

Security Guards or Security Officers?

It is what you want them to be

Have you ever wondered what is the difference between a security guard and a security officer?

In general, both are doing the same kind of job, which is providing security service to organizations. This could be in the form of manning a security checkpoint or a security counter, patrolling the premises of an establishment or escorting visitors into an office premise. So what makes the difference between a security guard and a security officer is actually the perception that we create between the two job titles.

In the past, a security guard's job is usually stereotyped as a sedentary job which does not require much training and qualifications and the guard is usually deployed at the service entrance of the office building. In today's context, there is a paradigm shift in the role of security personnel performing guarding services. A security guard is no longer perceived as a lowly paid position for retirees or people without much skill or education. As a matter of fact, most organizations now call their security personnel as security officers rather than security guards as they are expected to do more than just performing security guarding duties. Not only are they more educated, polished and versatile, they are better trained and qualified under the new regulatory requirement set by SIRD (Security Industry Regulatory Department). Closely guided by the baseline standard set and monitored by the authority, security officers now enjoy a more recognized and respectable job position with enriching and challenging job scope.

With the changing security landscape, many security officers are now trained in report writing, First Aid, administering AED (Automated External Defibrillator) to cardiac patients and also to recognize IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) while carrying out basic bomb sweeps during bomb threat situations.

With the increasing terrorist threats over the recent years, many business establishments are more committed to spending more time and budget on "target hardening" themselves. These include enhancing their perimeter security defence, access control strategies and surveillance technology. With the upgrading of the security **hardware** and **software**, the modern day security officer plays an integral part in this overall strategy by bridging the missing gap of **peopleware**. An office/business building that is well-equipped with state-of-the-art access control system and surveillance technology requires a well-trained security officer not just to manage and complement the entire security system, but also to provide the professional and business-friendly approach to balance the otherwise fortress-like environment.

The modern day security officer is also a thinking officer who takes more pride in his job as he can see how he adds value to the business. He is able to understand business needs while carrying out his security role and exercises more discretion and empowerment over his previous counterparts.

So the next time you, as a security management professional decides to hire new physical security personnel, you may want to consider rephrasing your recruitment ads from Hiring of Security Guards to Hiring of Security Officers...if you are a strong believer in self-fulfilling prophecy.

About the author:

Leslie Teo is an Assistant Vice President in Corporate Security (based in Singapore) of a US investment bank. A former Senior Police Officer, he currently sits as a member to the management committee of ASIS International (Singapore Chapter).

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ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Do you have an interesting article that you wish to share it with our members? Please email your article and write to the editorial management committee at newsletter@asis-singapore.org.sg

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Chairman's Message



Dear ASIS Members,

Glad to start the year by reporting to you that we have grown our local membership to an all-time high! As of January 2009, our Singapore Chapter has more than 190 members. For our successful participation in the 2008 **Reach Out! Member-Get-A-Member** program, our Chapter was recently awarded by ASIS International. It is because of dedicated chapters and membership like ours that ASIS International continues to grow and thrive, broadening our perspective, and enriching the security profession in numerous ways.

More than 50 local members and special guests attended our Q1 Chapter Meeting on 12 February. For that event, we had specially invited Mr. Ivan Howden of International SOS to give an interesting presentation on "*Blast Effects and Protective Solutions*". This topic is certainly important to us security practitioners as we sadly recall the Mumbai terrorist attacks that took place on 26 November 2008. In that regrettable incident, ten terrorists attacked eight sites in Mumbai city centre including 2 hotels - Taj Mahal and Trident - leaving behind 180 dead including one Singaporean, and ~290 injured. Let us not forget such global acts of terror, and do ensure that our security officers are ever prepared, well-trained, and vigilant to safeguard our own organizations and nation.

In this issue of our newsletter, fellow Management Committee member Leslie Teo has contributed an article to highlight the evolving role of security officers in modern day context. One thing for sure, technology will never replace security manpower under today's heightened security environment. Security officers must therefore be well-trained

to perform their corporate security role effectively, and to achieve higher productivity. Only then, can we as security practitioners remain relevant, and continue to add tangible value to our organizations in a global economic downturn.

On the academic front, we are pleased to announce that yet another batch of mature students have graduated from the Professional Diploma in Security Management (PDipSM) course jointly awarded by SMa School of Management and ASIS Singapore. During our Q1 Chapter Meeting, the top student Mr. Gerald Ng Soon Huat, Security Manager of TNT Express Worldwide (S) Pte Ltd, was awarded the **ASIS Singapore Book Prize 2009** for his excellent academic performance.

The high quality of ASIS Singapore events and programs was clearly evident as we see continuous stream of participants in our ASIS certification programs, and the PDipSM course. Pleased to inform you that our Chapter has partnered with STET Homeland Security to launch an inaugural joint security seminar on 20 March. For more details, please refer to the write up herein. In the coming months, more joint security training programs with STET Homeland Security will be organized by us. Do watch for these new opportunities for professional training.

On behalf of our esteemed Chapter, I am proud to represent us in the Security Industry and Skills & Training Council (Security ISTC) of Singapore's Workforce Development Agency (WDA) from this year. Together with other partners in Security ISTC, we hope to contribute even more towards raising the level of professionalism in the security industry.

Till we meet in our next Chapter meeting.

Best Regards,
Anthony Lee, CPP, CBCP
Honorary Chairman

Industry Update – Security Industry Skills Training Council (Security ISTC)

The starting point for implementing the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications System (WSQ) for the security industry is the establishment of the Security Industry Skills Training Council (Security ISTC). Appointed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the Security ISTC looks into the different levels of training programmes, and drives the implementation of WSQ in the Security sector.

One major programme is the Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR) - a tripartite umbrella scheme to help companies and workers manage the economic downturn and invest in skills for recovery.

The Security ISTC comprised of representatives from the NTUC Union of Security Employees (NTUC-USE), Security Industry Regulatory Department, Ministry of Manpower, WDA, auxiliary police agencies, and other selected security associations. The Chairman of ASIS Singapore is a member of the Security ISTC appointed by WDA.

The Security ISTC will spearhead skills upgrading and training, professionalise jobs, as well as attract more workers to move into and up in the sector leveraging on Security WSQ. This will help create a career path for security officers.

ASIS Singapore – STET Homeland Security Seminar

An inaugural ASIS Singapore-STET Homeland Security seminar was held on 20 March afternoon. Under prevailing economic situation, the theme was aptly coined “Making Financial Sense with Strategic Security Risk Management”.

Altogether, 19 participants took part in the half-day seminar held at STET Homeland Security premises in Holiday Inn Atrium.

With a focus on providing strategic security solutions in a cost effective way, the following renowned security experts and professionals delivered enlightening, professional presentations:

- “Security Risk Management on the Financial Balance” by Mr. Dennis Michael Egan
- “Latest Trend in Security Threats” by Dr. John Harrison
- “Blast Resistant Design of Commercial Buildings” by Dr. Li Bing
- “Investing in Security can enhance Business Value” by Anthony Lee, CPP, Honorary Chairman of ASIS Singapore

During Q&A session after the interesting presentations, the participants were informed of the “Guidelines for Enhancing Building Security in Singapore” publication (by Ministry of Home Affairs) which provides good guidelines for practical, cost effective security measures and building design considerations in our local context. The successful seminar ended with professional networking among the speakers and participants who are now equipped to better handle the balancing act of security risk management in their own companies and organizations.



Honorary Chairman, Anthony Lee CPP delivering his security presentation



From the left: Mr. Dennis Egan, Anthony Lee CPP, Mr. Tan Chong Kuan (STET Homeland Security) and Dr. John Harrison

Changes to Certification Examinations

Last December, the Professional Certification Board (PCB) shared the exciting news that international certification exams will be administered in 32 locations as a computer-based test (CBT) commencing in July 2009. As per such, the last examination the Chapter will host will be in May 2009.

Please note the CBT will have different pricing from the one traditionally hosted by local chapter. Please refer the following FAQs from ASIS International website for more information:

<http://www.asisonline.org/certification/computerbased.xml>

The FAQs Include:

- Application Processing
- Exam Reservation for CBT
- Exam Reconfirmation and Cancellation
- Exam Administration Procedures
- Exam Administration for 7 Sites where CBT is Temporarily Unavailable

Also, preview the list of 32 international CBT locations at this link: <http://www.asisonline.org/certification/computer.pdf>.

Do note that all applications for certification must be submitted to the ASIS Certification Department. The application review process will take approximately 3-4 weeks. Candidates should apply 8 weeks prior to their chosen exam month or they will be automatically rolled over to the next available testing window. Please check ASIS International website at <http://www.asisonline.org/certification/computerbased.xml#reservation> for the available windows.

ASIS International (Singapore Chapter) Q1 Chapter Meeting



The first event for members in 2009 was held on Thursday, 12th February 2009, 18.00 at The Legends @ Fort Canning. During the event, The Honorary Chairman shared updates on the chapter including the membership and events held in previous year.

In token of appreciation for continuing support of local paid-up members, the chapter conducted a lucky draw where three fortunate members were presented with S\$100.00 NTUC voucher.

The event continued with presentation by Mr. Ivan Howden, Vice President of International Risk, Ltd, on 'Blast effects: Minimizing the effects of terrorists IEDs'. The RVP and SRVP also presented membership certificates for 2009 chapter members. Dinners are served following certificates presentation.

CPP™/PSP™ Review & Examinations

The Certified Protection Professional (CPP™) designation is the highest recognition in the world accorded to security management professionals. The CPP™ is an international accolade of professional expertise, demonstrate competency, validate knowledge, and proven skills, all of which translate into a competitive edge in the complex business of security.

Similarly, Physical Security Professional (PSP™) designation is an internally accepted standard of competency in physical security that affirms a practitioner mastering a recognized body of knowledge and having a thorough understanding of the physical security best practices.

ASIS Singapore is pleased to sponsor the CPP™ and PSP™ examinations in Singapore on Saturday, 2nd May 2009. In conjunction to the examinations, ASIS International (Singapore Chapter) will be running a CPP™ & PSP™ Review Programs.

CPP™ Review will be held from 27th to 30th April 2009 while the PSP™ Review will be held from 28th to 30th April 2009. Both programmes will be conducted at The Legends Fort Canning, Singapore.

For more information of the examinations and courses, please visit ASIS International website at <http://www.asisonline.org> and Singapore Chapter website at <http://www.asis-singapore.org.sg>.

NEW BOARD CERTIFIED PROFESSIONALS

ASIS International (Singapore Chapter) congratulates and welcomes the following professionals on their passing of their examinations in May & November 2008.

May 2008

1. Chong Guan Heng, CPP
2. James Ong, CPP
3. Teo Khai Ming, CPP
4. Thomas D. Shannon, CPP

November 2008

1. Lim Choon Kwang, CPP
2. David Mattinson, CPP
3. Melvin Cheng, CPP
4. Vincent Ong Yong Ho, CPP

Nearly 10,000 professionals have earned the designation of CPP™. This group of professionals has demonstrated their competency in the areas of security solutions and best-business practices through an intensive qualification and testing program. As a result, these men and women have been awarded the coveted designation of CPP™, and are recognized as proven leaders in their profession.

