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National Security Inspectorate

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AWEW/mjc/NSI 017/13

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To: All NSI ARC Gold approved companies, CerticCS approved ARCs, applicants for NSI ARC Gold approval and applicants for CerticCS ARC approval

Dear Colleague

ARC APPROVAL TO BRITISH STANDARD BS 5979 OR THE BS EN 50518 SERIES

This letter relates to NSI Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) Gold approvals to British Standard BS 5979 with further information about the new European Standard EN 50518 series, which is in three Parts and is published in the UK as the BS EN 50518 series:

- BS EN 50518-1:2010 – Monitoring and alarm receiving centre, Part 1: Location and construction requirements
- BS EN 50518-2:2010 – Monitoring and alarm receiving centre, Part 2: Technical requirements
- BS EN 50518-3:2011 – Monitoring and alarm receiving centre, Part 3: Procedures and requirements for operation.

These BS EN standards are included in the on-line subscription to British Standards Institution (BSI) standards that is available to NSI approved companies via the NSI website for an annual fee. Alternatively you may purchase copies of the standards from us or from BSI. Purchasing from us gives you a discount compared to the full price from BSI.

Please note that information regarding CerticCS ARC approval to Irish Standard I.S. 228 in relation to the adoption of the EN 50518 series in Ireland was given in NSI Circular Letter Ref: AWEW/mjc/NSI 016/13 dated 18 October 2013.

Withdrawal of BS 5979

Our understanding is that BSI will withdraw the current (2007) edition of BS 5979 in January 2014 due to the publication of the BS EN 50518 series.

Continued use of BS 5979

Notwithstanding the withdrawal of BS 5979, ARCs already approved to BS 5979, or approved to BS 5979 within the timescale given below, will continue to be audited against BS 5979, as well as all the other standards and codes of practice relevant to NSI ARC Gold approval including BS EN ISO 9001 and NSI Quality Schedule SSQS 102.



New applications for NSI ARC Gold approval against BS 5979

Clearly the withdrawal of BS 5979 places a limit on how long we should accept new applications for NSI ARC Gold approval against BS 5979. Having due regard to the fact that some companies have already set about designing and building their ARCs to BS 5979, and that it takes time to equip an ARC and bring it into operation, we declare the following dates for accepting further ARC approvals to BS 5979:

- 31 July 2015 will be the last date on which we will accept an application for NSI ARC Gold approval against BS 5979
- 29 January 2016 (the last working day in January 2016) will be the last date on which a new NSI ARC Gold Certificate of Approval will be issued against BS 5979

No obligation on ARCs approved to BS 5979 to upgrade to the BS EN 50518 series

As far as we are aware, there is no requirement for ARCs approved to BS 5979 to upgrade to the BS EN 50518 series, though BS 5979 approved ARCs can apply for NSI ARC Gold approval to the BS EN 50518 series if they wish to do so.

Upgrading to the BS EN 50518 series

Please note that the construction and technical requirements of the BS EN 50518 series, whilst similar in some respects to Category II of BS 5979, are not the same as Category II of BS 5979 and therefore an upgrade to the BS EN 50518 series will require financial investment in changes to construction and facilities.

If you wish to consider upgrading to the BS EN 50518 series you should carry out a full design review to establish what would need to be done in order to achieve compliance with the BS EN 50518 series.

If an ARC approved to BS 5979 gains approval to the BS EN 50518 series the approval to BS 5979 will be withdrawn. We see no requirement for dual approval to BS 5979 and the BS EN 50518 series and in any case it may not be possible to comply with both standards simultaneously.

Scope of the BS EN 50518 series

It has been determined that the present scope of the BS EN 50518 series is for the monitoring of intruder and hold-up alarms only. For confirmation of this please see the Additional Information provided by BSI in BS EN 50518-1:2010 following the National Foreword.

The scope limitation creates a problem in the sense that most ARCs carry out monitoring of other types of alarm such as fire alarms, social alarms, alarms from CCTV systems and alarms from lone worker devices. Consequently there is a need for a code of practice to accompany the BS EN 50518 series in relation to the monitoring of alarms other than intruder and hold-up.

BS 8591 – BSI Draft for Public Comment

Work has progressed on a British Standard Code of Practice (BS 8591) for the monitoring of alarms other than intruder and hold-up that cross-references to the EN 50518 series. The purpose is to create a standard that allows the monitoring of alarms, other than intruder and hold-up, to be carried out in an ARC that complies with the BS EN 50518 series.

The draft BS 8591 has been released as a BSI Draft for Public Comment (BSI Ref: DPC: 13 / 30286749 DC). The deadline for comments on BS 8591 to reach BSI is 30 November 2013.

Copies of the draft British Standard may be purchased from BSI Shop <http://shop.bsigroup.com> or from BSI Customer Services Tel: + 44(0) 20 8996 9001 or email cservices@bsigroup.com.

The draft British Standard is also available for review and comment online via the BSI British Standards Draft Review system (DRS) at <http://drafts.bsigroup.com>. Registration with DRS is free.

We will apply the recommendations of BS 8591 to all NSI ARC Gold applications involving the BS EN 50518 series where the monitoring of alarms other than intruder and hold-up is carried out. This is as well as the application of all the other standards and codes of practice relevant to NSI ARC Gold approval including BS EN ISO 9001 and NSI Quality Schedule SSQS 102.

Applications for NSI ARC Gold approval to the BS EN 50518 series

There is no deadline for an ARC to apply for NSI approval to the BS EN 50518 series.

To apply for NSI approval to the BS EN 50518 series you will need to obtain a quotation, submit an application and be ready to receive an audit from us against the BS EN 50518 series and the requirements of the NSI ARC Gold approval scheme.

Even if you are NSI approved to BS 5979, an application to be approved to the BS EN 50518 series will require extra audit time over and above the scheduled routine audits. We cannot carry out an application audit to the BS EN 50518 series as part of, or instead of, a routine audit because there is a significant amount of additional work to be done.

All applications for NSI ARC Gold approval

For further information and a quotation please contact Deborah Hollingsworth on Tel: +44 (0)1628 764844, Email: Deborah.Hollingsworth@nsi.org.uk, or Sean Mullin on Tel: +44 (0)1628 764838, Email: Sean.Mullin@nsi.org.uk.

Further development of the EN 50518 series

Our understanding is that some minor amendments to the EN 50518 series have been agreed and will be published in due course. One of these amendments clarifies the scope of the EN 50518 series as being for the monitoring of intruder and hold-up alarms only.



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Further we understand that there is an intention to merge the three Parts of EN 50518 into one standard in due course (so as to avoid having three separate Parts).

In addition, the scope of EN 50518 may be extended beyond the monitoring of intruder and hold-up alarms only. However this is further in the future.

If you have any questions about the EN 50518 series, apart from obtaining a quotation for an application for NSI ARC Gold approval, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Weeks'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tony Weeks
Head of Technical Services