

## **NSI Policy: COVID-19 (During government Delay Phase)**

Issue date: 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (Revision 3)

### **Principles**

The public and industry stakeholders recognise the importance of fire and security approval schemes in ensuring our industry is seen to be reliable, professional and highly regarded.

NSI seeks to support the fire and security industry in every way that it is able, within its remit as a UKAS Accredited Certification Body.

### **Guidance to approved companies**

#### *Suspension of audit and assessment activity*

During the course of the crisis thus far and in line with government advice, NSI has taken steps to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 whilst continuing to deliver audits and assessments, most recently remotely.

However, it has become clear for approved companies and businesses under stress - some in extreme distress - continuation of anything like normal NSI audit and assessment activity as the pandemic unfolds is untenable.

**In order to best support industry and the approved company community, NSI has suspended all audit and assessment activity from 6th April 2020 until further notice.**

This is done with the support of our stakeholders and UKAS who understand that pursuing a 'business as usual' stance serves little purpose and may have adverse consequences in the current extreme circumstances.

#### *Key information*

1. Any NSI approval that is due to expire before 31st May 2020 will be automatically extended for a limited period unless evidence dictates otherwise. (Should individual companies seek audit / assessments in this period, they should contact us).
2. It is clear to us approved companies are genuinely striving to minimise deviations from standards and deliver the best service possible, which NSI will formally be recognising as and when audits are delivered.
3. Evidence of non-compliances that are COVID-19 related will be reported in "Auditor Notes" without recourse to raising Improvement Needs and Observations.

4. NSI has published FAQ documents relating to Security & Fire Systems / ARCs and Guarding Services. Please find these on the '[NSI updates on COVID-19](#)' page on the NSI website and also on the Gold and Silver landing pages of the Company Login Area of the website - these are being updated periodically.
5. NSI operations teams have been furloughed for the period 6th April – 31st May and your normal NSI contact will not be available. We trust you understand this approach as the most appropriate action to ensure NSI is well placed to resume normal audit and assessments when possible.
6. NSI is operating with a Skeleton Staff until further notice. Should you need to contact us, please select the most appropriate contact from the list on the NSI website '[Contact Us](#)' page and we will respond accordingly.
7. NSI has suspended its chargeable cancellation policy, until further notice.
8. NSI has suspended all classroom training until further notice. NSI's e-Learning courses remain available.
9. NSI's Head Office Sentinel House remains closed until further notice.

## **Guidance to NSI Staff**

The safety and wellbeing of all staff at NSI is of primary importance. For your information, NSI Staff have been advised to:

- limit their risk of exposure and risk of spreading COVID-19 to others by:
  - complying with all government requirements, namely "staying at home" and only leaving for legitimate reasons;
  - effectively managing their personal health and wellbeing and being considerate of others in this regard;
- inform NSI line management of any COVID-19 symptoms and report self-isolation;
- if required, request:
  - flexible working arrangements;
  - compassionate absence from work as a result of COVID-19;
- keep in contact and up to date with NSI and NSI staff communications via the appropriate channels.

## **Future updates and contact information**

The COVID-19 crisis is fast moving. This policy may be revised as events unfold.