

# THE ONTARIO REPORT



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## Regulating Private Security

As with any new piece of government legislation, there is always concern, confusion and a boat load of questions from the people and/or industry most affected by its passing.

When it comes to Ontario's relatively new Private Security and Investigative Services Act ([www.ontario.ca/private-security](http://www.ontario.ca/private-security)), there are still many members of the security industry still scratching their heads about how it directly impacts them.

Enacted into law on August 23, 2007, the act, administered and maintained by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS), in its simplest form, requires security guards, private investigators, bodyguards, bouncers or loss prevention personnel to be licensed. Under the act, any business entity that employs its own in-house security personnel, but is not in the business of selling security services, is also required to register with the Private Security and Investigative Services Branch. This may include, but is not limited to retail stores, hotels and hospitals. Registrations are valid for one year and must be renewed annually. Businesses that employ security staff from a licensed security agency do not need to register.

Although most members of CANASA are involved in the design, installation, distribution and manufacturing of electronic security and alarm systems, knowledge of this act is vital to their long-term viability as it most definitely impacts them and their customer base.

Jon Herberman, director/registrar of the Private Security and Investigative Services Branch (PSISB) of the MCSCS states this new legislation was implemented "because of the increasing importance of private security in Ontario, as well as the rapid growth of the industry," adding the industry has grown to include more than 55,000 licenced security guards and private investigators.

The impetus behind the act was the Patrick Shand inquest, which produced



many recommendations including the creation of some form of legislation regulating the province's private security industry. For Herberman, all of the recommendations helped "further professionalize the security industry, increase public safety and ensure that practitioners receive proper training and are qualified to provide protective services."

Brian Robertson, president of Diligent Security Training and Consulting, explains the act includes three main areas of reform from its predecessor: 1) a decision was made that proprietary security would be licensed, basically doubling the licensed body; 2) non-security guard categories were captured, such as loss prevention officers and bouncers in licensed premises; and 3) the idea of a "portable license" for the individual, that in effect allows casual labour, "moonlighting" and assistance in job searches.

Robertson also notes mandatory training requirements were introduced. The Ministry has set the curriculum and has stipulated who can deliver it, instructor qualification and testing. This aspect of the act is not scheduled for implementation until late 2009, but

those in the security industry should review the standards to ensure future compliance.

As director of security operations at Woodbine Entertainment in Rexdale, Ont., Kevin Murphy is fully up to speed on the act's inner workings, and believes it is good for the industry and the Ontario public.

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### CANASA NEWS

CANASA Ontario has approved a motion to request the National Board approve the establishment of an "Accredited Security Contractor" (ASC) designation.

This program will create a meaningful threshold for entry to the security contracting business. The ASC designation will attest to the consumer/end user that the Accredited Security Contractor subscribes to a list of industry "best practices." More information will be forthcoming in the months ahead. We will keep you posted!

# Never Ending Battle

Despite all of the efforts by law enforcement, many alarm companies, end users and product manufacturers, false alarms remain a thorn in the security industry's side.

While the alarm penetration rate increases, we are still seeing false alarm rates exceed the 90 per cent plateau. One of the reasons for the lack of significant progress is the fact that in Canada, there is a myriad of police by-laws regarding false alarms — ranging from fees to suspension to no police response at all. For alarm companies, it can be extremely difficult to keep track of what by-laws impact them and their customers.

For example, in Hamilton, Ont., if a home alarm is registered with the police, it is allowed one free nuisance alarm, with subsequent ones resulting in fines based on a sliding fee scale. In London, Ont., police give a caution notice on the first false alarm and termination of service on the second within 365 days. Payment of \$200 will reinstate service after termination, if inspected by the alarm company. Also, some police services will directly bill the consumer for a false alarm, adding non-payments to his or her tax bill, while others will bill the alarm company.

“There is no real unity or familiarity among the police programs or by-laws across Canada, which could make it difficult for the alarm companies,” says Christine Van Geest,



the Hamilton Police Alarms Program Administrator, adding in England, all police services operate under the same alarm policy, with fees only reflecting geographic differences.

In the United States, several states have instituted state-wide ordinances for false alarm dispatches.

Although policy differences can be difficult to explain to consumers, many industry pundits believe it is the responsibility of alarm companies to reduce nuisance alarms, which can actually open revenue possibilities. From a policing perspective, Van Geest recom-

mends provincial legislation that institutes mandatory permitting of alarm companies and certification of installers with better on-site training of consumers. As well, she feels that EVC installation would reduce nuisance alarms. Mandatory permitting of the client and heftier fines for abusers would put more onus on clients to take their equipment seriously, while dispatching guards to calls would reduce police involvement and thus fines.

Due to the “cry wolf” syndrome, many law enforcement officials will admit alarm calls are a low priority and it is up to the alarm community to address this problem so as to ensure the consumer gets what they paid for. Differing levels of guard attendance can be offered while there are products on the market that can offer instant e-mail video verification to the customer, who would then authorize police attendance based on information received. As well, manufacturers are creating better fool-proof equipment for consumers to reduce human-error, by far the leading cause of false alarms.

The cost of a nuisance alarm is staggering in lost police time, but can also result in death from car crashes, ignoring of alarms due to high false record and a lack of confidence by the consumer when they wait hours for police attendance. By working with law enforcement, there is no doubt the alarm industry can reduce false dispatches.

## ONTARIO EXECUTIVE REPORT

Summer is primarily golf season at the Ontario Chapter and the Summer of 2008 was no exception. The way we organize our golf tournaments allows for some good charitable work, while enjoying a great day with peers on the links. This past summer, the Ontario Chapter hosted three golf tournaments:

**London:** Held on June 20 at the Pine Knott Golf & Country club in Dorchester, 144 golfers helped raise \$2,230 for the Children's Hospital of Western Ontario;

**Toronto:** 188 golfers hit the Station Creek Golf Club in Gormley on July 17, and raised \$5,400 for Autism Ontario; and

**Ottawa:** On August 27, the Hammond Golf & Country Club witnessed golfers barbecue their own steak after a day on the course; more importantly \$1,344 was raised for the War Amps of Canada.

I may add that the weather cooperated for all three tournaments; in fact, the weather was excellent, which is no small feat considering the Summer of '08 will be remembered as one of the wettest on record.

One of the best aspects to remember from these events is the work of our great volunteers and the support they showed to local charities. I

would like to thank all of them for the hard work done in promoting, supporting and delivering these events on behalf of their colleagues. In particular I would name Mary Vella and Bob Hoevenaars for London, Ed Fitchett for Toronto and tireless Pierre Thivierge for Ottawa.

At the national office, I must give credit to a very special group of people, Lynne Hewitson and the national office staff, whom took care of a major portion of the tournaments and all of the minutiae of getting them organized, right down to the finest details. We should also recognize and thank Frank Pietrobono, CANASA's national president, for his inimitable skill in selling raffle tickets, which are instrumental in supporting the various charities involved.

With Fall upon us, it can only mean one thing: Security Canada Central. I hope to see all of you at the conference. Please stop by the CANASA booth and say hello to all the people working for you — the members. See you at the trade show.

— *Mel Gedruj, CSPM*  
Treasurer, Ontario Chapter

# At the Show

On October 22 and 23, the largest security event in Canada will take place. Similar to past Security Canada Central (SCC) conferences and expos, this year's event will feature new products, industry experts, great educational sessions and plenty of networking opportunities. However, there is one difference: It will be bigger and better than ever!

Have you honestly thought about how you can get the most out of SCC, which some deem equivalent to ISC West held annually in Las Vegas, Nev.? Where else do you have the chance to see new products, view the latest trends, and collect information on current issues in the industry?

The concept of "security" has grown to be a viable business on many levels. SCC's steadily increasing growth rate of 10 to 15 per cent per year reflects this train of thought. The 2008 show is a representation of more than 300 booth spaces, and more than 2,500 attendees over a two day period.

To get the most out of your SCC experience, it is a good idea to arm yourself with the right information before embarking on the long journey through this information marketplace. Comfortable shoes, lots of business cards, and a couple of practical goals are a good start.

Here are some important things to keep in mind as you are walking the aisles:

- The "theme" of the show this year is "Optimizing the Use of IP Ready Infrastructure." We have all seen the introduction of and continuation of the trend towards this type of technology.
- SCC draws a more diverse type of attendee, one who is in tune with the ever-changing demands of the security decision-maker. Remember, in today's competitive marketplace, face-to-face interaction with well-informed personnel is difficult, let alone rare, and you should treat this as the opportunity for you to speak with the key people who can assist you with your requirements and build your business.
- 2008 brings more seminars than ever, 32 to be exact; this does not take into account the additional 10 Manufacturers Technical Sessions. Innovative sessions represented by key people in the banking, event management, police services and legal sector are well represented in this year's line up. Where else can you, as a CANASA member, take advantage of the range of educational topics covered for the low cost of \$150.00? You should consider this an investment in your future.
- For the first time, the High Tech Crime Investigators Association will be represented and have prepared a fascinating session on digital forensics relating to portable/mobile devices.
- Since safety is currently a key issue in the labour field, CANASA will be offering a course on WHMIS in Construction and Fall Protection Basics, a key factor you should consider for yourself, as well as your valuable staff members. Please note that upon completion of these courses you will be issued Wallet Cards to verify your participation in the course.
- Having difficulty finding good staff? CANASA is finding more students are investing in the future of this industry. Recently noted, Loyalist, Algonquin, and Georgian Colleges offer several options in the security field. Hiring the right person for the right job is key to the success of your business. CANASA has taken note of the increased participation in these college courses as an option to source out your new and innovative employees of the future.
- The further development of your staff can also benefit from the ATC1 (Alarm Technician Course) being offered on October 24 and 25, at the Doubletree International Plaza Hotel. This hands on, technical course will benefit both your staff and your bottom line!
- Have you taken a moment to ask yourself, as a CANASA member, am I contributing enough to the association? Make sure that your voice is heard at the Annual General Meeting taking place on Wednesday, October 22 at 5 p.m.
- Meet with the key decision-makers who are moulding the industry; it is important for you to give them your feedback and input into what you would like to see in the marketplace. Make a point of visiting the booths

## ON THE LINKS



1st Place Winners from the South Western Ontario Golf Tournament held in London, Ont., receive trophies from Ed O'Hearn (front, middle): Bob Lafrance, Steve Ricker, Mike Earhart, Bob Hoevenaars



1st place winners at Toronto golf tournament: Ed Fitchett, CANASA's Ontario Chapter President, with team of Wayne Hurd, Peter Garnham, Henry Schnurbach, Doug Dombroski



2nd place winners at Toronto golf tournament: Colin Young, Rob Stelling, Ed O'Hearn and Ed Bodbyl, with Ed Fitchett



3rd place winners at Toronto golf tournament: Ed Fitchett with team of Alex Grenda, Dave Givelas, Brian Doswell, Stan Pocock



Most Honest Team at Toronto Golf Tournament held July 17 at Station Creek: Ed Fitchett with team of Kyle Acker, Jim Bowles, Tim Flood, Craig Graham

and exhibits that will make you a better-informed security professional! It is always an advantage to you, as a businessperson, to encourage your staff to attend and collect information on new trends, technologies and products, which would be in the best interests of your future company growth!

And don't forget that as a CANASA member you receive preferred pricing on events!

## MARKETING MINUTE

## GETTING RANKED

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Education: TBA

Self-Regulation: Mark Fairley

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Members' Meeting/  
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Media: Rita Murphy

Trade Show: Jamie Couper

Membership: TBA

Monitoring Station: Bert O'Grady



When it comes to Internet marketing, it is all about search engine optimization (SEO). Simply put, SEO is the process of making a web site and its content highly relevant for both search engines and online searchers. It is the difference between a web page being ranked on the first page on Google's search page or on the twentieth.

There is no doubt that more and more people are using the Internet to find service providers of all types, including alarm companies, monitoring stations and system integrators. If you want your company's web site to be ranked higher in Google, Yahoo and MSN's search results, you may want to try the following SEO tips:

- Submit your web site to the search engines.
- Insert keywords within the title tag so that search engine robots will know what your page is about. The title tag is located right at the top of your document within the

head tags. Inserting a keyword or key phrase will greatly improve your chances of bringing targeted traffic to your site.

- Make sure you have links coming into as many pages as possible. What does it tell a search engine when other web sites are linking to different pages on your site? That you obviously have lots of worthwhile content.
- If you have several topics that could each support their own website, it might be worth having multiple domains.
- Every site needs a site map, which should be linked to and from every page on the site. This will help the search engine robots find every page with just two clicks.

These are just a few of the SEO strategies companies can implement to increase traffic to their respective web site. It may be time consuming and a little confusing, but it is definitely a worthwhile investment for any business, of any size.

**REGULATING PRIVATE SECURITY**

*Continued from page 1*

"Civil litigation was the check and balance and now we have a Code of Conduct that will benefit all," says the president and chairman of the board of the Canadian Society for Industrial Security (CSIS), who sat on the Ministry's advisory board for the act. He notes that in such places as Toronto's PATH system, "private security is involved in providing safety in large public spaces that are privately owned. The new legislation gives the public a more visible check and balance. As well, it demands better skills and education from the workforce."

Ontario is not alone in trying to regulate some aspect of the security industry. Quebec's Bill 188 requires licensing for locksmiths and alarm installers, while British Columbia has required security and alarm technicians to be licensed for years.

So why should members of CANASA take notice? Well, according to Robertson, "you must actually regulate yourself if you want the province to set the standards." In other words, standards that actually assist the industry, open avenues of revenue and meet public demands.