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**To: All NSI approved companies and applicants**

Dear Colleague

**NEW 2012 EDITION OF BS 7858 (SECURITY SCREENING)**

I am writing to inform you that British Standards Institution (BSI) has published a new (fourth) edition of BS 7858. The new BS was published during October 2012 and the Foreword contains a statement to the effect that the new edition comes into effect on 1 May 2013.

The new edition introduces changes and the main ones are listed below:

- The number of character references has been reduced from two to one (except where additional character references are required to cover "gaps").
- Character referees must have known the individual being security screened for a minimum of two years immediately prior to the start of security screening.
- Character references must not be obtained from previous employers, relatives (by blood or by marriage) and/or persons residing at the same address as the individual.
- In addition to all bankruptcy proceedings and court judgments (including satisfied), the individual must supply details of all financial judgements made against them in the civil court and any individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs) with creditors from the previous 6 years.
- If a SIA licence is held, the organization must see the original licence and verify it against the public register of licence holders. The document details must be cross-checked against other information provided by the individual.

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- If a SIA licence is not held, the organization must be able to demonstrate that they have taken necessary steps to confirm the identity of the individual. A copy of the document(s) produced must be retained in the screening file together with details of who examined and copied the original document and evidence of any additional electronic check(s). Details within the document(s) must be cross-checked against other information provided by the individual.
- The individual's public financial information must be obtained as part of the preliminary checks instead of being verified later as part of completion of security screening.
- If an individual has opted out of appearing on the electoral roll, other forms of evidence such as recent utility bills, bank statements, etc. must be requested to confirm the individual's current address of residence.
- The threshold for Executive sign-off of single or multiple CCJs has been raised from £5,000 to £10,000.
- For some contracts (for example sites that are potential terrorist targets) organizations should consider checking the consolidated list of financial sanctions targets in the UK.
- The security screening period for the purposes of limited security screening has been reduced from 5 years to 3 years (but the full security screening period remains the same according to the circumstances).
- Where an individual is offered conditional employment following limited security screening but before full security screening has been completed, the terms and conditions of their employment must clearly state that confirmed employment is subject to satisfactory completion of full security screening within the period allowed and that conditional employment will end if full security screening is not completed satisfactorily within the time period allowed.
- The time periods for completing full security screening have not changed (12 weeks for five year screening, 16 weeks for longer periods). However an Executive can extend the security screening period by up to a maximum of 4 weeks in limited cases subject to certain requirements.

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- Periods of extended travel abroad (longer than 31 days) must now be verified as part of completion of screening.
- Where there are “gaps” in the record of career and history, the screening officer must now seek alternative evidence to verify the duration and the reasons for the incomplete record, as well as obtaining independent confirmation by a character reference having knowledge of the individual during the gap period in question.
- With regard to ancillary staff, the organization must have in place procedures which ensure that individuals who have not been security screened are restricted from having access to sensitive information, assets or equipment.

For companies approved (or seeking approval) to BS 7872:2011 (cash and valuables in transit (collection and delivery)) the security screening period is 10 years (rather than 5 years).

You are free to implement the new BS 7858 as soon as you wish (but by no later than 1 May 2013) provided that you adhere to all of the provisions. Further guidance about the adoption of the new BS is given in NSI Technical Bulletin 0022, which is available from the approved company login area of our website.

Hard copies of the new BS may be purchased from NSI or from BSI. The cost from NSI is £136.50 per copy.

You can gain access to the new BS via the on-line subscription to Standards on the NSI website, which is renewable annually. Whilst the on-line subscription does provide low cost access to Standards there are restrictions including one that prohibits printing. For further information on obtaining Standards please go to our website [www.nsi.org.uk](http://www.nsi.org.uk) or telephone NSI's Maidenhead office on 01628 637512.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries regarding the application of BS 7858:2012 that are not covered in the Technical Bulletin.

Yours sincerely

**Tony Weeks**  
Head of Technical Services