

RJ/mjc/NSI 009/15

31 March 2015

To: All NSI Approved Companies

Dear Colleague

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

With so much change to cope with in life it is comforting for end users, be they businesses or homeowners, to have constants they can rely on especially when it comes to security. Whatever else is in flux NSI approved companies continue to deliver a full and fair service.

At NSI we never forget that the strength and validity of NSI approval is in the delivery without fear or favour, and with impartiality and independence at the very core.

Regrettably for a very small minority of approved companies, NSI is obliged to withdraw approvals each year, where there is an unwillingness or lack of capacity to maintain standards.

Such decisions are taken when need be, after due consideration, and in the belief that whilst not party to the detail of any case, the NSI community would concur with such action. In my view NSI approval can be held high in the knowledge that it is truly valued, deserved and earned, and is the clearest signal of integrity, trust and competence in the business.

Our nationwide team of auditors continues to deliver what I believe to be the most professional audit service of any Certification Body in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

We have seen a number of retirements of longstanding and experienced individuals in the last 12 months, and with that, new arrivals have entered our ranks. The importance placed on giving you the best possible continuity and quality of service, means that whilst, like most businesses we continue to be cost conscious in all respects, we ensure that all newcomers are fully trained and familiarised before being deployed on "active service".

NSI continues to maintain a full strength team of its own full time auditors, supplemented only by exception and when required, by carefully appointed contractors. This is a policy and mainstay of the quality of NSI approval, and best serves your needs.

Furthermore we recognise a key strength of our teams is the benefit they and you derive from the sharing of best practice. This year NSI has invested in additional internal training days for auditors to ensure the team remains up to speed and well informed of changes and new thinking, and so improve the quality of service we deliver.

NSI Certification continues to be seen as confirmation of service excellence in the sector, with end-users and stakeholders insisting on the value of the NSI Brand. We are committed to the growth of NSI Gold as the hallmark of service excellence in the industry.



Security.Improved

Each year NSI receives around 150 complaints from end users regarding approved companies. Given the number of Certificates of Compliance issued (over 68000 in the last year), and the number of contracts delivered by Guarding Services providers, this is indeed a very small percentage. However patterns do emerge. Service across the board continues at a high level. Beyond that we would observe in the final analysis many complaints might be avoidable had end users expectations and understanding been better checked at the outset. It would seem to me that achieving a reduction of half should be something to aspire to.

In the last 13 months NSI has staged three exclusive NSI Installer Summits with the first held at the Motor Cycle Museum in Birmingham in March 2014, the second in November in Manchester and the third again at the Motor Cycle Museum in March 2015. These immensely popular events have all covered their costs. NSI is not fundamentally an events business, but whilst demand from the NSI community and exhibitors remains NSI looks to continue staging these events, with the intention to hold one national event per year going forward.

A significant part of our work of course involves developing and implementing new Standards. Securing our own approval with UKAS to deliver the latest BS EN ISO 9001:2015 is well advanced. With its introduction later this year, we are offering a series of training days exclusively to NSI approved companies to help kick-start transition to the revised standard. Feedback from our trial course earlier in the year was very positive, and we look forward to meeting many of your staff at the forthcoming training days. These as ever will be tailored to the needs of businesses operating in the sector – so please take advantage of the opportunity, and see our website for more details.

We are working toward being ready to audit against the revised standard in the autumn and would encourage you to get ahead of the curve and not leave your transition to the last minute which if previous experience is anything to go by only serves to stress your own organisation with additional pressures. NSI expects to be the first CB in the Sector delivering audits to the new BS EN ISO 9001:2015 standard.

Having done a lot of work in anticipation of the introduction of Compulsory Business Licensing in the Security Guarding Sector in 2014 this failed to materialise, and we found ourselves bidding successfully to continue as an SIA Assessing Body for the Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS).

When we have more clarity over the successor to the ACS we will be acting accordingly and keeping you informed. Virtually all approved companies we assess hold NSI Guarding Gold; an approval that we believe sets them apart from other operators in the industry. No doubt it will be some time before a new government finds its feet and defines the future for ACS and/or Business Licensing. Watch this space.

Our focus in training will continue to be to the extent that it supports approved companies seeking education in our core areas. Training in a wider context we believe is best suited to specialist operators and we are pleased to have secured generous discounts for all approved companies seeking training from TAVCOM going forward. Details will be available on our website shortly.



Security.Improved

We have utilised our E-learning tools in particular to give readily accessible guidance to approved companies taking advantage of E-Certificates of Compliance. This simple and effective service saves time and effort and the knowledge that final clients are serviced quickly with their documents. It is our intention to phase out the use of paper certificates over the next year. Paper certificates now account for a minority of those issued, and I would encourage you, if you are still a paper user, to trial web-based E-Certificates. Installer Companies using this approach find it a great time saver, and speeds up the process of completing necessary administration.

In the last month or so some of you will have been steered toward Direct Debit for settling invoices. This has been driven by a motivation to save both you and us time and expense in processing routine payments. The take-up has been very encouraging, again saving time and effort. Continuing this theme it is our intention to phase out acceptance of paper cheques this year in keeping with best business practice.

As a not for profit organisation, with a clear mandate as a UKAS accredited Certification Body, NSI continues to run with long-term sustainability in mind. The need for prudence remains key, along with delivering a good value premium service. As a result of this, the fee increase this year has been set overall at 2%, which we believe balances the need to deliver value for money for you with the need to sustain the foundations of the business.

At NSI we are committed to delivering the best possible auditing service to you and ensuring that includes clear and straightforward reporting as and when improvement needs and opportunities are found. This service should in the final analysis bring added value in supporting a continual improvement culture, and a Certificate of Approval in which your clients can have the ultimate confidence.

Many of our customers are very longstanding, whilst each year we see newly approved companies joining the ranks. Whichever end of that spectrum you occupy, you are a valued client of NSI, whom we will diligently strive to serve again in this coming year to the best of our ability. 'Thank-you' for your business.

Yours sincerely

Richard Jenkins
Chief Executive