

Industry Security Notice

Number 2011/04

Subject: National Security Vetting and Government Contracting Policy

Introduction: This Industry Security Notice (ISN) is issued as a reminder to United Kingdom (UK) organisations recruiting staff either on behalf of Government Departments or for Defence contractors, of the UK Government policy regarding the confidentiality of the national security vetting process. This ISN should be read in conjunction with ISN 2010/03.

Issue: There have been a number of recent instances where recruitment agencies have been issuing and handling Security Questionnaires as part of the National Security Vetting process.

Policy: Individuals subject to National Security Vetting are asked to provide via the appropriate questionnaire personal information about themselves, partners, family members and other associates. This information is taken into account by Government Departments and agencies to reach a reasoned decision on an individual's suitability to be granted a security clearance permitting access to protectively marked information. It is the responsibility of the employer to sponsor the security clearance for, and seeking the completion of the appropriate NSV questionnaire by prospective employees. It is not appropriate for recruitment agencies to be involved in any part of this process beyond informing suitable individuals that the appointment requires the successful applicant to be subjected to the NSV process.

For defence contractors the recently-introduced CERBERUS electronic vetting system by registered users will, when it is fully accessible for industry users, speed up the vetting process and provide for the electronic submission of vetting questionnaires to the Defence Vetting Agency over an appropriate link. On the occasions when it is necessary to use hard copy forms, vetting questionnaires should be handled by authorised sponsors only.

Action by Contractors/Individuals: Contractors should ensure that agencies recruiting personnel on their behalf are not involved in processing any NSV questionnaires. Contractors or individuals requested to complete NSV questionnaires by recruitment agencies should refer the agency to this notice and ISN 2010/03.

Validity / Expiry Date: This ISN remains valid indefinitely or until superseded.

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