security provider. All of the following criteria should be considered:

- **Adequate and current insurance** – view documents and ensure that they are current and provide coverage suitable to your situation.
- **A good reputation** – investigate provider's reputation to ensure that they have maintained good relationships with customers, are trustworthy and dependable.
- **References** – request and check references to obtain a valuable insight as to the reliability and performance of the security firm. Use ASIC and business search tools to check trading history.
- **Training** – review the security firms training regime and request supporting documentation to support their assertions.
- **Equipment** – ensure equipment to be provided by the security firm is fit for purpose and meets all occupational health and safety requirements.
- **Costs** – understand financial arrangements with the security firm regarding planned invoicing cycle, rise and fall cost management, cost drivers, rate reviews, additional charges and award/agreement impact.
- **Written Contract** – defining the rights and responsibilities between client and security provider should be detailed and written, including dispute resolution processes, contract review, extensions and termination.
- **Management** – experienced professional management with specialist expertise in the private security industry will ensure effective service delivery and well-trained and supervised staff.
- **Security Guards/Technician qualifications** – clients have a right to ensure only appropriately licensed and trained personnel work on site, request evidentiary procedures to confirm licence and qualification status.

To enable a security provider to meet the established criteria and deliver the service, clients should clearly communicate the requirements through:

- A concise statement describing the security activities to be performed including the days, hours of service delivery.
- A detailed set of any special instructions, given to the security provider to develop into standard operating procedures to enable them to deliver the service.
- Nominated management representative to liaise between the company and the security provider.

Due-diligence as indicated includes the checking of references, operational performance and achievements. Achievements can be in

the form of peer recognition and through this process ASIAL provides the annual Australian Security Industry Awards for Excellence. In 2012 the awards enter their 17th year and recognise individuals and organisations within the security industry.

Reflecting upon past winners we can demonstrate what makes one security provider stand out from the next.

Strategic Protection won the award for 'Special Security Event or Project'. Director and owner of Strategic Protection, Mark Slavin and his team were responsible for delivering security services to Perisher during the ski season. They considered that the project was unique within the Australian security industry and the biggest challenge for a security company of their size and experience. The challenge was to go beyond merely providing security personnel but to deliver the highest quality customer service experience for their client and their patrons and to make a short term resource intensive project financially viable in a remote and demanding location.

It is important for clients to recognise the need for a security contractor to make a profit. With open and honest cost recognition and management, all parties can achieve their desired outcome.

With Strategic Protection the challenge was to take 30 licensed security personnel, train them to the highest standard and have them perform unique duties in a professional manner without fault for 18 weeks in the harsh Perisher environment. Staff selection was important considering that the security personnel had to live and work together for the duration of the contract. Initial staff selection revolved around customer service, communication, presentation and the ability to demonstrate and deliver a feeling of safety.

Training in core values included, company induction, client expectations, staff conduct, remuneration and benefits, conflict resolution, tactical crowd control management, OH&S and detailed briefings on standard operating procedures.

Site-specific training covered a range of topics and procedures unique to the Perisher environment. This included site induction, operation of over-snow vehicles, emergency evacuation procedures and client venue operation and management.

The operational objectives of Strategic Protection was to achieve:

- Zero service complaints.
- Ensure 100% staff retention for the 18 weeks.
- Zero tolerance for staff misconduct.
- To provide the best presented staff – both in attitude and attire.

The investment on training including group team building exercises of climbing the Sydney Harbour Bridge, 4WD courses and group social gatherings paid off. Over the 18 weeks Strategic Protection maintained 100% staff retention with no staff issues although there were three minor service complaints.

Outstanding results do not happen by accident. Recognition by the client of a group with a commitment to service delivery and an honest and open relationship with the client delivered the contracted outcome plus more.

The marketing acronym of PBB (People Buy Benefits) was certainly evident in the relationship developed in delivering Perisher the quality service.



All security providers are capable of establishing and delivering a professional and quality service. The Regulator in each jurisdiction covering the security industry falls under Government authority and the issuing of licences are either managed through a Police, Consumer Affairs, or Officer of Fair Trading arrangement. The licensing process includes probity checks to ensure individuals and business owners meet a minimum standard with regards to prior convictions, conduct and close associates. The security industry does not issue licences.

Even with all the checks and balances having been conducted and approved by Government, there is still no guarantee of success in operating a security business or a guarantee to receive a quality service. A sound and experienced management structure supported by quality staff, professional recruitment and industrial relations process and documented operating procedures are essential.

ASIAL members receive addition support in managing their business with regards to professional development, industrial relations advice, government relations and regulatory support and compliance guidance. Being an active member of a Security Association can provide the point of difference in service delivery, client relationship and confidence.

At times clients may have a challenging technical environment and require a security provider to advise on available options with regards access control, CCTV, support services and recommend options. Clients may experience difficulties in evaluating and understanding the suggested options and place significant trust in their selected security provider.

Another example of excellence was the award winning 'Integrated Security Solution' by Pacom Systems involving three parties, Pacom Systems, Teknocorp and Melbourne Park Precinct. The project demonstrated innovation and excellence in the integration of Melbourne Park Precinct's complete security system. The project and installation took over two years to complete providing open architecture with the flexibility for the client to have scalable centralised security and network management system over all of their facilities.

Melbourne Park Precinct is primarily a series of sports venues and stadia, however it also plays host to a number of prestigious full-time commercial tenants. Some of the tenants include Melbourne Storm (Rugby League), Melbourne Victory (Football), Melbourne Rebels (Rugby Union), Olympic Park Sports Medicine Centre, Imaging@Olympic Park, Tennis Victoria and the Victorian Olympic Committee.

The Melbourne Park Project incorporating the new AAMI Park was a project full of challenges. The sheer size of the area involved numerous buildings and locations and the overall plans for future expansion made every day security a challenge. Combining this with the large volume of traffic during major events, one can appreciate that the environment was well beyond your average security project scope.

The Melbourne Park project required a complex overall security system that integrated access control, intrusion alarms, video surveillance, and a voice intercom system. Beyond the complexities in integration of the individual systems a number of different types of security environments also needed to be addressed including:

- Perimeter security.
- Access to the general public (on a large scale).
- Control of a number of independent tenant environments.
- Elevator control for up to 18 elevators.
- Multiple security control rooms, some of which only become active during special events.
- Manning of control rooms by different security sectors including security guards, police and emergency service personnel.
- 24 hour round-the-clock manning using graphic map click control.
- Control for the car parks.
- IP based communications / operation.
- Ability to easily expand in the future.

One of the key challenges within the Melbourne Park Precinct was to ensure that the security solutions installed used the latest technology available. This included communications over an IP based network. The legacy systems in place could not fulfil that brief. Therefore an IP based communications and security solutions were selected. Pacom Systems was the selected choice for the Melbourne Park Precinct. The IP communication between Pacom equipment meant that the security system could leverage the existing network without overloading other application activity, interface with other security applications to provide a completely managed solution, be centrally administered from the main security headquarters, but, still provide remote control during special events and functions.

A further challenge within the Melbourne Park Precinct was the complexity of centrally administering the overall security, but still ensuring that local management could be carried out during a special event. For example, during the period of the Australian Open Tennis tournament a control room at the Rod Laver complex needs to become active so that security management can be performed locally to the event. Pacom Systems assisted in this area of security by allowing remote management of multiple sites with central administration and control. This meant that while the central security headquarters is functioning as per normal, the control room at the Rod Laver arena could be easily activated and managed remotely by the staff on site. To facilitate this remote security management outside of the primary control room, a new network infrastructure was also required. Teknocorp installed a separate fibre optic backbone to join the Rod Laver arena with the main control room in AAMI Park.

Pacom's intuitive database import facility within the GMS software enabled the cardholder data to be easily imported and utilised with minimal programming and downtime. All data did not have to be re-entered as all the fields were selected and imported (department, PIN, access level, photo ID, etc), making it easy for security personnel. The GMS database supports up to 4.2 billion cards so there is a lot of capacity for system growth.

The need for reliable and high quality images was resolved using IndigoVision IP based video technology. The IndigoVision Control Centre software provided the capability of matrix switching the images while the inclusion of multiple PC monitors to view the cameras increased the systems flexibility. The images are then recorded on hardware based Network Video Recorders with sufficient drive capacity to record high quality images without compromising the required achieving time frame.

Pacom's High Level Interface (HLI) was used to integrate the access/ alarm system with the IndigoVision CCTV. The HLI enabled any event to be linked with video. If an alarm occurs, for example, the event information is passed immediately to the security operator who can instantly verify the event via CCTV, rather than lose valuable time searching for the appropriate piece of video. Being a high profile site with a sizable risk of crime, this integration enabled quick, efficient and automated review of video if an event was detected.

From a card compatibility perspective, the Pacom system could be configured to support the legacy card format. If the Melbourne Park Precinct ever desires a newer technology, Pacom's innovative 'multi-format' mode of operation can be activated. This enables support for up to five different Weigand card formats on one reader at the same time. In addition to 26-bit standard format, up to 4 other Weigand formats can be supported, each of which can include 3 parity bits.

Pacom's platform design provided the flexibility to meet all of Melbourne Park Precinct's immediate and future requirements. Teknocorp devised an innovative and scalable solution that enables them to grow into the future and have a 'future-proof' security system.

As indicated the quality of an organisation is important, and prospective clients should always ensure that they conduct appropriate due diligence. It is more difficult to evaluate the quality of management and staff and the use of reference checking of current and previous contracts performed by the security provider can never be understated.

When reference checking, a client could not be more impressed if informed of the dedication and commitment of a security providers staff, if the site supervisor was the winner of the security industry's individual achievement award. This was the case of Binaya Thapa from Trident Security. Binaya was the security supervisor for Trident Security for the Ipswich City Square in Queensland.

During the 2010 Queensland floods, Binaya displayed excellent forethought and worked closely with management to identify areas in danger of flooding. The car parks were in immediate danger of flooding and through knowing the centres traders and good communication only three cars remained in the car park and were flooded.

During the floods, Binaya and his family experienced personal devastation with his house being submerged in 1.5 metres of water. Even so, Binaya showed tremendous customer service and commitment to his client, continuing to work 12-hour shifts for days

on end, and covering other staff members' shifts when they could not make it to work due to the floods.

Ipswich City Square's marketing manager Norelle Lawrence commented that "Binaya was a humble man, and his behaviour during the time of the flood was totally within his character. He went beyond what would reasonably have been expected of anyone in his position as security supervisor, in providing a level of service that exceeds our expectations."

Reflection of quality relationships, complexity of projects and commitment by individuals, identifies security providers as 'special'.

Peter Johnson

ASIAL

About ASIAL

- Peak national body representing 85 per cent of Australia's \$6 billion + private security industry.
- 3,000 + members who employ 130,000+ personnel.
- Employer Organisation under the Fair Work Act as the peak security industry body.
- Registrar under the Australian Communications and Media Authority's Cabling Provider Rules.
- Key industry sectors represented by ASIAL include:
 - Manpower (critical infrastructure protection, guarding, mobile patrols, crowd control, aviation screening etc.).
 - Electronic (access control, CCTV surveillance, alarm response, biometrics).
 - Physical / barrier security (locks, barriers, fencing etc.).

Peter Johnson

Peter is the Manager, Compliance & Regulatory Affairs for ASIAL. Peter has over 38 years' experience within the security and associated industries with emphasis in general security, aviation and healthcare industries operational and emergency management. Peter has broad industry and commercial experience through holding senior management roles in both the private and public sectors. Throughout his career, Peter has had extensive training and has had significant involvement in operational management, risk management, personnel management, investigations, major incident management & response, training and recruitment.

Prior to his appointment as the ASIAL Manager for Compliance & Regulatory Affairs, Peter provided security management services to the healthcare industry, and was a Board Member of ASIAL for eight years.

Before joining the private sector, Peter was the Officer in Charge Crime Scene Section at the Victorian Police Forensic Science Laboratory. During his sixteen and a half years with the Police service, Peter also performed duties within the Communication and Prosecution Divisions and gained considerable experience whilst attached to the Coroner's Office as Coroner's Assistant.