

Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS)

Briefing document for RAYNET-UK Controllers

Background

There is an increasing requirement on all types of organisations that its members are confirmed as to who they are. This equally applies to voluntary and charitable organisations of which RAYNET-UK is one and is considered to be good recruitment practice (see BS 7799 and BS7858). The requirement includes checks on each member to confirm their identity, where they live, that they are entitled to reside in this country and that they have no unspent criminal convictions.

This is best achieved by following the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) as detailed by the Cabinet Office, but since RAYNET-UK does not have any employees, the requirement for employer checks and references is waived.

What is BPSS?

This is a check recognised by industry, government & security services as a valid way of establishing a person's identity.

BPSS approval of a member will allow access to protectively marked information up to OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE [legacy –RESTRICTED] on a need to know basis in an uncontrolled environment. Such information may be present on Resilience Direct (otherwise known as RD- a government-sponsored internet based collaboration system), in Cabinet Office/Local Authority documents and at meetings such as the Local Resilience Forum. It should be noted that all protectively marked information is subject to the Official Secrets Act.

BPSS and RAYNET-UK

How it would benefit Groups

- Confidence that your members really are who they say they are
- User Services would see that you are exercising due diligence using a recognised standard when accepting new members
- In the vast majority of cases, this scheme would satisfy any general requests from our User Services for RAYNET members to be “checked”

What the scheme is not!

The BPSS check is **NOT** a formal security clearance or vetting against government held lists. It is entirely internal to RAYNET-UK without reference to outside agencies.

How would it work?

Members who wish to be checked as part of this scheme would be asked to:

- Verify who they are by presenting evidence of their name and address from an approved ID Verification Checklist
- Declare any unspent criminal convictions

The scheme is administered by a BPSS Co-ordinator and ID verification is checked by Group/County/Zonal Officers who have themselves been BPSS checked.

What proof of identity is required?

The easiest method of confirmation of ID is to provide a full current passport for the individual. This may be a copy of the original providing the copy has been endorsed, confirming that it is a true copy, by a separate individual who is not a relative and preferably a Controller. A passport that has expired will not be accepted.

If this is not available then **two** other forms of proof of identity should be used from the following list:-

- Current UK photocard driving licence
- Current full UK driving licence (old version)
- Recent HMRC tax notification
- Current firearms certificate
- Current evidence of entitlement to DWP benefits (e.g. Universal Credit)
- Birth certificate
- Adoption certificate
- Marriage certificate
- Civil Partnership certificate
- Proof of residence from a financial institution
- Recent original utility bill *
- Local authority tax bill (valid for the current year) *
- Bank, building society or credit union statement or passbook containing current address *
- Recent original mortgage statement from a recognized lender *
- P45 *

Those marked with an * should be dated within the last six months.

This list is not exhaustive and consideration should be made of relevant documents produced at the time. However, should a document be submitted for verification that is not on the list, please check with the BPSS Co-ordinator prior to the application being submitted.

Who can verify these documents?

- Zone Co-ordinator
- County Co-ordinator
- Group Controller
- Deputy Group Controller
- Group Registrations Officer

Please be advised that the identification can only be verified by a RAYNET-UK member who holds one of the above posts and has BPSS clearance themselves.

Nationality and Immigration Status:

Where a member is not a British citizen, evidence of his or her entitlement to reside in this country is required. Copies of a certificate of registration, naturalisation, passport or Home Office document confirming the individual's UK immigration status are necessary.

Implementation

Implementation of the BPSS checks is entirely voluntary, with both Groups and individuals deciding locally whether to opt into the scheme.

Should a Group wish to implement the checks, the Controller would first be checked by their Zonal Co-ordinator or County Co-ordinator. S/he would then be able to act as the authorised person in the Group to sign the checks.

The initial documentation would be handled by the local controller who would pass all relevant completed details to CoM's BPSS Co-ordinator for checking, allocation of approval and filing. The Co-ordinator would be available for advice and would work closely with the controller on any queries.

Frequently Asked Questions

Isn't this the "thin end of a wedge", with full vetting coming along later?

No.

While we can't predict what our User Services might require in the future, we can say that there are no plans to increase the level of member checking beyond the BPSS standard and we have no reason to believe this would change in the foreseeable future.

We hope that most Groups will implement BPSS checking on both new and existing members.

What would happen if a member's BPSS approval were refused?

Refusal of a BPSS approval would prevent that member from having uncontrolled access to OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE [legacy –RESTRICTED] material (e.g RD) and thus s/he may be excluded from meetings and areas where access to such information is freely available. Refusal of BPSS approval on a particular member may make the working of RAYNET too difficult and the individual may be asked to resign.

Members who do not receive a BPSS approval would have the right to be told the reason and if not satisfied to request an appeal hearing. This hearing would take place within 6 weeks of the request and the panel would comprise of the relevant ZC, BPSS Co-ordinator, Chairman/Deputy and one other Trustee or local controller. The decision of the panel will be final.

How would the applications be handled?

Once proof of identity and the criminal record declaration have been checked, the member would complete part 1 on the Verification Record. The authorised Group/County/Zonal Officer would then complete parts 2 and 3 and forward the completed Annex A and B forms to the BPSS Co-ordinator, who would add a unique number to the Approval document. The approval or otherwise will be notified to the relevant controller and the member's record on the database updated accordingly.

How can I be sure that the documentation provided will be secure?

Given that some of the information could be sensitive personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998, access to such information would be restricted to those with a true need to know.

Documents relating to the Baseline Personnel Security Standard and the completed Baseline Standard Verification Record must be kept, but any supporting documentation (e.g. copies of utility bills, etc) would be destroyed within 6 months unless there is a clear business reason for exceeding this period, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Criminal conviction information collected in the course of the BPSS process will also be deleted except in exceptional circumstances.