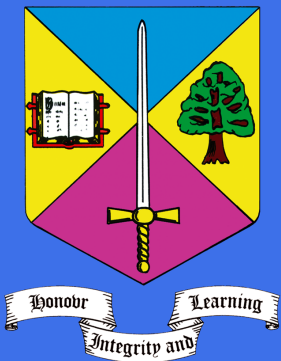




22/3/17

There are no words that can express the feelings.



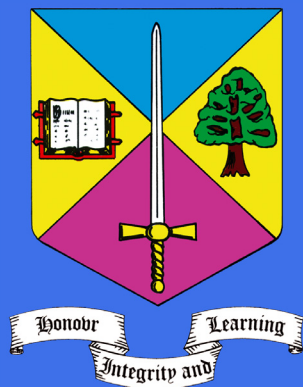
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David Palmer FIPI
Editor



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Editorial

Frustrating as the delays over Brexit may be, I suppose that something that may concern professional investigators is the cross-border recognition of investigatory qualifications that requires that other EU states permit legitimate, qualified investigators to ply their trade within the EU. As you know, and partly as a direct result of an IPI member taking the Italian authorities to court, private investigators conducting enquiries in EU states are allowed to do so specifically because of the obligation that states allow freedom of movement and plying of trades. The only caveat, if indeed it is one that is applicable, is that the state in which a UK PI wishes to conduct their business may have qualification criteria which the UK PI should match – and as we don't have licensing despite that being common practice in the EU, that isn't necessarily a clear position.

With the triggering of Article 50 on the 29th of March and the two-year exit period that follows, one must expect that the Government will include this issue in its negotiations. At the moment, as we do not have PI licensing in the UK, there is absolutely no restriction on any foreign investigator conducting a private investigation in our country, EU citizen or otherwise. In the event of Brexit, the EU may well decide to place restrictions on UK PIs conducting enquiries in Europe – depending in part on the negotiated deals regarding trade. But owing to our position – no licensing – what reciprocal restriction could we enforce?

The Institute will be considering an approach to the authorities concerned on this particular issue, and any input, knowledge, observations and experiences from the membership would be helpful in terms of that approach.

Please let the Board of Governors know your thoughts – as you can appreciate, the Board does not represent the broad sweep of needs of the whole profession and really does need guidance on issues like this.

Contact us via ipitrain@aol.com .

David Palmer FIPI
Deputy Principal

Licensing

The Cooling Off Period

Following previous assistance from former IPI Member Byron Davies MP, the following letter to him has been passed to the Institute

The content resulted in a spread of different viewpoints from the Board members who read it. There are two opinions.

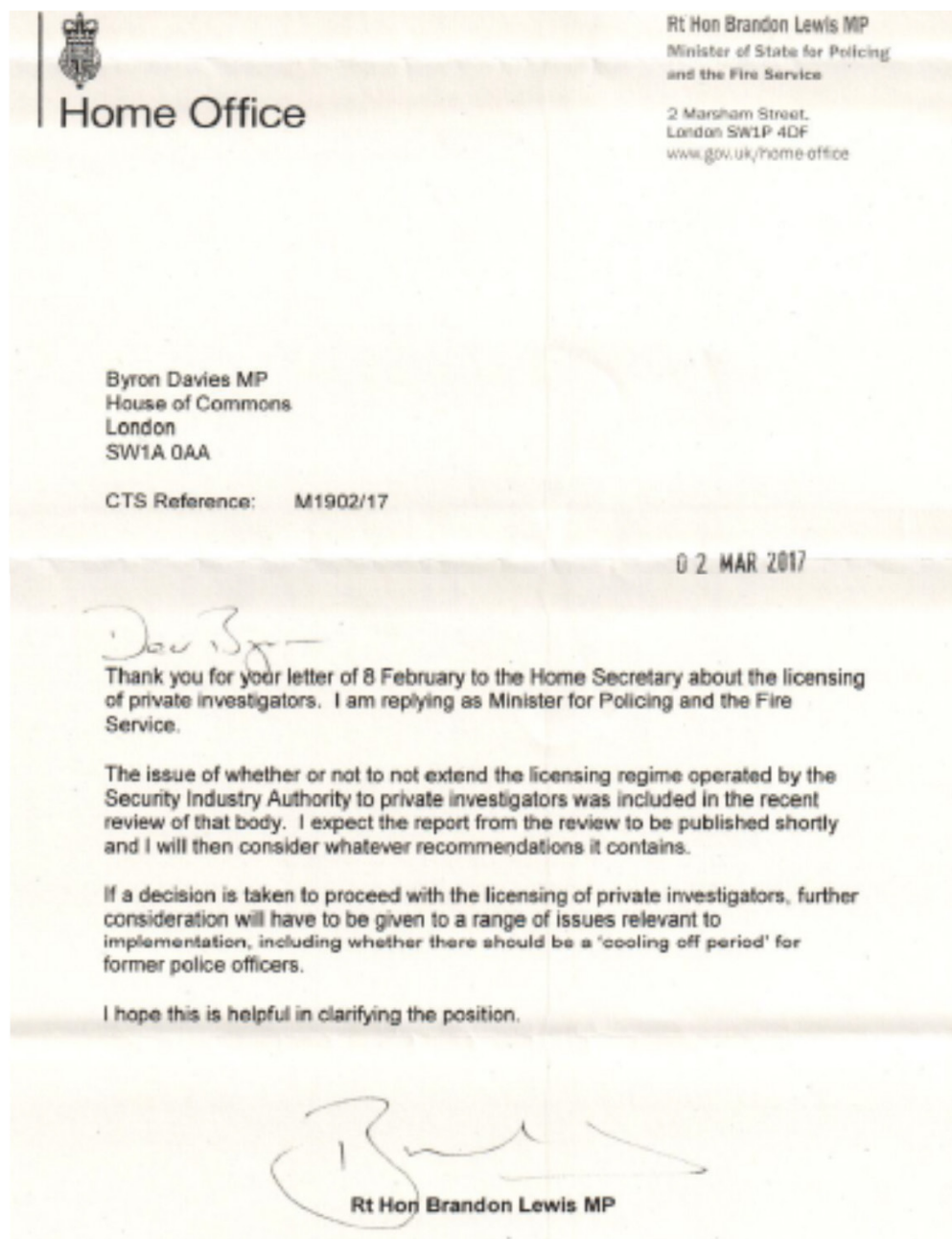
1. Licensing has been put into the long grass again, waiting for the SIA, a tax-payer funded but evidently risk-averse authority, to hide behind delaying tactics again.
2. The reference to the Home Affairs Select Committee observation that ex-police officers could be barred from being PIs for a year after leaving the service is an indication that some thought HAS been given to the (usually stock) response.

Notwithstanding the hope raised that something may happen soon – either way – the Institute remains dismayed that a majority – honest police officers – should be disadvantaged because a very small amount of evidence, provided by those bastions of honesty known as ‘solicitors on the losing side’, indicated that about 4 police officers from one force were corrupt.

In the event that this cooling-off period proposal is made more formal, the Institute seeks views from the membership about the practicalities and effects such an imposition might have.

One thing occurs as this is written. Such an imposition would only impact retiring officers seeking a licence. Those retiring officers employed by

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organisations, e.g. banks, insurance companies, solicitors, retail outlets, other professions, government, etc. would NOT have such an imposition imposed. Thus arguably making any licensing restriction solely based on the relationship between an investigator and his/her directing mind. If I am employed, I can start today. If contracted, I have to wait 12 months. What would the practical benefit be of a post-profession bar on work.

And now that I am 55, I also ask what difference 12 months would make anyway?

Finally, I suggest that in the event such a bar is imposed, all serving and ex-MPs, ministers and so on should not only be banned from being MPS AND consultants at the same time like ex-Chancellor Osborne, but they should also be banned from being washing machine salesmen at the same time, too.

SIA Update

It may have escaped everyone's notice that about 12 months ago the SIA conducted an industry-wide survey on the future of licensing and, indeed, of the SIA itself.

The result of this electronically submitted survey, 12 months later, is yet to be released. Nevertheless, that hasn't stopped the SIA circulating yet another electronic survey. Perhaps the first survey failed to provide the desired answers? The Editor did send an email asking about it months ago. No reply has been provided.

Our sector, still waiting for a simple decision to implement licensing following Teresa May's 2013 announcement, which itself followed the Home Affairs Select Committee 2012 hearings and those of the Leveson Enquiry, seriously has to ask why on earth the SIA, which is now trumpeting its diversity credentials, still hasn't completed the job it was set 16 years ago.

No doubt the triggering of Article 50 will provide another excuse – although why our implementation of a UK security industry statute should be affected by whether or not we are in Europe escapes me. I can see that there may be consequences, but waiting to see what those consequences are would

have prevented the UK defending itself in WWII. "Let's wait and see if Hitler invades, and if he does, we'll arm."

As a 30-year 'Indian' expected to produce results 'now' on a daily basis, and for whom the expression 'deadline' was routinely allied to the expression 'or else', I respectfully submit that the 'Chiefs' in the SIA should ask themselves if they were ever up to the job.

In other news, a recent snippet from an SIA source suggests that they are using the 'not sure who might be caught in the net' argument over implementation of PI licensing. I won't rehash the article written in these pages some time ago, but surely that was considered when the Act was drafted? The same source stated s/he didn't understand whether they (an investigator working for government) would need licensing.

I weep. I really do.

Our sector ... has to ask why on earth the SIA, which is now trumpeting its diversity credentials, still hasn't completed the job it was set 16 years ago.



Investigators in the Press

Members reading the IPI Newsletter will recall mention of a news report then pending that could impact the industry, after which things went quiet. The Editor has now been asked to address this omission.

A report appeared in The Times newspaper on or about the 5th of February 2017. The case in question referred to a previously reported dispute between parents of a woman who had been 'counselled' by a third party, following which that woman had become estranged from her parents and 'remembered' (my apostrophes) being abused as a child. The police had been called in to investigate the abuse allegation, as a result of which the parents had sought various legal remedies and had employed famed City solicitors Mischon de Reya in that regard.

The crux of the story is that a private investigator of some industry standing had allegedly obtained private bank records of the daughter, and provided them to MdR, who apparently utilised that knowledge.

To quote the Times article, *"Neither the documents' origin nor their authenticity has been established. Police have received information from another private investigator. He claims to have been enlisted by ***** , who he says claimed the documents had been "hacked" from Craig's emails. Citing client confidentiality, ***** declined to comment on any of his work for Caledon. Craig (The counsellor. Ed) said the documents were forgeries intended to discredit her. She said she understood the concerns*

over her "powerful and unique" techniques, but insisted that her work was valuable."

The reason that this article had implications for the industry is that the PI alleged to have 'obtained' the aforementioned envelope is a senior member of another organisation, and formal complaints have been reportedly made to that organisation. The organisation has allegedly stated that it has not received the complaint (although it is reported to have arrived in the same envelope as a complaint they did investigate) and/or that they have apparently not acknowledged the complaint, nor properly investigated it. There have since been several resignations of that organisation's members who find this 'ignorance' unethical. There have also been associated issues which this article is not intended to address.

The Institute, the professional body for investigators, cannot ignore the potential consequences of such a media story, hence our reporting it in this issue.

It would be remiss of us not to mention that Mischon's represented a number of clients in the phone hacking/Leveson enquiry and would be more than adequately aware of the dangers of obtaining/

There have since been several resignations of that organisation's members who find this 'ignorance' unethical

using unlawfully obtained data, if that is what happened in this case.

The full article can be accessed by The Times subscribers [HERE](#).

A later article in Punch mentioned the fact that the PI identified in the Times was a senior 'director' of the ABI while the Times did not.

Workplace Investigations

Whose domain, are they? The Professional Investigator or the HR Professional?

By Brian Collins MIPI

What is a workplace Investigation? A workplace investigation will normally arise when either an allegation or grievance is received from an employee, a potential disciplinary matter arises stemming from an employee's conduct or when there are concerns in relation to a potential breach of a company's policies and procedures.

In many cases these matters can be resolved informally and quickly. However, in some circumstances this option is not possible and either management, HR team or company lawyers deem it necessary to conduct a workplace investigation. The driving force behind the decision to conduct a workplace investigation could be that it is felt that formal action may need to be taken against an individual.

If a company makes the decision to conduct a workplace investigation it is extremely important that this procedure is conducted in a fair and impartial way. A flawed, incomplete or biased investigation can undermine the disciplinary process and can result in the employer being subject to claims of unfair dismissal by the employee.

The employer must be able to demonstrate, potentially to an employment tribunal many months

A flawed, incomplete or biased investigation can undermine the disciplinary process and can result in the employer being subject to claims of unfair dismissal by the employee.

down the line, that they conducted their investigation fairly and thoroughly, and if the decision to dismiss an employee was made on this basis. The employer must be able to show that after a reasonable investigation they genuinely believed that a misconduct had occurred and they had reasonable grounds for this belief.

It is just as important for the employer that they treat grievances seriously when they have been raised. If after an investigation, the grievance is not upheld the employer needs to provide evidence and reasons for this decision to show an employee that their grievance had been taken seriously.

It would be at this stage that the decision is made to allocate an investigator. Who makes that decision? This really depends on the size of your company, and on looking ahead to anticipate how an employment tribunal would view what is 'fair and

reasonable' when they put themselves in the shoes of the decision maker at the time they made that decision. The employment tribunal will consider all factors when they address this. If your company only has four employees and a very small profit margin would it be fair and reasonable for the owner of the business to conduct the investigation? It probably would be. However, if you have five hundred employees and you allocate the line manager of an individual to investigate one of their own team for a serious allegation, would this be fair and reasonable? Probably not.

Large organisations often have the luxury of allocating staff from another department to undertake investigations or they may have the luxury of an Internal investigation or security department to undertake this function. It is normally the small to medium size businesses that find it most difficult to find the balance.

If you have been asked to conduct a workplace investigation and are looking to ensure that your investigation is fair and objective, the you will be looking for fact based evidence that supports or undermines the allegations.

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The ACAS guidelines state that *'Wherever practical an investigator should be:*

- *available during the investigation's expected timeframe*
- *not personally involved in the matter being investigated*
- *not involved in any subsequent decision making on the matter*
- *be trained in how to investigate.'*

This is clearly a difficult criterion to meet in a small company or business.

They ACAS guidelines go on to state;

'When investigating, an investigator should:

- *consider what the issues of the matter under investigation are*
- *plan how the investigation will be conducted*
- *decide in what order evidence will be collected*
- *collect all relevant evidence and consider what the evidence shows*
- *report their findings.'*

The investigator should know exactly what the parameters of the investigation and be provided with all the available details of the matter they are tasked with investigating. Their role is to establish the facts of the allegation or incident by collecting relevant evidence such as;

- Witness evidence
- Documentary evidence
- Physical evidence

Large organisations often have the luxury of allocating staff from another department to undertake investigations or they may have the luxury of an Internal investigation or security department to undertake this function.

This information is then presented in a comprehensive written report.

Beyond identifying whether or not a disciplinary hearing is appropriate, the investigator will not include conclusions or make recommendations as these may taint the mind of the decision maker at a disciplinary meeting. The investigator should have no further involvement in the proceedings outside of the scope of the Investigation.

So, who do you, as an employer, use to undertake your investigation?

Whilst companies have the option of sending managers or HR staff on one day investigation courses, as many do, is this fit for purpose? If a mid-level manager is tasked with undertaking an investigation into one of the admin support team after attending a one day course 3 years previously, is this a fair and reasonable approach by a company? Do they remember how to obtain witness evidence without leading the witness? Did their one day training provide them with sufficient information to ensure their approach is truly objective? Are

they tainted? Have they listened to office gossip relating to the matter? Could they be mangling that team and people they have interviewed in the next office reshuffle or promotion? Do they have the time to do the investigation, which will normally be over and above their normal workload? If they are to be judged by an employment tribunal on their procedures, is this approach fair and reasonable?

Is it fair and reasonable to use HR to undertake the investigation? They deal in Human Resource issues all the time. Depending on the qualification and experience level they have, they will be comfortable conducting witness interviews. Their CIPD training does cover workplace investigations. Senior HR staff will have extensive experience in dealing with Disciplinary matters. Conversely, except for large businesses, they are likely to have been tainted with discussions about an allegation as the HR department will be the central depositary for such allegations. They are the hub of any disciplinary matter. The HR team will organise the extraction of staff for interviews, suspensions of the staff, coordinate with senior managers to arrange staff cover. HR are not dedicated Investigators: such tasks will form only a small percentage of their function. You could question that their department's central position in a company's mechanism could open the door to considerations around their impartiality in a fair and reasonable process?

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When you look at the role of the Investigator in isolation it is clear why many companies now see the Investigation role as one that is best outsourced. The criteria required as outlined by ACAS fit fairly and squarely with the Professional Investigator.

The outsourced Professional Investigator with training in workplace investigation procedures will meet all the above ACAS criteria. They are dedicated experienced professionals who are trained to interview witnesses, gather evidence, be objective in their approach and produce high quality Investigation reports. They undertake this role every day and most have done so for many, many years. As contractors with one role they have time to dedicate to the investigation to ensure that it is completed as expeditiously as possible. As external contractors, their independence is difficult to challenge. They eliminate the risk of any 'bad feeling' for a business that can occur when other departmental staff are utilised in this role, thus allowing Senior managers to reassure staff that by using external investigators things were done fairly and correctly. There is a cost saving, as businesses do not have to factor in training courses in investigations for HR staff and managers - the cost of outsourcing investigations is normally significantly less than the training costs.

In conclusion, it is my opinion that with a small investment in training there are a significant opportunity for the Professional investigator to undertake a role that has historically the domain of

HR teams. My own experience indicates that Senior managers welcome the opportunity to be seen to be fair and independent in their approach to disciplinary matters through outsourcing. HR teams are resistant to this change but once they have utilised a Professional investigator they appear to welcome further employment because, once the fear of loss of function of the investigative element is eliminated, they can concentrate on managing the overall disciplinary process.

British Standards Institute

On the 23rd of March the Deputy Principal attended a meeting of the BSI 'GW/3' Committee, which is a collection of representatives of the wider security industry who have input on the content and currency of British Standards.

This meeting was convened to review all security Standards but David Palmer was there to seek updates on BSI 102000-2013.

You may recall a diatribe about Public Concern at Work's desire to create a whole new standard on Whistleblowing Investigations, and the arguments for and against, and how the committee went away to think about the next step. Fortunately, that issue has gone away because the international whistle-blowing Standard – yes, there is one – is now to include an 'investigation section' and as such, BSI no longer needs to address it in 102000.

BUT...

Along came road traffic collision investigators who want to create their own British Standard for their work. Accordingly, BSI have directed them to provide evidence as to why a separate Standard is required for their investigation specialism. BSI 'rules' states that no new investigation standard should be created if it is not markedly different to another one which covers the subject, so the RTC investigators will have to show how their investigation management process differs from a generic investigation management process – remember, the Standard is about managing the service, not on what service

Along came road traffic collision investigators who want to create their own British Standard for their work.

is provided, which appears to be a common misconception.

That said, 102000 was due a review next year, so that review is being brought forward to allow for this issue to be included. The Institute will Chair the Review Panel and a wide range of panel members is to be sought, in part to avoid further specialist groups feeling as though their interests have not been considered.

Any specialist members who believe they could assist are asked to contact ipitrain@aol.com OR Beverley.webb@bsigroup.com.



ISO 37001: Anti-bribery due diligence

According to ongoing research at the World Bank Institute (WBI), US\$1 trillion is paid in bribes each year.

By Michael Whittington, MIPI

In February 2016, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) secured a conviction against the UK Aim-listed firm Sweett Group plc, for its failure to prevent a bribery culture in a subsidiary firm operating in the Middle East. The company was fined £2.25 million.

More recently, in September 2016, Ronald Harper, Deputy Property Manager with the Royal Household, was convicted for five years after being found guilty of accepting bribes of more than £100k. Directors of at least two companies involved, were found guilty of conspiracy to make corrupt payments and each sentenced to 18 months.

In most jurisdictions, it is an offence for individuals to engage in bribery. However, in recognition that the law alone is not sufficient to combat bribery, more needs to be done by organisations to proactively address this issue.

In order to assist organisations to fight bribery, in October, The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) published ISO 37001: 2016 Anti-bribery Management Systems. This standard is aimed at helping organisations (public or private) of any size and in any country, to establish, implement, maintain and improve an Anti-Bribery compliance programme. The guidance includes good practice measures and controls.

In September 2016, Ronald Harper, Deputy Property Manager with the Royal Household, was convicted for five years after being found guilty of accepting bribes of more than £100k

Pertinent to those persons responsible for compliance oversight of recruitment and employee screening in their organisation, section 7 of the standard includes recommendations for carrying out due diligence on personnel (From Directors to Volunteers) before they are employed and again on transfer or promotion.

It is recommended that all firms should have a robust employee screening programme, which not only helps prevent fraud and theft, but enables organisations to demonstrate that strong Anti-Bribery controls are in place. ISO 37001 promotes verification of qualifications and employment history, as well as checking whether individuals have direct links to public officials, or evidence of previous involvement in bribery.

Organisations accredited to, or working towards

accreditation of ISO 37001 should also consider extending its due diligence requirement to supply chains and other counterparties or intermediaries.

Author: Michael Whittington, MIPI & Chair of the European Chapter of the National Association of Professional Background Screeners Contact: michael.whittington@riskadvisory.net



Industry Qualifications Calls for Ofqual to Establish an Expert Panel on Qualifications Fraud

Awarding Organisation Industry Qualifications (IQ) has today called for qualifications regulator Ofqual, to establish an expert panel on confronting the issue of qualifications fraud in industries which require qualifications to obtain a license to work.

IQ itself was a victim of qualifications fraud in 2015 when Ashley Commerce College (ACC) was exposed by the BBC as having submitted examination and assessment framework that had been produced fraudulently. The qualifications concerned related to the security industry and were issued by IQ in good faith, and in accordance with established procedures. The qualifications issued fraudulently by ACC allowed some individuals to apply for a license to work in the security industry.

At the time the BBC reported "Industry insiders had told the BBC large numbers of colleges were willing to help students cheat security exams. One former SIA employee, speaking anonymously, said a high number of colleges were breaking the rules. He went on (to say) thousands of people [are] working in the industry illegally, having obtained accreditation illegally".

In an age tragically marked by terrorist atrocities, we need to know that those charged with keeping us safe are appropriately trained and qualified through a rigorous system of assessment and accreditation. Qualifications fraud in the security industry is a significant threat to public safety.

It has been reported that the ACC case was just one of 19 cases of companies operating fraudulently or engaging in malpractice in the security industry, working with a number of awarding organisation, the ACC case being the only case related to IQ.

"Since the exposure of ACC, IQ has been worked to encourage the prosecution of those involved in what was a complex fraud" said Raymond Clarke, Chief Executive of IQ. "This was our first experience of confronting systematic fraud, and despite the BBC coverage, it has been very difficult to gain traction with the police and regulatory authorities which would lead to the criminal prosecution of those involved. The need for the qualifications regulator, Ofqual, to take a lead in the creation of an environment which both reduces the risk of qualifications fraud and deals emphatically with those involved when it occurs is self-evident".

In response to what is clearly a significant issue, IQ is proposing the establishment of an expert panel. The objectives of such a panel would be to:

1. Establish the level and nature of qualifications fraud in the UK qualification system
2. Review current regulatory mechanisms for recording and disseminating information on those

involved in fraud and or serious malpractice, and developing proposals which would ensure that such individuals are barred from the UK qualifications framework.

3. Review the approach to the prosecution of fraud and the establishment of procedures and protocols with the police to ensure effective prosecution.

According to Clarke, the scale of the problem is currently unknown and information concerning those involved in fraud or serious malpractice incomplete and largely inaccessible. "The worrying fact is that those involved in fraud at ACC could still be involved in the delivery of regulated qualifications elsewhere – nobody knows. What is known is that they have not had to face prosecution for illegal acts which have threatened public safety. There is an urgent need for stakeholders, under the leadership of Ofqual, to address this issue in an open and progressive manner. A failure to confront the issue serves the interests of nobody other than the fraudsters".

For more information please contact Raymond Clarke on 01952 457458 or r.clarke@industryqualifications.org.uk

Separating the Wheat from the Chaff

By Ray Clarke, IQ Ltd

I was talking to one of our customers a couple of months back, struggling with the new economic climate facing training providers. As a well-regarded training company it had excellent employer relationships which had served it well for publicly funded training.

The issue revolves around the availability of public funding for the types of programmes offered by security training providers being progressively removed. Moreover, as the market for license to practice training is saturated with low cost and low value providers, it inevitably causes difficulties for quality providers to compete. Instead we see trainers that are not capable of inspiring students, and sometimes with limited experience in the security industry, training new entrants to the sector. In some instances, training companies themselves are perhaps barely fulfilling their legal duties.

In an environment where the price of a four-day course is so low, something has got to give. The numbers of students per cohort creeps up, the quality of trainers declines and the quality of facilities reduce as training organisations start to cut costs in an attempt to remain competitive. Whilst public funding historically allowed quality providers to offer license to practice training with the higher overheads subsidised, it is not as easy for quality to shine through in today's climate.

In an environment where the customer is

the market for license to practice training is saturated with low cost and low value providers

increasingly the individual seeking work, rather than employers, combined with the natural interest in obtaining their qualification as inexpensively as possible, standards fall.

As far as IQ is concerned, we have witnessed the changes. Whilst in 2012, our rejection rate for security training centres submitting for centre approval was 21%, during 2016 it has increased to 38%. Some of those applying were new to the security market but many are moving from one awarding organisations to another.

Responsibility

There are many that will argue it is the responsibility of awarding organisations to police this situation in what is a challenging environment. Whilst there is perhaps a grain of truth in this view, it also only

represents part of the story. Responsibility also rests with regulators and employers.

In my view, the biggest challenge we have is how we ensure a pool of high calibre trainers. People that can communicate and inspire, can impart the value of their experience in the security sector and for whom standards are important.

Trainer Capability

When I ran my first trainers course for the BSIA in 1988, there was an elderly man enrolled on the course, training to be a trainer. It was clear from the first morning that he was going to struggle. When I asked him why he wanted to be a trainers he informed me that he had no choice. His company liked him but he was too old and frail to be charged out to customers any longer, but he could not afford to retire. Very few companies placed value on the role of the trainer at that time, with a few notable exceptions.

Whilst we cannot ignore the fact that we have made significant progress since those days, there is still

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more to do. We cannot as a sector say that all or perhaps even the majority of training is interesting, well informed and delivered with integrity. When, at the bottom end of the market sub contract trainers can be paid at £125 per day or less is this really surprising?

We are a long way from what perhaps many of us hoped for at the onset of licensing and the shame of the situation is that the role of the trainer, probably holds the most significance within the licensing regime. It is perhaps the least well controlled.

Trainer Integrity

In March 2015, just as the BBC were exposing fraud at Ashley Commerce College (ACC) involving a trainer many in the industry were familiar with and importantly respected, IQ published a white paper which considered amongst other things, the way in which we monitor trainers. In March 2015, there were no means for an awarding organisation to access information from the regulator Ofqual, on trainers who had been involved in fraud or malpractice. Despite initial interest from Ofqual, some 21 months later, there has been no progress.

The overwhelming sense is that after the issue was raised by IQ in March 2015, it was quickly placed on the 'too difficult pile' by the qualifications regulator. It is far easier to respond to the effect than address the cause.

Despite the attention the ACC case generated, and the information supplied to Ofqual at the time, neither Ofqual nor any awarding organisation

The biggest challenge we have is how we ensure a pool of high calibre trainers. People that can communicate and inspire

operating in the security sector can confirm with confidence, whether those involved in the fraud at ACC have re-entered the education sector or are involved in security training. Furthermore, a list of individuals also supplied to Ofqual by IQ, who had been identified as possibly being involved in fraud or malpractice have not been followed up.

Clearly, it is not easy to resolve this situation as issues concerning the transfer of data and what might be perceived as the creation of a defacto 'black list' all have legal implications. It is obvious more needs to be done. Without action, the qualification systems will continue to be exposed and it really is time for the regulators to finally take action.

Making Changes

In the absence of regulatory action, perhaps there are things that can be done by the sector itself, with the support and involvement of awarding organisations. During the prime of SITO, industry trainers underwent the SITO train the trainers programme and were then listed on the SITO trainers register. Whilst the restrictive nature of the old SITO scheme cannot be repeated, there are things that could be done.

Perhaps the SIA could consider licensing a controlled number of companies to provide Security Trainer Training. After all, the SIA let a number of contracts for ACS assessment companies and the issue of the quality of trainers is at least as important. The way in which we develop people on entry into the industry is so critical effects quality, understanding and labour retention. However, we work in an environment where individuals can gain qualifications as trainers outside of the control or influence of the SIA, or the Awarding Organisations operating in the sector.

Another solution perhaps is to create a register of approved trainers. The sector competence of the individuals could be independently assessed, the training credentials could be monitored and perhaps the trainer independently tested. Awarding organisations could amend their own centre contracts to allow incidence of maladministration, malpractice and fraud to be reported to the holder of the register. A person could then be removed from the register should there be serious and proven concerns in relation to conducts or capability. Whilst the SIA might be the natural home for a register of trainers, it could be taken forward by others.

Clearly, there would be a considerable amount of detail that would need to be resolved as the legal issues are challenging. However, for those employing trainers in the sector, and certainly for

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awarding organisations, such a register could prove to be invaluable.

Awarding organisations have a part to play in raising the standards of training delivery. Somehow we need to stop the churn of the unscrupulous and or inadequate trainers or training companies, moving around the sector. It is highly likely the 38% of centres IQ refused approval for this year will have found an awarding organisation to work with. Conversely, I am sure despite our best endeavours, we have approved centres previously rejected by others. We need to encourage efforts to establish a culture of intelligence sharing.

Employers are also key actors in driving a culture of improvement. We are perhaps seeing a drift away from outsourcing to re-establishing training departments. It is possible that this drift will accelerate as the apprenticeship levy becomes a reality. This would be a positive development as we start to re-build internal capability. However, for those that do rely on the open market or training providers to attract pre-trained and qualified recruits, there is work to be done with the supply chain. Identifying trusted suppliers and backing quality through establishing recruitment pathways with those suppliers would have an impact.

Whilst pre-trained and free has its attractions, it depends on whether you get the wheat or the chaff. I would contend that it is time to think how we increase the percentage of wheat to chaff.

Guest column - Frank China

It is always nice to write about something you really know about or something you have a passion about, something on which you can be sure you are the 'almost' expert, or at least know all the background and facts, but these days it is becoming harder and harder, no sooner does one feel one has a handle on something than someone changes it. But I suppose that is the fun of living in today's world.

A majority of Brits voted to leave the EU, but those who didn't, say that the vote was wrong and saying that those who voted to leave didn't really know what they were voting for – well, not bad for over seventeen million people who voted to leave, foolish people they are of course; but those who voted to remain, these 'remainers', evidently, knew what they were voting for – amazing isn't it, how seventeen million people can be so foolish and sixteen million so clever! And all individual votes, so we are now living in a land of politically incompetent citizens ... mind you, one would think one would probably have some sympathy with that thought, but not for any part of the earlier logic! However that's democracy, or is it, someone once said 'Democracy is like sex. When its good it is very very good. And when its bad, its still pretty good'. So for the moment let it be pretty good.



America voted to put 'Donald' in charge and those who didn't vote for him, decided that that too was an incorrect vote. The bit one finds hard to understand is that the losers, on both sides of the `pond`, seem to believe that the definition of democracy is also wrong ; these have been two very big and dramatic votes, votes which will probably shape the world for many years to come and if would seem that there are most such dramatic votes to come, has France seen the light, Holland, Italy and even Germany. This really demonstrates what is happening now in our world. The Americans are now seemingly adopting the policy that to be truly American, you actually have to be born there, whereas the Brits believe that a British Passport, residency and a little 'spare cash' are all you need to voice your views no matter how vociferous

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and out of the mainstream you are, maybe we should adopt the American view-point. Regrettably my answer to that would probably be 'no', since Britain has been truly international for 'hundreds' of years and it would be disappointing if it did not become so again, albeit tempered, perhaps, with a little tolerance when mavericks try and take a lead, even take-over!

Nationalism is now the flavour of the month, and so it, perhaps, should be; surely one wants to visit foreign lands, wants to see different cultures, but maybe one doesn't want anyone to live in their land unless they adhere to that country's laws and regulations and most countries want to be able to establish those laws and regulations themselves. If they do, surely one would welcome them as warmly as one would hope to be warmly welcomed in their country and if they stayed and decided to be part of the British culture, it wouldn't matter if they are black, white, yellow, Christian, Jewish, Hindu or any other denomination, they will, as they always have been, be warmly welcomed.

Why do some people seem to believe that leaving the EU will turn Britain into some 'third world' state. It is not a matter of 'numbers', sixty million versus five hundred million. It is a matter of sixty million in partnership with upwards of three billion plus, of which those five hundred million are only a part.

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