

Competent Persons Scheme - NaCTSO's Spring 2023 Update

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Update from the NaCTSO Competent Persons Scheme. What is next?

It was fantastic to meet so many interested in the Competent Persons Scheme (CPS) at the Security and Policing Event in Farnborough. It is evident how much enthusiasm there is for it. Following a nine-month discovery phase, we have been able to: gauge appetite; review what is currently available; and consider the most appropriate way to deliver. Again, thank you to everyone who took part in our survey last summer or took the time to reach out to us separately. We have been given the go-ahead to start making the CPS a reality! Now the real work starts for us.

Although we know what we want to achieve with the CPS, we now face the challenge of putting it into practice. Please bear with us whilst we explore the best ways to proceed, make edits and alterations as necessary during this process. This will ensure the final product reflects all that we learned during our research and evidence gathering phase.

The Plan

As published on ProtectUK before, the CPS will be divided into two parts:

- an OfQual-approved, level 3 qualification, with the working title of Competent Person in the Workplace (CPIW)
- a register of peer-reviewed CT Specialists, with the working title of Counter Terrorism Security Specialists Register (CTSSR)

The provisions for Martyn's Law and associated Guidance are still in development. We believe that there will be an increased demand for people to develop or gain skills related to assessing CT threats and mitigating actions.

We are designing the first NaCTSO-endorsed qualification, which will be available to anyone within the business community. We seek to offer the tools to identify and mitigate threats that your company may face from terrorist activities. We also aim to increase the knowledge level of students and provide advice for long-term use. We understand that for most businesses it will not be necessary to have or become counter terrorism experts. Therefore, we have proposed a 5-day course, with additional self-study and a final assessment. This course will provide the capacity to create suitable counter terrorism risk assessments. It will also provide scope that can enhance general security measures.

Some companies may not feel that a qualification is the appropriate course of action for them, and that instead, they would prefer an external specialist to provide a bespoke solution. Where this is the case, our Register will provide a list of counter-terrorism security specialists (as opposed to security generalists) who can meet your specific CT risk assessment needs. Applicants will be required to submit proof that they are suitably qualified, knowledgeable and experienced as CT Security Specialists. We are looking at a number of registers, across multiple industries, to understand how different models are run and which may have suitable practices that we wish to introduce to the CTSSR.

The CPIW and CTSSR are two standalone projects being designed by NaCTSO. They are in response to what you said would help most in meeting identified requirements. Taking the CPIW qualification will not lead to eligibility for the CTSSR. The CPIW is aimed at those making or implementing security decisions within a business. As such, it has been designed to be open and achievable, whilst maintaining value for money. It is also designed to reduce excessive abstraction times from day-to-day roles, some of which may be safety critical. This led to our decision to offer it at Level 3. The register is for those already working as CT Security Specialists. They will have the appropriate skills, qualifications and knowledge. The register's purpose will be to provide businesses with NaCTSO-recognised CT professionals to carry out risk assessment(s) and make recommendations.

Next Steps for the CPIW:

We will formalise our syllabus content, course materials, and testing requirements. We will adjust these as necessary to meet OfQual's stringent requirements for endorsement and to meet the needs of our market. We will work with an awarding body to achieve this. Once that stage has been reached, they will recruit and work with training providers to deliver the qualification. During this process, we ask for your patience – it is important for us to develop the best possible products and that will take some time. We must also consider any implications arising from Martyn's Law, if and when it is agreed by Parliament.

Every business must make their own decisions about the best way for them to be compliant with Martyn's Law. Businesses should also ensure that they are comfortable with the level of CT-preparedness education and training that they offer their employees. They should also consider the impact this may have on the public. We will design these two products using our specialist knowledge and with our partners across government. We aim to offer the best, and only, Counter-Terrorism Policing-endorsed options. As we continue to make progress, we will keep you informed. When we are in a position to make a further announcement, it will be found here, on ProtectUK. ProtectUK is our single, authoritative voice and platform for counter terrorism communications.

Many thanks,
The CPS Team

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