C R I M T R A C

Responsive · Innovative · Accountable

BRIEF

C R I M T R A C

Released by the CrimTrac Agency under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

FOR DECISION

File Number: 14/107

Reference: D14-144

→ DSDS,

Please obtain D/HR input on the Resource Implications before I sign.

28/2/14

To: Chief Information Officer

Through: Director Service Delivery and Security

For Information: Chief Executive Officer
Chief Operating Officer
Human Resources Manager, Operations

Australian Government Personnel Security Policy Review

Purpose:

a) That you **approve** CrimTrac's response (**Annex A**) in relation to the personnel security core policy and protocol consultation drafts; and the options presented in the *Baseline Clearance and Pre-employment Screening* discussion paper.

Background:

Consultation drafts of a revised personnel security core policy and protocol were sent to agency security management personnel on 22 January 2014.

Ms Samantha Chard, A/g Chair Protective Security Policy Committee, has sought comments from agency security management personnel, cleared by the agency's security executive, on consultation drafts of the personnel security core policy and protocol by 28 February 2014.

Security personnel were also provided with a *Baseline Clearances and Pre-employment Screening* discussion paper and Ms Chard has welcomed views on the options discussed.

Key issues:

1. The insider threat is persistent and a significant risk to business. A malicious insider is a current or former employee, contractor, or business partner who has, or had, authorised access to the agency's resources and intentionally exceeded or misused that access to cause harm. Notable malicious insiders include Bradley Manning (WikiLeaks) and Snowden (NSA 'whistelblower').

2. Managing the insider threat is an ongoing personnel security process of which pre-employment screening is one component. The changes in the consultation drafts of the Australian Government personnel security core policy and protocols documents are largely geared towards removing ambiguity, reinforcing personnel security practices throughout the employment cycle, and confirming the importance of information sharing. The changes are positive with minimal resource implications.
3. A notable change in the Australian Government's personnel security protocol is the reduction in revalidation periods for the baseline clearance from 15 to 10 years for employees, and 15 to 5 years for baseline and negative vetting clearances for contractors. These changes reduce the risk of a reportable offence being committed within the first five years of a clearance and it being spent, and thus undiscoverable, during revalidation; and risks associated with the transient nature of contractors.
4. The Protective Security Policy Committee is also seeking views on a range of pre-employment screening and baseline vetting options. The options can be summarised as retaining the existing process; implementing a hybrid process whereby agency pre-employment checks are recognised as part of the vetting process by the vetting agency; and raising the standard of pre-employment screening across government to a level equivalent to the baseline clearance process thereby doing away with the requirement for personnel to obtain a baseline security clearance.
5. Raising the standard of pre-employment screening across government and removing the requirement for personnel to obtain a baseline security clearance before accessing agency resources is preferable to CrimTrac security management personnel. This option will significantly improve the timeliness of the engagement process, remove the existing duplication of effort between CrimTrac and the vetting agency, and ensure CrimTrac is aware and better able to manage personnel security risks. There are no proposed changes to the process for negative and positive vetting clearances.

Resource implications

6. There are minimal resource implications associated with changes to the personnel security core policy and protocol. The agency's security management team will need to update the agency's relevant policies and operating procedures.
7. Raising the standard of pre-employment screening for personnel across Government in lieu of obtaining a baseline security clearance will have minimal resourcing implications for CrimTrac:
    a. Agency security management personnel, and potentially the authorising delegate(s), may need to obtain a Certificate IV in Government (Personnel Security). The cost of this qualification from CIT Solutions is currently $4 250.00.
    b. The effort required to on-board a staff member would remain similar to the current process (**Annex B**) however CrimTrac could also outsource screening to a vetting agency if necessary.
    c. The expected cost per screening process to the CrimTrac Agency, if done in-house, is estimated to be $42 for a National Police Check (through the AFP) and $47 for a financial check.

C R I M T R A C
Released by the CrimTrac Agency under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

8. The agency's HR and Payroll Management Software, Aurion, already contains a module ideal for an agency undertaking the pre-employment screening process in-house.

Conclusion

The personnel security core policy and protocol documents represent a welcome increase is the importance of managing ongoing personnel security risks and better represent the range of issues affecting personnel security.

Although the option of raising the pre-employment screening standard across Government is a likely outcome and preferable to CrimTrac's security management personnel, each of the options presented in the *Baseline Clearances and Pre-employment Screening* discussion paper can be accommodated.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Chief Information Officer approve and sign CrimTrac's response (Annex A) in relation to the personnel security core policy and protocol consultation drafts; and the options presented in the Baseline Clearance and Pre-employment Screening discussion paper.

R. Eastwell ..... ***Robert Eastwell*** Manager, Protective Security CIO Portfolio 26 February 2014	**(a) Approved / Not Approved** ..... ***Lee Walton*** Chief Information Officer CIO Portfolio February 2014
Action Officer: Robert Eastwell X7767	

Attachments

Annex A: Letter to a/g Chair Protective Security Policy Committee from CIO – Personnel Security Policy Review.

Annex B: Comparison of Baseline Vetting requirements and CrimTrac's pre-employment screening process.

Annex C: Summary of proposed changes to personnel security core policy.

Annex D: Summary of proposed changes to personnel security protocol.

Annex E: Letter from a/g Chair Protective Security Policy Committee to Agency Security Management Personnel and supporting attachments.

CRIMTRAC
Released by the CrimTrac Agency under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*