

EVALUATING GUARD SERVICE

Consider the following features when evaluating standard guard service:

TOUR SUPERVISORY SYSTEM RECORDING METHODS

Guard tours should be recorded by one of the following methods:

- Portable watchclock. The clock must be kept locked, and the key must be inaccessible to the guard. The clock records should be removed from the clock and checked daily by management's representative. Guards should never remove their own records from the clock. Even if contract guard service is employed, management's representative should remove the records from the clock and check them rather than relying on a supervisor from that service.
- Central station guard patrol tour supervisory system. With this type of system, the written records of the guards' tours are maintained in the central station. NFPA 72, requires the central station to notify the facility in writing if the guard is late in starting or finishing a tour. A specified grace period of 10 min – 15 min is usually permitted. Upon the expiration of the grace period, the central station attempts to contact the guard by telephone. If unable to reach the guard, the central station immediately notifies the police and dispatches its own armed guard.
- Proprietary guard patrol tour supervisory system and stationary watchclocks. With these systems, the guards' tours are automatically recorded at a central location. Management's representative should review this record daily.

CHECKING TOUR RECORDS

When checking tour records, make sure that:

- All unoccupied areas of the facility are included in each tour.
- All key stations or tour supervisory transmitters in each tour have been recorded clearly in a regular hourly pattern at night and in a bi-hourly pattern during the day.
- Tours last no longer than 45 min, allowing for a rest period of at least 15 min each hour.
- The tours begin within one half-hour of the time the area becomes unoccupied and continue to within one half-hour of the resumption of occupancy.
- The "tell-tale" of a portable or stationary watchclock is recording each time the clock is opened. Look for indications that the clock has been opened more than once a day or at unusual times. This might indicate that surveillance records were tampered with or that unauthorized persons have access to a clock key.

TOUR SUPERVISORY SYSTEM INITIATING DEVICES

Key stations, tour supervisory transmitters, or intermediate stations should be inspected once a month to see that they have not been relocated or removed, and to confirm that they are firmly attached and sealed with a "tamper" seal. Make sure the key has not been damaged. If there is evidence of tampering, the key stations, tour supervisory transmitters, or intermediate stations should be checked more often and suitable action taken.

GUARDS

Consider the following points when evaluating guards. See NFPA 601 for further details.

- The physical and emotional stability of guards should be evaluated. Guards hold positions of trust that require individuals who are physically able, mentally alert, and morally responsible. Pre-employment tests and investigations evaluating these qualifications should be mandatory whether the guards are employees of the company or from a contract service.
- Guards should have sound judgement and should be capable of responding calmly in an emergency. They should be mature enough to have sound judgment and should have the physical stamina required by the job.
- A sufficient number of guards should be provided to maintain proper surveillance. It is not desirable for guards to be assigned part-time duties unrelated to surveillance. If they are so assigned, however, these duties must not interfere with surveillance.
- The guards should receive management's full support in the performance of their duties.
 - When the guards are facility employees, management should provide the necessary training and supervision and establish the scope of the service.
 - If a contract guard service is used, management should not assume that it will be adequate. Rather, management should prepare detailed specifications and investigate the ability of prospective contractors to meet these specifications. When the contract has been let, management should make sure that its intent is being carried out.
- The initial and continued training of guards should be given as a formal, comprehensive written program covering all applicable protection procedures. Each guard must be:
 - Acquainted with the general nature of the facility's operations and possess specific knowledge of those operations which are hazardous.
 - Familiar with the facility's manual and automatic fire protection equipment and protective signaling systems. They should be especially aware of the location of all sprinkler valves and know which area each controls. AXA XL Risk Consulting suggests that guards periodically accompany the person making fire protection equipment inspections in order to gain a working knowledge of facility protection features and hazards (see *OVERVIEW*, Section 12 [PRC.1.12.0]).
 - Familiar with the location and operation of manual fire alarm stations and other means of transmitting fire alarms. Such means should be provided throughout the facility to permit guards to easily report a fire.
 - Taught to notify the fire department before attempting to fight the fire.
 - Taught how to admit public fire apparatus to the property and how to direct fire department officers to the location of the fire.
 - Taught to properly notify company officials when an emergency occurs or when potential trouble is observed.
 - Taught to maintain a shift log and to prepare reports to management of observations made and action taken during tours.
- Guard service should be integrated into the overall pre-emergency planning program (see *OVERVIEW*, Section 7 [PRC.1.7.0]).
- General and special instructions and other data required by the guards should be written down and kept up-to-date (see NFPA 601).

In summary, management should expect, and is entitled to receive, guard service of the highest quality. Guards must be conscientious in the performance of their duties, noting and reporting all infractions of company regulations and closely following the orders given to them.