An tÚdarás Slándála Príobháidí
The Private Security Authority

Strategic Plan 2026-2028

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Foreword

Our new strategic plan for the three years 2026-2028 comes at an important time for the Private Security Authority. Established in 2004, the Private Security Authority has spent the last two decades in its important establishment and growth phases. It has sequentially brought sectors within licensing, in the process setting standards and promoting professionalism in the private security industry. We currently have 15 sectors under licence. Over the coming three years we will work to advance licensing to the remaining sectors as mandated by the legislation.

As a still relatively young organisation, the Private Security Authority is cognisant of the need to achieve greater awareness amongst the public of the work it does. It will be important that more resources are directed towards communications and promoting knowledge of what is regulated by the Private Security Authority and of how we conduct our operations and ensure compliance. It will also be important that the Private Security Authority raises its profile amongst licence holders and the general public. We will achieve that by developing a new communications strategy and through initiatives such as increasing our participation in multi-agency inspections.

Over the term of this Strategic Plan, the Private Security Authority will promote professional standards and practice improvement. It will do this by working in partnership with the industry to continuously enhance professional competence and standards. That will include identifying the scope for enhancement in both assessing licence holder suitability and undertaking probity checks and in the auditing assessment and certification process. We will work to update standards where updates are needed and will review our standard development processes to make them more efficient. Working with those involved in security guarding, we will evaluate leading practice and consider enhancement to the initial training as well as the need for continuous improvement as careers progress. Beyond that, we will increase awareness of the tangible benefits of diversity to encourage greater inclusivity in contractor recruitment, promotion and the deployment of personnel.

As we move from establishment to consolidation, achieving operational transformation though the delivery of efficiencies and enhanced effectiveness will be a top priority. The Private Security Authority has been hindered by legacy technology and not well positioned to modernise processes. It is vital that we be able to deliver a better experience to both our licence holders and our staff. Over the timeframe of this plan we will introduce new ICT systems to transform the manner in which we licence, regulate, and produce and use management information. In tandem with the introduction of the new technology we will systematically identify and deploy solutions to enhance our administrative efficiency through process redesign, ICT enablement and effective system integration. We will look to ICT and AI solutions to better target inspections, streamline inspection processes, and to improve both our inspection capacity and reporting.

The staff of the Private Security Authority are at the heart of what we do. Our Strategic Plan 2026-2028 can only be delivered through our team of people. Over the next three years we will develop and leverage our shared expertise to successfully deliver our mandate while

meeting our stakeholders' expectations. We have knowledgeable and engaged staff, and a good organisational culture. These qualities though cannot be taken for granted. We need to preserve and further develop what is good about our organisation as it enters and goes through a time of operational transformation. Concurrent with this 3-year strategic plan, we will have a resource plan that makes clear what we need to enable us to achieve these stretching objectives.

Regulation of the private security industry is important. Stakeholders agree that the Private Security Authority has brought significant improvements to the Irish security industry over the last two decades. Together with our industry stakeholders we will continue to protect the public and raise standards, increase awareness and enforce compliance. The Private Security Authority has benefitted greatly since establishment from the support of the Minister and the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, An Garda Síochána, the security industry, and many others. Our Strategic Plan 2026-2028 stretches the ambition of the Authority and implementation will require that support to continue.

Ms. Jillian van Turnhout

Mr. John Phelan

The Authority

The Private Security Authority (PSA) is responsible for the regulation of the private security industry in Ireland. Our role is to protect consumers and the public by promoting a quality regulatory environment for businesses and individuals working in the security industry. We are an agency of the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, established by the Private Security Services Act 2004. The Act was amended in 2011 and 2021.

In 2025, there are over 52,000 employee and contractor licences in circulation in the following sectors:

- Access Control Installation and Maintenance
- Cash-in-Transit
- CCTV Installation and Maintenance
- CCTV Monitoring
- Door Supervisor
- Enforcement Guard
- Event Security
- Intruder Alarm Installation and Maintenance
- Intruder Alarm Monitoring
- Locksmith
- Private Investigator
- Security Guard
- Supplier or Installer of Safes

During the course of this Strategic Plan, regulation will be extended to individuals working in the electronic security[1], powered gates, locksmith and safes sectors and to contractors in the powered gates, security consultant and close protection sectors. The scope of security guard licensing will be expanded to include dog handlers.

The PSA is administered by a Board appointed by the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. The current Board took office in March 2022 with returning Board members appointed on a 2 year term and new Board members appointed on a 4 year term. The Board is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the Authority. This Strategic Plan sets out the Board's goals and objectives for the next three years.

[1] The Electronic Security sector includes Access Control, Intruder Alarm, and CCTV installation and maintenance.

The Regulatory Environment

The qualitative and quantative stakeholder consultations we conducted in developing this strategy show that industry stakeholders welcome the improvements regulation has brought to the industry. They expressed a consistent desire to see greater general awareness of both the PSA and of the relevant regulations. Respondents want to see a level playing field, where all contractors, at a minimum, abide by the standards set by the PSA. We know that we need to raise awareness and we will work to achieve this over the course of this strategic plan.

Technology also emerged as a theme, with emerging technologies changing the way in which security services are delivered. Notwithstanding new technologies, the security industry generally is challenged to recruit and retain staff with the healthy state of the economy continuing to be reflected in the demand for security services. The PSA will look to assist the industry in making security work a lifelong career option, with career paths and professional development, and in examining how working in security can be made more attractive to underrepresented demographic groups. The PSA will itself implement new technology and will systematically identify and deploy solutions to enhance our administrative efficiency. Over the next three years, we will develop the ability to process licence applications faster and more efficiently, which will help firms when recruiting and individuals when applying to us.

Licensing Statistics August 2025

Sector	Individuals	Contractors	Turnover (€)[2]
Cash In Transit	906	4	63,203,000
Door Supervisor (Event Security)	N/A	39	4,314,000
Door Supervisor (Licensed Premises)	12,609	45	10,366,000
Electronic Security Sector[3]	N/A	971	317,445,000
Enforcement Guard	5	3	102,000
Locksmith	N/A	192	24,257,000
Private Investigator	290	85	9,726,000
Security Guard (Alarm Monitoring)[4]	956	38	66,991,000
Security Guard (CCTV Monitoring)	N/A	35	22,946,000
Security Guard (Event Security)	N/A	51	16,304,000
Security Guard (Static/Guarding)	36,936	187	534,353,000
Total	51,702	1,650	1,070,008,000

[2] Turnover is based on figures provided by contractors with their application and relates to their previous accounting period. Figures are rounded.
[3] The Electronic Security Sector currently includes licensing in the sub-sectors of Access Control, Intruder Alarm and CCTV. The Supplier or Installer of Safes sectors were brought under licensing in 2025, bringing the number of sectors licenced to 15.
[4] The figure for individuals includes Intruder Alarm Monitoring and CCTV Monitoring, as one licence covers both categories.

We currently regulate 15 sectors of the security industry and this will expand to 17 over the course of this plan. We anticipate that the number of licences will increase from around 52,000 to in excess of 60,000 over the course of this plan. The industry is not homogenous, with contractors ranging from low-turnover sole traders operating in their local community to large national and international companies with multi-million Euro turnover. This diversity presents many challenges for a regulator as each sector is different in how it operates and within each sector the scale of individual businesses can require different approaches in the areas of licensing, compliance and communications.

Most of the growth in licensing is expected to be due to the extension of employee licensing to electronic security, powered gates, safes, and locksmiths combined with continued demand for security guards. In order to provide for this increase, the strategy includes a broad programme of development in training, qualifications and standards. Consultation with the security industry will be critical in ensuring that the programme meets the needs of security providers.

Our primary focus is the protection of the public and users of security services. To achieve this we will strengthen the regulatory environment by undertaking a review of our standards to support crime prevention and consumer protection.

Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission

is to protect the public by regulating the private security industry through raising standards, increasing awareness and enforcing compliance.

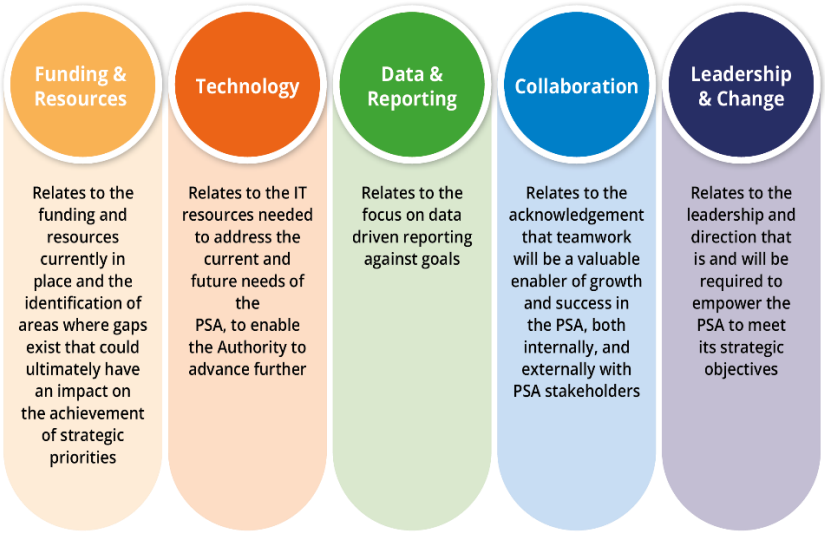
Our Vision

Our Vision is one of enhanced public confidence and consumer protections in a well regulated security industry.

How we will deliver on our mission

Our mission for this strategic period centres on

These goals will be underpinned by a number of enablers, which will support the delivery of our plan.



Goals and Objectives

GOAL 1:

Strengthen regulatory effectiveness and enforce compliance to build public confidence in the security industry

Objectives:

To achieve this strategic goal we will:

1.1 Research, evaluate and assess compliance and public safeguarding gaps to: (i) determine regulatory enhancement requirements and (ii) inform the development of targeted awareness campaigns

1.2 Develop and update our regulatory benchmarks to reflect the PSA's evolution, and leverage ICT and AI for inspection targeting and the delivery of compliance enhancements

1.3 Develop and implement a comprehensive Communications Strategy to raise awareness of PSA regulation, promote compliance, and enhance public confidence in the security industry

1.4 Explore scope to pursue appropriate sanctions for less significant and self-evident compliance breaches – without recourse to detailed investigation and prosecution

1.5 Develop and enhance arrangements, including the use of collaborative targeted multi-agency inspections to optimise impact and incentivise compliance

1.6 Advance the licensing of private security sectors in accordance with the Private Security Services Acts 2004 to 2021

GOAL 2

Advance professional standards and practice through industry partnership to elevate competence across all sectors

Objectives:

To achieve this strategic goal we will:

2.1 Provide PSA's considered input into the review of vetting arrangements – identifying scope for enhancement in assessing licence holder suitability and undertaking probity checks

2.2 Undertake QA reviews of auditing bodies' evaluation practices, to enhance audit assessment and certification, while ensuring adherence to PSA audit guidelines and meeting licence holders' value expectations

2.3 Establish thematic working groups to complete evaluation of leading practice and inform: (i) basic training module enhancements and (ii) up-skilling/CPD module development

2.4 Undertake review of diversity research and increase awareness of tangible benefits to encourage greater inclusivity in contractor recruitment, promotion and the deployment of personnel

2.5 Identify standards requiring: (i) priority review and (ii) development – agree related work programme and report progress on a quarterly basis

2.6 Undertake review of PSA standard development processes and agree updated procedures to deliver efficiency in meeting the different sectors' priorities and implementation timelines

GOAL 3

Modernise operations to achieve enhanced efficiency and effectiveness

Objectives:

To achieve this strategic goal we will:

3.1 Systematically identify and deploy solutions to enhance our administrative efficiency through process redesign, ICT enablement and effective system integration

3.2 Ensure that internal systems and processes are redesigned to support staff interoperability and deployment/redeployment to reflect operational needs

3.3 Prioritise PSA first-time licence application/renewal process for early-stage automation, efficiency enhancement and the incorporation of applicant self-serve IT options

3.4 Ensure adoption of ICT and AI solutions to: (i) target inspections , (ii) streamline inspection processes, (iii) increase the PSA's inspection capacity and (iv) improve reporting

3.5 Identify senior champions, consistently apply project and risk management protocols, and collaborate effectively with the Department to ensure timely delivery of the integrated ICT solution

GOAL 4

Build on organisational foundations to support successful strategy delivery

Objectives:

To achieve this strategic goal we will:

4.1 Establish and adopt internal knowledge management and communications arrangements to preserve our corporate memory and promote effective information sharing

4.2 Ensure full compliance with our various governance and legislative requirements, establish performance measurement frameworks for strategic goals, and present related status updates to the Board

4.3 Draft and implement an integrated People Strategy to develop, support and motivate our staff, while managing succession and encouraging performance

4.4 Ensure that our equality and human rights obligations are incorporated into all aspects of the PSA's culture and work practices

4.5 Develop an integrated 3-year resource plan and supporting business case to deliver our objectives, optimise efficiencies and leverage the PSA's impact

Implementing the Strategy and Monitoring Progress

We will work in partnership with the Minister and his Department, our industry stakeholders and other interested parties to ensure the successful implementation of this strategy. Key to the success of the strategy will be the availability of resources to deliver on the commitments therein. Resources are also vital to our aim of offering a professional, modern service to our licence holders and the public. Investment in digital technologies to replace our outmoded IT systems is a must if regulation is to expand to meet all of our statutory obligations. We will need the continued support of the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration to deliver these new technologies during this plan.

The cooperation of the security industry in achieving the objectives in the strategy is paramount to us and we are committed to working with the industry in a collaborative approach for our mutual benefit. We plan to expand engagement with our licence holders through the establishment of a number of forums across the various sectors we regulate. The Authority's senior management team will be responsible for translating the strategy into annual business plans with performance targets. The annual plans will be published and industry stakeholders will have an opportunity to advise on the external impact of measures taken to implement the strategy.

We will report on our performance in implementing this strategy in an open, transparent and public manner. Reporting will be undertaken through a number of channels:

- The Chief Executive and senior management team will report to the Board at each Board meeting.
- The Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration and his Department will be kept informed of progress through the annual Performance Delivery Agreement, at governance meetings and in our Annual Reports.
- The security industry and the public will receive regular reports through our social media, e-zine, consultative forums and in our Annual Reports.

Constant review and monitoring of the strategy will be of critical importance and, where necessary, we will take corrective action to ensure delivery of our objectives. It will be important that the strategy remains relevant and some of the objectives may change in light of developments not currently foreseen.

Appendix 1 - Sectors Licensed (September 2025)

Sector	***Contractor***	***Employee***
Cash in Transit	*Yes*	*Yes*
Close Protection	*No*	*No*
Door Supervisor (Licensed Premises)	*Yes*	*Yes*
Electronic Security Sector (Installers of Access Control)	*Yes*	*No*
Electronic Security Sector (Installers of CCTV)	*Yes*	*No*
Electronic Security Sector (Installers of Intruder Alarm)	*Yes*	*No*
Enforcement Guard	*Yes*	*Yes*
Event Security	*Yes*	*Yes*
Installer of Safes	*Yes*	*No*
Locksmith	*Yes*	*No*
Private Investigator	*Yes*	*Yes*
Security Consultants	*No*	*No*
Security Guard (Alarm and CCTV Monitoring)	*Yes*	*Yes*
Security Guard (Static Guarding)	*Yes*	*Yes*
Supplier of Safes	*Yes*	*No*

Appendix 2 - Statutory Provisions

The Private Security Services Act 2004 is the primary legislation under which the Private Security Authority operates. The Act was amended by Part 4 of the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 and by the Private Security Services (Amendment) Act 2021.

Section 9 of the Private Security Services Act 2004 provides for a Strategic Plan.

Section 9. (1) The Authority shall, as soon as practicable after it is established and thereafter within 6 months before each third anniversary of its establishment, prepare and submit to the Minister, for approval by the Minister with or without amendment, a strategic plan for the ensuing 3-year period.

(2) A strategic plan shall—

- *(a) set out the key objectives, outputs and related strategies of the Authority, including its use of resources,*
- *(b) comply with any directions issued from time to time by the Minister in relation to the form and manner of the plan's preparation, and*
- *(c) have regard to the need to ensure the most beneficial and efficient use of the Authority's resources.*

(3) The Minister shall, as soon as practicable after a strategic plan has been so approved, cause a copy of it to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas.

Section 8 of the Private Security Services Act 2004 provides for the functions of the Authority.

Section *8.—(1) The Authority shall, subject to this Act, control and supervise persons providing security services and maintain and improve standards in the provision by them of those services.*

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), the Authority may, and where required by this Act shall—

- *(a) grant and renew licences,*
- *(b) issue identity cards to licensees,*
- *(c) where appropriate, suspend or revoke licences,*
- *(d) (d) establish and maintain a register of licensees,*
- *(e) specify standards to be observed in the provision of security services by licensees or particular categories of licensees,*
- *(f) specify qualifications or any other requirements (including requirements as to training) for the grant of licences,*
- *(g) undertake or commission, or collaborate or assist in, research projects and activities relating to the provision of security services, including the compilation of statistical information and other records necessary for the proper planning, development and provision of those services,*
- *(h) investigate any security services being provided by any person,*
- *(i) establish and administer a system of investigation and adjudication of complaints against licensees,*
- *(j) monitor the provision of private security services generally,*
- *(k) liaise with licensees with a view to keeping itself informed of any matters requiring its attention,*
- *(l) advise the Minister on any matter relating to its functions,*

(m) keep the Minister informed of developments in relation to the provision of security services by licensees or particular categories of licensees and assist him or her in coordinating and developing policy in that regard.

(3) The Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Finance, by order—

(a) confer on the Authority such additional functions relating to security services and connected with the functions conferred on it by subsections (1) and (2) or any order under this subsection as the Minister considers appropriate, and

(b) make such provision as the Minister considers necessary or expedient in relation to matters ancillary to or arising out of any of the functions mentioned in paragraph (a).

(4) The Minister may by order amend or revoke an order under this section, including an order under this subsection.

(5) Any function of the Authority may, without prejudice to its general responsibilities under this Act, be performed through or by its Chief Executive or any other member of its staff duly authorised in that behalf.

(6) The Authority may, subject to this Act, do anything which it considers necessary or expedient for enabling it to perform its functions.

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