



Your property in safe hands:

# Security in cleaning



**Since 1994, Julius Rutherford has built a reputation as London's most professional and reliable contract cleaning company. A major part of that is down to our strong commitment to security.**

Your organisation deserves the highest FM standards and it's more important than ever to have appropriate security measures in place for every aspect of your business to protect people and reputation. We understand the uneasiness that may be caused when you know that your facilities are being accessed by operatives at times of the day when your staff are usually not present. Your cleaning contractor must have effective procedures in place to safeguard the security of your site and the cleaning team, whilst guaranteeing you receive the level of service you deserve.

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Our experience providing cleaning services for many of the capital's most prestigious offices, schools and public buildings has shown that there are steps and stringent processes which should be followed to take care of a facility. We have written this guide so that you can use the latest best practices to help ensure your facilities are secure when outsourcing contracts.

**Are the personnel who undertake the cleaning of your facilities really who they claim to be?**

According to Home Office data, an estimated 500,000 to 900,000 foreigners work illegally in Britain, many in the capital. There are hundreds of thousands of fraudulent identity documents in circulation in the UK\*, yet few contractors are able to spot them.

\* [www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognising-fraudulent-identity-documents](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognising-fraudulent-identity-documents)

# Are your facilities secure when outsourcing contracts?

Times are changing and without a doubt, the world in which we live and work has much higher security risks than ever before. Advances in technology have created a world with heightened vulnerability and increased fraudulent behaviour. It will come as no surprise to anyone working in the capital that we all need to be more vigilant and ensure we carry out thorough checks of where we work and to whom we trust our assets.

We would encourage estates and facilities managers to ask your cleaning supplier:

- **Is your workforce legal?**

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Security vetting should be a top priority for any contract cleaning company. All staff, from directors to cleaners, whether recruited directly or inherited through the Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) process, must have the legal right to work in the UK and pose no threat to your business. As technology advances, the professional cleaning industry should be moving towards a more system's based approach to vetting staff and improving the safe delivery of cleaning.

During the initial security vetting of staff Julius Rutherford inherit, we often reject between 20-40% due to forged or out-of-date IDs. That shows just how complacent some contractors have become – and how strong security measures need to be. Fake documents should not pass if rigorous security vetting procedures are in place.

# Verifying identity

A strong recruitment process should be in place. Be sure to request proof from your cleaning contractors that they have checked that identity documentation is valid.

While some service providers settle for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks – which replaced CRB checks – these are useless if the ID in question is fake. People who don't exist will pass the check – and give you a false sense of security. And, if they're working illegally, the contract cleaning service provider faces penalties from the Home Office. Your brand association with a service provider that employs staff illegally could have a detrimental effect on your reputation.

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# Positive identity check

No-one should be able to work within a business without first providing photographic ID with a machine readable zone (MRZ) so its validity can be checked. Ask your cleaning organisation how it makes identity checks to ensure they have reliable processes in place to verify that staff visually match the photo. Sounds obvious, but a surprising number of employers do not even conduct this basic level of inspection.

- Photographs should be consistent with the appearance of the employee (this means the service provider must see them in person);
- Has the service provider checked that expiry dates of any limited leave to enter or remain in the UK have not passed?
  - Is the service provider satisfied that the documents are valid and genuine, have not been tampered with and belong to the holder?

# Validating documentation

Be sure to ask your cleaning company if they verify documents through validated document checkers and make sure they are using the best and most secure databases to check the authenticity of who they are recruiting. An additional level of security vetting they should consider using is a passport reader which automatically captures a document's ultraviolet and infra-red response, comparing these images instantly to an online database. A good example is the Keesing Authentiscan document checker which Julius Rutherford has been

successfully using for over 8 years. This is the world's largest reference database for documents; it includes over 1,800 types of document from over 200 countries; updating new documents as soon as they are issued. Such documents include passports, work permits and residence permits.

The reader captures all pictures and text on the ID document, as well as information stored in the machine readable zone (MRZ).

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**Did you know?** A recent investigation by The Times (September 2016) uncovered a trade of nearly £2 million in identity documents, including EU identity cards and driving licenses from EU countries available to buy on the dark web for less than £400. It is therefore valid and necessary to request that additional security vetting steps, like those mentioned above, are carried out.

# Going that extra step in the vetting process

Is your contractor a 'coffee-shop recruiter' who has a casual approach to interviewing people or do they implement a secure recruitment process at their offices using the very best systems and processes? Employers should have a thorough vetting process when adding any new staff to a contract, and when they take over a contract with existing staff in place. There should also be a robust ongoing vetting process, as it's no good having comprehensive checks on contract handover, but then a lax approach thereafter.



The British Standard BS 7858:2012 is the recognised benchmark for performing candidate and employee screening within the UK and clients should be asking if their cleaning company are vetting to this level.

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Pre-employment Screening is the process of looking at specific aspects of an individual's character and suitability for employment. BS 7858 – 2012 is the code of practice for screening developed by the British Standards Institution, used widely in the security industry, and is now applicable to and being adopted by many other business sectors.

# Knowing where staff are

At Julius Rutherford, keeping track of over 2000 cleaners at 350 sites across London is no mean feat. With our 'Fresh thinking in cleaning' philosophy, we are embracing new and innovative technologies and employing multiple attendance tracking systems. This includes using a biometric system and vehicle tracking, which allows us to know where our staff are and when.

Telephone Time and Attendance Systems are the basic standard industry option. Is your cleaning service provider happy with this? If you believe that your contract requires even higher security, it is important that additional checks are built into the system to provide additional reassurance. Explore these options with your contract cleaning service provider to check whether they go beyond the initial security vetting process.

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# Vehicle tracking

These days, regardless of the size of your contract cleaning company, a fleet of cars and vans can be co-ordinated so that an employer can monitor their location through a mobile resource management system. Vehicles can have tracking systems installed so that employers know where their operatives are at all times. Not only does this ensure that you are aware of all vehicles on your site, but it also promotes responsible driving practices which create a safer environment for everyone. In addition, if there's an emergency that requires additional backup support at your site, then it is possible for your cleaning contractor to check on-line to see where all vehicles are and deploy the vehicle closest to the site.



In an industry with a renowned high turnover of staff, these robust processes are vital. It is easy for contract cleaning service providers to take on staff quickly and cut corners to ensure the cleaning frequencies for a client are maintained, but this is a false economy and may result in problems later in the contract.

# Biometric recognition

Biometric identification, whereby a person's identification can be verified through unique physical attributes, such as their finger print or iris, offers the most advanced and reliable means of ensuring only the right personnel enter your premises.

Biometric finger scanners use multi-spectral imaging technology that enables the measurement of fingerprint characteristics that are at and beneath the surface of the skin.

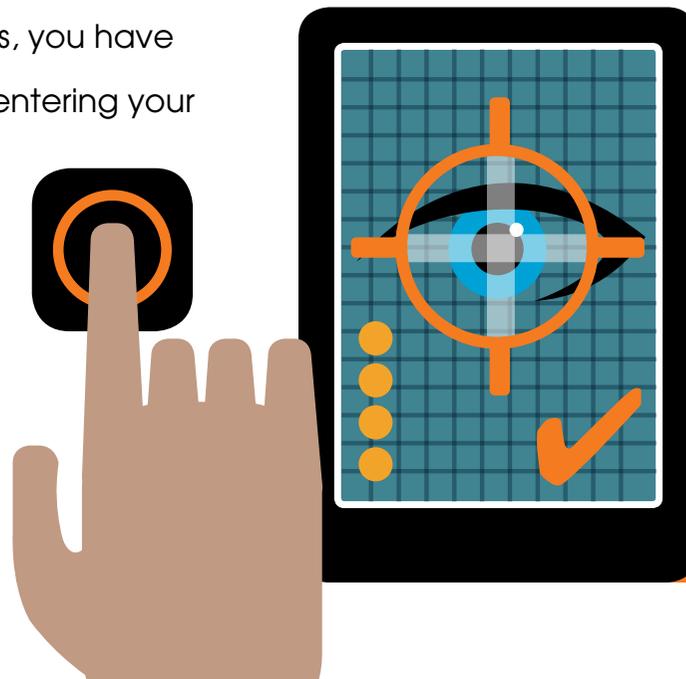
If you outsource your cleaning to an organisation which uses biometric finger scanners, you have complete control of exactly who is entering your premises.

The technology eliminates the risk of fraudulent activity by cleaners as the multi-spectral imaging technology will only allow registered employees and contractors to log in. Some systems can also be adjusted to include filter criteria, for example, if you require all staff on-site to be first aid trained or have counter terrorism clearance.

It is also important that there is a secure process in place for how biometric data is recorded. This should be managed by

authorised personnel so that a secure process of data capture is in place – which stops people from registering a person using someone else's finger.

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According to CallCredit Information Group's 'Fraud and Risk Report' 2016 a majority of UK firms are expecting to increase their spending on biometrics in the next three years.

# Safer recruitment decisions

Depending on the locations that you require your cleaner to access, establish whether cleaning operatives have been checked against the Children's Barred List. This instantly checks the cleaner against records of individuals who are on the sex offender register or are deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure Application also helps to make safer and better informed recruitment decisions, when supported with thorough ID checks. This will check the candidate against the Police National Computer, local police records and several other government databases.

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DBS certificates are only valid for 3 years and need to be renewed. Be sure to ask your contractor to provide current certificates.



The DBS can't access criminal records held overseas. A DBS check may not provide a complete view of an applicant's criminal record if they have lived outside the UK.

Employers should make sure they have access to all the information available to them to make a safer recruitment decision. You can read about how to get a criminal record check for overseas applicants, or those who have previously lived outside the UK, on the Home Office website.

Source: Gov.UK

# You have responsibilities too

Staff and contractors have the right to work in a safe environment. This might seem obvious, but it's the little things such as notifying the contractor if there has been a health and safety incident which may affect their working, or even informing them if conditions at the site require them to take extra precautions to ensure their safety.

Security benefits the cleaning staff as well as your own staff, as they can be sure that their well-being is being protected.

This will lead to a more secure, motivated workforce and ultimately better standards.

Understanding that security and safety are a two-way priority is essential to gain the highest level of service from your contract staff.

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In summary, your checklist when asking your service provider about their security processes should include the following questions:

- 1) Is the workforce legal?
- 2) What steps are in place to check the employee's identity?
- 3) Has the identity documentation been verified using reliable, secure databases?
- 4) What extra steps have been taken to screen candidates and employees?
- 5) Is vetting of staff an ongoing process?
- 6) Do they follow recognised standards?
- 7) How does the service provider confirm they know where staff are?
- 8) What is the process for recording this?
- 9) How do they check whether people are suitable to work with children or vulnerable people?

And finally

- 10) Have you considered your own role in making the workplace safe and secure?

# Conclusion

At Julius Rutherford, we are proud of our track record and confident in the service we provide to our clients. We want to see levels of security vetting improved across the professional cleaning industry and from our experience, we have developed tried and tested processes which we want to share.

Issues of security are a priority for our workforce and for our clients and we will continue to carry out security vetting at the highest level. The best way to drive up standards across the industry is for facilities managers to be aware of the various methods and to ensure they ask the right questions from their contractors when outsourcing. This pressure will drive professional contract cleaning companies to implement thorough security vetting as the norm within their recruiting process.

**Join us on**



As technology advances, so too will our processes. We call it “Fresh thinking in cleaning” and it’s what has helped us earn the reputation as London’s most professional and reliable contract cleaning company.

So if you would like to work with us,  
then give us a call.

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