

Hospital Security Training Feb 2020

Background.

The survey was commenced to gain a understanding of the Hospital Security industry, looking at whether people were employed directly by the Hospital or by a contact company, and whether there was any difference in the training they were given, or in which they thought was suitable for the requirements of their duties. We often hear comments that there should be more of this in the initial training courses, and then we hear comments like should this be trained in a course or in an induction provider by the employer.

The survey partly was to understand any future training options which might be missed by the hospital or the security company at this stage, or even within the RTO system for security courses, which could better help to improve the industry in the future.

The survey also asked a couple of questions in related to the award payments and to gain a understanding of whether staff need to be better educated on the award and their knowledge of the award in relation to their industry.

The survey was shared through Security Facebook groups, and asked for people to pass it onto their colleagues to assist in a more accurate survey, the disappointing part was only 17 people identified as working in a hospital setting were prepared to undertake the survey, although not names, emails, personal details were collected during the survey.

Results

When the question was asked about who they were employed by, 58% of the respondents were employed directly by the hospital, and around 41% employed by a private Security company, which surprised me a little as I thought the majority of the work was now being contracted out, but apparently this is not the case, and I believe in some States this might reduce the necessary qualifications, and licences some staff might need to work in the security aspect of the Hospital industry.

When asked about the award, and whether Security officers knew their pay rate, 47% of them believed they were paid according to the award, and around 5% acknowledged that they did not know the award requirements. The interesting aspect was 35% were paid above the award, and only 11% indicated they were paid below the award, which surprised me given the many discussions which occur in the Facebook groups about pay, and under payment of staff etc, again I would suggest the minimum responses in the survey to not give us a full count of the actual situation.

When the question was asked about an induction prior to your first shift, the results were that around 23% of respondents indicated that no induction was offered, which is disappointing as how are staff meant to do the best job possible with knowing what is required, think this might be a education aspect which could be introduced for Managers. However around 35% indicated that the security company provided the induction, and that 52% were inducted by the Hospital.

When it came to training it was good that the majority, around 76% of respondents indicated that their employer provided some sort of training for the security staff once they are employed, which is good, although still means that 23%, almost 1 in 4 were not being offered training once they are employed in a security role.

When it came to medical outbreaks in the workplace, e.g flu, corona virus, and whether security were provided with any special instructions on this subject, it is disappointing to see that 76% said no, they were not offered any specific instructions as to how to respond or anything about the condition, could this have put staff at risk in the initial stages. May be an education aspect for employers which can be better reviewed and evaluated for future incidents.

When the question was asked about how long some had been in their current role for, we found 35% of the respondents indicated they had been in their role for 1-2 years, however it was interesting that both the 2-5 years and the Over 8 years had the same responses of 23% for each. W

Whilst it is not important, when the question was raised about age, 41% respondent with being over the age of 45, and only 11% indicated being under 25 years of age, which might be a bracket in which Security can look at improving which might allow security officers to consider security as a career path and not just a full in or casual position.

Whilst it was not important, 88% of the respondents indicated to being Male within the hospital system, which leaves a minimum of the respondents were female, however again it is difficult to monitor this, as there were minimum responses to the survey to give a true indication of the gender of the security staff within hospitals.

When it came to the question about the future and how long they saw themselves remaining in security, it was pleasing to see that 52% of the respondents were planning on remaining in the industry for another 5-10 years, the disappointing part of the responses were that around 30% of the respondents almost 1 in 3 were unsure on the industry and whether they would remain in the industry for the future.

The interesting aspect of the survey for me, was that 40% of the respondents indicated that they wanted to try another aspect of the security industry, as the part the most wanted to move towards was the Management level, which might be a area where security companies need to have good processes and procedures in place to develop and improve their staff towards Management, which can only assist with the succession planning. It was noted that 26% of the respondents were keen to consider learning more and possibly moving into an investigations aspect of the industry. The disappointing part was that 33% of the respondents indicated they were not interested in trying another part of the security industry in which they current work in.

When asked about job satisfaction 88% of the respondents indicated that they were happy within their current role within the security industry. 70% of the respondents indicated they were offered Mental Health Support as part of their employment. 58% of the respondents rated their Manager for leadership as being very good, however the concerning part was that 23% indicated their Manager or team leader were below average when it came to leadership, which again might be an area Security companies and review and improve their leadership development of staff as we know

employers are more likely to leave a company due to poor Management/ Leadership than almost any other reason.

OH&S/ WH&S is an important subject in any industry, and the disappointing part was that 64% of the respondents indicated that they don't always feel safe at work. This might be something in which individual companies can research within their own workforce and look at ways in improving this.

When asked whether someone had another role in the hospital, it was interesting that 16% respondent with a receptionist job, and 83% indicated they had another role in the hospital however the other did not allow for porter or cleaner, so unfortunately the survey did not detect what the other role was, or whether they were done in conjunction with a security role or whether both were casual/ part time roles in different areas of the workplace at different times.

When It came to qualifications it was interesting to read that although 35% of respondents indicated they had completed the certificate 3 level qualification, that 29% of the respondents indicated they had the Diploma of Adv Diploma level within the security industry, which I think it is great that security officers have taken the time to advance their knowledge and skills in the industry, which can only help to keep improving the industry.

There seemed a common thread when they were asked about what training did they want employers to offer in the future, the area people felt they were lacking included, Communications, Dealing with weapons, self –defence, Mental health and de-escalation, more on the on job scenario's to better prepare a security officer.

When it came to asking about what training they thought was missing in their initial training, again the following, Conflict Management, Mental Health De-escalation, and more scenarios based on real life situations to help ppl prepare for the industry.

People did not feel supported with in the workplace and many in the hospital industry felt there needed to be more staff on the floor to assist when something goes wrong.

When it came to general comments on the industry, there were not a lot made within this survey, however the following were the standouts

Females reported sexual harassment being an issue, and something in which companies need to address.

National Licencing, possibly more powers for the security officers, better training, but also better RTO system, and trainers who are prepared to train potential staff for the industry and not just the money, e.g. not everyone should pass the course.

Summary.

The survey was considered ways of finding out what future training options could be out there for training providers to offer for staff, however providers must realise a lot of employees are paying for their own, so needs to be done at an affordable price, considering the security officer's wage is low.

It is good to see a majority of the employers are offering training, recently I did a survey on business owners and the majority of the respondents there who earned under \$250,000 set a \$5000 budget for training for themselves or their staff, so not a huge budget when you look at their income, so need to ensure training costs are in line with the budget, so real value for money.

Initially training is missing a bit for the majority of staff, and maybe the RTO system needs to consider a certificate II type course or something in hospital security, however if people complete this it could mean they can only work in Hospitals, rather than any other security. However now we have identified some shortfalls in training, it allows employers to consider ways in which they can improve the staff training and knowledge in the areas in which they feel are missing.

It appears within the survey results, security officers are expressing an desire to undertake further training and have identified their weaknesses for them to be able to complete their tasks, management need to consider which of the training is more important for their own staff within the workplaces they operate in. One of the biggest questions will always remain who will pay for this training, whilst the award might cover training in a lot of ways, for example staff being paid to do the training, it comes to the training of the actual training, although understanding is the training relative to the job at hand, or is it just someone going for extra qualifications.

Enjoy your time in the industry.