

# 10 Questions to Ask

## Before Selecting a Uniformed Protective Services Firm



The WORLD PROTECTION GROUP, Inc.<sup>®</sup>

"We Protect Your World"

### 1. What is a PPO and how big is the private protection industry?

The term PPO signifies that the owner of a contract security service is a licensed Private Patrol Operator (PPO). More than 13,000 licensed security companies operate nationwide. Verifying licensing is the first step in the selection process.

### 2. What licenses must PPOs possess?

Security providers must possess a PPO license authorizing them to perform private physical or security patrol services. Security providers that perform investigative services must have a Private Investigator license. Check the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS) web site for the licensing status of security firms.

### 3. What licenses must Security Officers hold?

The majority of US states require a license, known as a Guard Card, to work as a Security Officer. Most require 40 hours of training to procure a Guard Card and an additional 8 hours of continuing education per year. Security Officers who carry firearms and weapons, including pepper spray and batons, usually have additional permits and training requirements. You should ask to see permits, licenses and certifications of the security personnel working for you.

### 4. What distinguishes contract security firms?

The realm of licensed operators varies: from single-owner firms with a group of employees serving a geographic area to corporate firms that employ thousands of employees globally. Some firms specialize; others offer a range of services from physical security to equipment.

### 5. How do top security firms screen officer candidates' backgrounds prior to employment?

The security provider should perform the following minimum checks: seven-year criminal and civil background; restraining order; verification of I-9 employment eligibility, military service, education, former employment, and all security permits; and drug and psychological screening.







**6. Is your security budget compatible with your current level of threat and security risk?**

It is important to understand that security services are not a commodity - and that there are shades of competency and quality. Too much security for a situation where the threat level is low, is inefficient and wasteful. On the other hand, in circumstances where a high level of response is required, low paid security officers and outdated equipment is an unnecessary risk. A professional security firm will evaluate your specific situation and advise on the best approach.

**7. Should I prepare to budget for quality?**

When developing a budget, consider the wages of the security officers, the types of shifts they work, the types of equipment they will use, and how much and what type of training they will need.

**8. Why should I care how much security officers earn or if they receive benefits?**

Are you concerned about the image of your company? About protecting proprietary and sensitive information? About lawsuits, internal theft, and the safety and well-being of your employees? If you answered yes, give credence to the type of security officer deployed at your business. Never compromise your company's liability, assets, and image. A trained, experienced security officer who earns fair compensation and benefits will be a professional who becomes a long-term member of your security team.

**9. Every company I encounter claims its employees are the best trained. Who do I believe? How can this be true?**

When interviewing a security firm, qualify the sophistication and relevance of its training programs. Do they fulfill BSIS training requirements? Are the programs and instructors certified? During the interview, the security provider should ask you about the security/training needs of the officers.

**10. What intangibles should I seek in a security company?**

Look for a firm that shares the attitude and aspirations that you have as an individual and a company. Compatible values help ensure long-term success.