

NATIONAL SECURITY INSPECTORATE

SCHEME FOR NSI ARC GOLD APPROVAL OF ALARM RECEIVING CENTRES

PROSPECTUS

(as at December 2007)

1. General Introduction and Summary of Criteria for NSI ARC Gold Approval

- 1.1 The applicable Regulations are the NSI Regulations. [NAC Regs].
- 1.2 There are six scopes of approval within the NSI ARC Gold approval scheme. All are based on the application of BS 5979: 2007, as summarised below. Applicants can elect to apply under any one or more of the five scopes, which are for:
- (a) High integrity monitoring of intruder alarms;
 - (b) Monitoring of intruder alarms (other than high integrity monitoring);
 - (c) Monitoring of fire alarms;
 - (d) Monitoring of social alarms;
 - (e) Monitoring of CCTV systems (see 1.3 below);
 - (f) SOC monitoring Category 5 after theft systems for vehicle recovery (see 1.4 below).

The expression “high integrity monitoring” (see 1.2 (a) above) is used as a description of monitoring that is fully in accordance with BS 7042 and the relevant recommendations set out in BS 5979.

- 1.3 The scope of approval for monitoring of CCTV systems has two options. An applicant company may choose to apply for approval in respect of any one of these options:

- (i) RVRC monitoring BS 8418 detector activated CCTV systems and other CCTV systems used in security applications (BS 5979 Category II); or
- (ii) Monitoring of CCTV systems used in non-security applications (BS 5979 Category I).

The abbreviation “RVRC” (see 1.3 (i) above) stands for “Remote Video Response Centre”, which is a term defined in BS 8418.

- 1.4 The scope of approval for SOCs monitoring “Category 5” ATSVRs (After Theft Systems for Vehicle Recovery) is based on a scheme developed by the Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre (MIRRC) located at Thatcham in Berkshire.

The abbreviation “SOC” (see 1.2 (f) above) stands for “Systems Operating Centre”, which is a term used in Home Office Scientific Development Branch (HOSDB) Publication No. 14/02 “Stolen Vehicle Tracking – ACPO and Home Office Guidance to Companies on Police Policy”.

- 1.5 A successful application leads to listing in the Official Directory of NSI approved Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) and entitlement to use the NSI ARC GOLD logo.

- 1.6 The Criteria for NSI ARC Gold approval are stated in the NSI Criteria for approval [NACP 0].

- 1.7 The above-mentioned Criteria [NACP 0] require adherence to all the applicable General Criteria including Criterion 2.3 (Insurances), Criterion 2.4 (Experience of Management), Criterion 2.5 (Repute of Management) and Criterion 2.6 (Finance).

- 1.8 The above-mentioned Criteria [NACP 0] require adherence to the following Codes of Practice and other requirements:

- 1.8.1 Compliance with the recommendations contained in BS 5979: 2007 (British Standard Code of Practice for Remote centres receiving signals from fire and security systems) insofar as such recommendations in the opinion of NSI shall reasonably apply.

NOTE: Compliance with the recommendations applicable for monitoring of the particular class (or classes) of monitoring in respect of which you seek approval is required including:

- for monitoring of intruder alarms, compliance with the recommendations of BS 5979 applicable to ‘Category II’ centres and compliance with the recommendations of BSI DD 243 and BS 8473;
- for monitoring of social alarms, compliance with the recommendations of BS 5979 applicable to ‘Category I’ centres and compliance with the recommendations of CLC/TS 50134-7;

- for monitoring of BS 8418 detector activated CCTV systems and other CCTV systems used in security applications (see 1.3 (i) above), compliance with the recommendations of BS 5979 applicable to ‘Category II’ centres monitoring CCTV systems and compliance with the recommendations of BS 8418.

NOTE REGARDING BS 8418: 2003

BS 8418: 2003 calls up recommendations contained within British Standard Code of Practice BS 7958 and BSI Published Document PD 0008 (now superseded by BSI BIP 0008).

- for monitoring of CCTV systems used in non-security applications (see 1.3 (ii) above), compliance with the recommendations of BS 5979 applicable to ‘Category I’ centres monitoring CCTV systems.
- for monitoring of ATSVRs (see 1.4 above), compliance with the recommendations of BS 5979 applicable to ‘Category II’ centres and compliance with Thatcham’s “Category 5” Criteria for SOCs and HOSDB Publication 14/02.

1.8.2 Compliance with BS 7858 (British Standard Code of Practice for Security Screening of Personnel Employed in a Security Environment).

NOTE: All applicant companies need to be aware of the significance that NSI places on the security screening of both the principals and staff. Applicant companies need to set up and implement a formal security screening procedure to BS 7858 (with all its attendant documentation) prior to application, (or to have completed this before approval is awarded).

Directors, partners and proprietors of applicant companies (and any persons holding 10% or more of the shares of the applicant company) are security screened by NSI (as are the persons nominated to be Qualifying Managers and the person nominated to be responsible for carrying out security screening within the applicant company). All of the above need to submit fully completed Personal Data Questionnaires (Form NSF 450) to NSI in order for the application to proceed.

1.8.3 Compliance with NACP 2 (NSI Code of Practice for Customer Communications).

1.8.4 Compliance with NACP 3 (Issue 2) (NSI Code of Practice for Management of Sub-contracting).

1.8.5 Compliance with NACP 5 (NSI Code of Practice for Management of Customer Complaints).

1.8.6 Compliance with NSI Quality Management System requirements as set out in Section 1.9 below.

(The above is a summary. It is not exhaustive and it does not include all the normal criteria. Reference should be made to the published “Criteria for Recognition” booklet [NACP 0].)

1.9 The above-mentioned Criteria [NACP 0] require that ARCs shall implement and maintain a Quality Management System complying with BS EN ISO 9001: 2000 and NSI Quality Schedule SSQS 102, which will be assessed by NSI as part of the application for NSI ARC Gold approval.

2. Application Procedure

2.1 Submit completed application form [SF 428], all supporting documentation and application fee to NSI at Sentinel House. This documentation needs to include a copy of the applicant company’s Quality Manual and Procedures. It is important that the content of these manuals is sufficient for the Application to be further progressed.

2.2 It is likely that there will be some correspondence between NSI and the applicant company regarding security screening of personnel and other matters (see 1.8.2 above).

2.3 An inspection visit will be arranged by appointment, for the purpose of assessing compliance with BS EN ISO 9001, SSQS 102, BS 5979, other documents such as BS EN 50134-7 and BS 8418 where applicable, and the other requirements of the Scheme including compliance with relevant NSI Codes of Practice and NSI Directives. The visit normally involves two Inspectors and lasts a full day.

2.4 If improvement needs are found, the applicant company will be advised accordingly and should take appropriate corrective actions. When the company advises that all matters have been attended to, a second inspection visit may be arranged depending on the nature and extent of the improvement needs observed. There is an additional fee if a second visit is required to complete the process.

2.5 Where improvement needs against certain of the constructional requirements of Clause 5 of BS 5979: 2007 are identified during the first visit, the applicant company may be able to invoke the paragraph at the end of sub-clause 5.1.1.3, which states:

An ARC that became operational prior to 30 June 2008, and which relied on layered security to achieve compliance with the year 2000 edition of this standard, can continue to use layered security, provided an equivalent standard of protection is achieved compared with the physical means set out in 5.1.1.3.

- 2.6 Where an ARC wishes to rely on the 'layered security option' permitted by the last paragraph of sub-clause 5.1.1.3 of BS 5979: 2007, the company must demonstrate to the satisfaction of NSI that the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) became operational before 30 June 2008 and that plans to develop the ARC were drawn up based on the content of BS 5979: 2000 (i.e. prior to BS 5979:2007 being published). The company must also supply a dossier setting out full details of layered security proposals explaining how a standard of protection equivalent to that which has been traditionally accepted is intended to be achieved.
- 2.7 Any applicant company using the layered security option should refer to NSI Technical Bulletin 0007, copies of which may be obtained on request from Sentinel House.
- 2.8 NSI Technical Bulletin 0007 gives guidance on the procedure adopted by NSI for those applicants wishing to use layered security. Please understand, however, that an election to opt for the layered security route is likely to entail an additional visit, at additional cost to your company.

3. Award of Certificate

- 3.1 An NSI Certificate (issued by NSI to an approved company) normally runs to the end of the financial year (i.e. 31st March) during which it was issued. At the year-end, it is normally renewable upon payment of an annual renewal fee.
- 3.2 During the life of the certificate, routine surveillance visits are made to the ARC from time to time, to verify continued compliance with the requirements of the Scheme. These visits are normally made annually and are chargeable in addition to the annual renewal fee.
- 3.3 Every effort is made to combine the BS EN ISO 9001 and the BS 5979 routine surveillance visits.
- 3.4 NSI preserves a right to make additional visits at its sole discretion, chargeable to the company that operates the ARC.

4. Advice

- 4.1 We are normally happy to discuss the application of particular clauses of BS 5979, either at an informal site meeting (e.g. during construction of the alarm receiving centre) or by reference to plans and drawings at an office meeting. Such meetings may be arranged either before a formal application is submitted, or during the application process. Companies requesting such an advisory meeting are asked to note that:
 - (i) A fee is payable (in addition to the normal application fee);
 - (ii) Priority is given to official inspection visits and the processing of applications. While NSI will normally use its best endeavours to accommodate advisory visits where these are requested, NSI does preserve an absolute right to refuse or defer an advisory visit, with or without giving reasons;

- (iii) While advice is offered in good faith, responsibility is not accepted and indications given during an advisory visit do not bind us as to the determination of an application for approval;
- (iv) Companies which have received an advisory meeting/visit, or which have submitted plans or other information are not thereby regarded as having made an application for approval, and will not be regarded as Applicants under the Scheme until they have submitted completed application form (SF 428), together with the application fee and supporting documents.

5. Fire Detection Systems for Alarm Receiving Centres

Attention is drawn to sub-clause 5.1.8.3 of BS 5979: 2007 which calls for the whole of the building housing an ARC to be supervised by an automatic fire detection system complying with Type P1/M of BS 5839: Part 1: 2002, or by an automatic sprinkler system, (except where the conditions set out in the NOTES at the end of 5.1.8.3 are satisfied).
