



Security Newsletter

DECEMBER 2018 | ISSUE 15

We would like to wish all of our readers a happy, safe and secure holiday season.

Security Investigations

This issue examines the topic of security investigations which may need to be conducted for your organization by an internal or external security unit.

Increasingly, security departments are taking on responsibility not only for their usual security functions, but also for health & safety issues and investigative duties previously carried-out by HR departments.



What is a security investigation?

An investigation is a systematic, careful fair and impartial enquiry aimed at establishing the facts or circumstances surrounding an event or incident in order to discover what has occurred and what procedures or actions have caused the result.

Reasons for conducting investigations

Some reasons for conducting security Investigations

- Unauthorized entry to a building or facility
- Damage to physical security structures
- Violence towards staff or visitors
- Theft of Company property
- Theft of Company Intellectual property
- Theft of company product
- Theft of employees' property
- Wilful damage to company property
- Bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Intimidation/Blackmail
- Breaches of Code of Conduct

- Breaches of Code of Practice
- Alcohol/Drugs/Weapons
- Vetting for sensitive employment placement

Within an organization, the expected conduct of its employees should be open and transparent.

This organizational culture should be included in the Code of Conduct and all employees should be familiar with it. The code should also include details of how complaints about wrongdoing can be made and detail which part of the organization will be responsible for conducting investigations when they are required.

How incidents come to light

There are a number of ways that incidents can come to light. These include:

- By direct observation of management or supervisory staff.
- By direct observation of security staff.
- As a result of a formal complaint.
- As a result of an anonymous complaint.
- As a result of another enquiry.
- After a report is made by a union or staff association

Incident Response

Immediate incident response should be covered by the security departments Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs). These will ensure that initial action is taken to respond to the incident, to prevent further injury to anyone at the scene, to give initial first aid if necessary and to ensure that the incident scene remains as untouched as is practicable. Action will then be taken to preserve any evidence for future use in an investigation.

Where the incident is of a different nature, such as a complaint of harassment for example, the detail that needs to be recorded and gathered will be very different. However, the process to be followed should still be covered by a SOP.



Who should conduct investigations?

Most organizations assign the investigative role to their in-house security divisions. Not only because many of the incidents requiring investigation are of a security nature but also due to the fact that many security units employ seasoned corporate investigators with extensive investigative experience. Other organizations prefer to outsource this function to an independent service provider so that the relationship between their security units and staff is not adversely affected by a particularly serious investigation.

The Investigative Process

The goal of every investigation is to gather information and the most basic way to do this is by asking questions

The investigative process consists of a number of steps. Their aim is to be fair, transparent and open but to lead to an overall determination of what has actually occurred, what processes may have been incorrectly followed (or correctly followed but found to be at fault) and who if anyone was to blame for the incident. These steps consist of:

1. Deciding whether to investigate or not. Is the incident serious enough? Has the complaint been made in a timely fashion? Are there any other factors which make an investigation desirable or undesirable?
2. Initial action needs to be taken to preserve evidence at the scene of the incident, by taking photographs before everything is changed, preserving CCTV footage if any, recording the identity of witnesses and where there is no incident scene per se obtaining information from the complainant.
3. With a decision made to investigate and action taken to record and preserve initial evidence, the next stage is to choose an investigator or a lead investigator if the enquiry is complex or wideranging. The person chosen needs to be experienced and seen to be fair and impartial by all parties to the proceedings. The investigator needs a clear mandate to proceed which should be covered in the organizations Code of Practice. It should be noted that if the conduct in question strays into any breach of the law or legislation that the matter should be referred to the civil authorities.

The most challenging part of many investigations especially where witnesses disagree or contradict each other is determining what exactly occurred

4. The investigator or the investigation team needs to plan the investigation. Who do they want to interview? What evidence or information do they need. They need to gather all the relevant information available. This will include initial witness accounts, photographs, CCTV footage, radio, telephone logs, text messages, social media, emails, fax and printers, etc. There may be more detailed information required from the victim (if any) or the person making the complaint.
5. he reasons for undertaking an investigation and for conducting interviews vary considerably both in seriousness and complexity. It is therefore difficult to cater for all situations. However, for all, care must be taken in planning for the interviews. Is the interview with the victim/informant, with a witness or with an accused/suspect? The approach will be different in each case.

6. Overall, what does the interviewer know and what is he/she trying to determine. Those questions will shape the interview.
6. Once the information and evidence has been gathered, the interviews conducted, and any necessary follow-up interviews completed, it is time for the investigator to evaluate all of the material. This evaluation needs to be fair and impartial and must encompass all material gathered. It should outline what has happened, who did what, what processes were used and their results and should determine who if anyone is to blame. Was the complaint substantiated?
7. Finally, the investigation should be properly documented with sufficient detail to cater for any subsequent litigation and the organization should take appropriate action or follow-up with changes to Codes of Practice where necessary.

Standard Operating Procedures

Finally, the whole investigative process should be covered in a security SOP so that security personnel understand their responsibilities in investigative situations and the organization as a whole understands the role and requirement for the security department to undertake appropriate investigations.

Distinction or Investigative Task

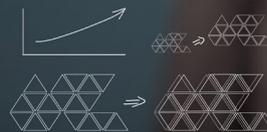
Documentation & Response



Connection & Evaluation



Threat VS Action Response DILEMMA



Investigation Process

Data Collection & Analysis



Tactical & Strategic Investigative Response



Event Classification & Recognition



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