

# Security

## Business start-up guide

### Security industry overview

Businesses in the security industry provide private security, protection or enquiry services. Police forces and government security agencies are not included in this industry.

Security services provided by businesses in this industry include:

- guards and patrols
- monitored security systems
- casual and permanent security staff
- crowd controllers
- ATM cash collection and cash transport
- some aspects of secure document and computer data storage.

Demand for security and investigative services is rising. Cautious households and businesses are investing more in security and preventative measures.

Technology plays a key role in crime prevention in the digital age, from CCTV to online security, and protection from fraud and identity theft. All of these are growth drivers for the security industry.

Demand has also increased in recent years for ATM cash collection and cash transport services.

Starting or buying a security business involves many essential steps. Legally, you must ensure that you apply for and receive the correct licences.

This guide explains how to start a security business in Queensland. It will help you understand the challenges and opportunities of entering the security industry so you can make good business decisions.

### Getting into the security industry

Before you start a security business in Queensland, you need to understand how the industry works, what

things you need to consider in your planning, and the legal requirements you must meet.

### Finding a competitive edge in Queensland's security industry

Low barriers to entry allow a high number of small operators to set up business, many of which work part-time.

Guards and patrols can win and retain business by competing on:

- price
- quality of staff
- service
- word-of-mouth recommendations from other clients.

Private investigators can boost their competitive edge through:

- good communication
- specialist knowledge and skills (e.g. in areas like fraud investigation)
- good past results
- retaining client confidence during investigations.

### Key success factors for a security business

To start a successful security business, you need to:

- be a member of an industry organisation
- use the latest technology and most efficient techniques
- have a highly trained workforce
- provide staff development and training programs
- provide premium services
- have a good reputation.

### Security industry entry barriers

Barriers to entry in the security industry are low as many areas don't require a high skill level or formal qualifications, and only a small capital outlay is needed to start operations.

The industry is labour-intensive and capital expenditure is low. Some industry-specific, state-based licences and regulations exist, but generally compliance is not difficult.

Depending on the type of security services you offer, you may need to be physically fit and be prepared to work late nights and in sometimes difficult conditions.

Although formal training requirements are minimal and qualifications are optional for most employees, there are an increasing number of professional courses emerging for this industry.

(Source IBISWorld, March 2012)

## Security industry requirements

A number of licensing and registration regulations govern the security industry. When starting a security business you need to consider the following requirements.

### Security Provider Licence - Individual: Class 1 & 2

To provide commercial security services as an individual (either as a sole trader or contractor), you may need either a:

- **Security Provider Licence - Individual: Class 1.** This licence is for bodyguards, crowd controllers, private investigators and security officers (cash in transit, dog patrol, monitoring, unarmed).

or a

- **Security Provider Licence - Individual: Class 2.** This licence is for security advisers and security equipment installers.

The [Office of Fair Trading](#) manages these licences. You must complete an approved training course. The application for these licences includes a criminal history check.

### Security Firm Licence - Class 1 & 2

To provide security services as a firm (employing people to provide security services to third parties), you may need either a:

- **Security Firm Licence - Class 1.** This licence is for bodyguards, crowd controllers, private investigators and security officers

(cash in transit, dog patrol, monitoring, unarmed).

or a

- **Security Firm Licence - Class 2.** This licence is for security advisers and security equipment installers.

The [Office of Fair Trading](#) manages these licences. The application for these licences includes a criminal history check.

### Commercially Hired Guard Dog Licence

To run a security business that provides guard dogs to clients, you will need a Commercially Hired Guard Dog Licence from [the local council](#). The application for this licence includes a criminal history check.

Membership of an approved association

All new applicants for a security firm licence need to be a member of an approved association before their licence is granted.

### Mandatory fingerprinting

All new applicants for security industry licences need to provide their fingerprints as part of the application process. If your name is included on the application form, your fingerprints will have to be taken. For firms, this includes directors, secretaries, executive officers and associated persons.

### Recognition of an interstate or New Zealand licence

If you are already licensed in another Australian state or territory or in New Zealand and you want to have your licence recognised in Queensland, you may need an application for mutual recognition Class 1 and/or Class 2 from the [Office of Fair Trading](#). If you are currently licensed in another state, under most, but not all circumstances, you may apply to have this licence transferred.

### Operating radio transmitter equipment

To operate radio transmitter equipment as part of your security service, you may need a [Radio Communications \(Apparatus\) Licence - Transmit](#) from the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

### Possessing a weapon on duty

If you plan to have a weapon in your possession during your security work, you may need a:

- [Security Licence \(Guard\)](#) from Queensland Police. You need this licence

to possess a weapon or weapons while working as a security guard as an employee of a licensed security organisation. You must hold a current security provider's licence and you must have successfully completed an approved course to get this licence.

- **Security Licence (Organisation)** from Queensland Police. This licence allows you to possess any category C, E or H weapon and permits security guards employed by your business to possess a weapon or weapons while performing their duties. To get this licence, you need a registered [business name](#) and approval of your premises from [your local council](#).

## Legislation that may apply to your business

- *Invasion of Privacy Act 1971*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Weapons Act 1990*
- *Security Providers Act 1993*
- *Security Providers Amendment Act 2007*
- *Mutual Recognition (Queensland) Act 1992*

To access copies of legislation, visit [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au).

## Useful industry contacts

### Business Support Unit

For more information on licences, regulations, market research, business planning and other support services phone 13 25 23 or visit [business.qld.gov.au](http://business.qld.gov.au)

### National Security Association of Australia (QLD)

Phone 07 3806 1699

Visit [www.nsaqld.com.au](http://www.nsaqld.com.au)

### The Australian Security Industry Association

Phone 02 8425 4300

Visit [www.asial.com.au](http://www.asial.com.au)