A Guide to Access Control for the logistics and road transport sector

What is access control?
Access control provides the ability to control, monitor and restrict the movement of people, assets or vehicles, in, out and round a building or site.

Access control is essential for all businesses to protect people and assets and has the added benefit of being expanded from controlling, for example, a single entrance door, to a large integrated security network. There are also huge potentials in terms of integrating HR and other systems, such as Time and Attendance, Visitor Management, ANPR, Fire, Intruder and CCTV, which can cut costs and streamline administration costs.

What risks does the logistics and road transport industry face and how can these be countered by access control?
The sites of companies operating in the logistics and road transport industries have a transient population of staff, drivers and contractors, with many vehicles of all sizes requiring easy yet secured access to the premises. Goods dealt with by transport companies can range from high value products such as computers and IT equipment to daily goods such as food and household materials, so ensuring access is restricted solely to authorised people is pivotal to secure against threats such as theft, vandalism or, in more critical scenarios, tampering with products or vehicles for terrorism purposes.

Access control systems are all designed to allow access only to people with the necessary authority to ensure that goods and people are protected, whilst helping manage known or anticipated threats.

Generally, systems comprise three component parts:

1. The physical barrier – to physically restrict access to a building or location via such methods as:
   - Doors; secured by either a magnetic or strike lock or can be revolving or sliding.
   - Turnstiles and speedgates; designed to limit access to one person for one card presented.
2. The identification device – There are a number of different technologies used to identify users of an access control system, such as:
   • A proximity card and reader using RFID – cards can be programmed to work at a short read range or a long read range.
   • A smart card and reader.
   • A swipe card and reader.
   • PIN pads.
   • Biometric (e.g. fingerprint, iris scanning).

3. The door controller and software – The door controller and software are at the heart of the system and are used to decide who can gain access through which access point at what time of the day. These can vary dependent on the size of the system and how many readers or sites you are trying to control from one point. Some of the options include:
   • A stand-alone door controller linked to a single door with no software.
   • A number of door controllers all linked together to a single PC to control one site.
   • A number of sites all interlinked together over a wide network area.

Please note: Access control systems should form part of a comprehensive and integrated security strategy. For the transport logistics sector, an effective strategy will also include the use of the likes of physical security equipment, cash and valuables in transit security, property or vehicle marking and CCTV systems to ensure all-round protection of vehicle, site and staff. For more information on what other measures the sector could integrate with their access control systems, visit the BSIA’s website www.bsia.co.uk

What added benefits can access control systems bring?

Visitor monitoring
In a logistics site context, where visitors can blend in with the high volume of staff present, the use of PC and computer networks should be considered. These systems can print photographic ID and allow access to be restricted to certain areas within the site. Moving to a software solution for visitor management is an easy and inexpensive solution and can provide a number of added benefits.

Time and attendance
With both staff and visitors entering and leaving the premises, badge/token technology can be used to record employee hours and monitor visitor movement within a specific site. If appropriate, these can be processed against working hours, applicable for both temporary and permanent staff, which can work in real time to feed transactions through to the company’s payroll. Time and attendance systems also accurately help keep employers on the right side of the European Working Time regulations and manage holidays and absences effectively. Fast, accurate and easy-to-use, these systems are suitable for businesses employing just a few people, right up to large multinational companies.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition
To monitor the movement of vehicles on site, CCTV-style cameras and computer software can be used to identify number plates of vehicles. Some systems can also store photographs of the driver and vehicle for subsequent analysis. This sophisticated software allows critical information to be passed to the police to assist in the pursuit, identification and capture of offenders should an incident occur. Visual proof of parking offences with the corresponding time and date information is provided as evidence and to avoid disputes. Using a Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) link, monitors are then able to identify the owner of a vehicle and process the offence automatically.
Fire roll call
Fire roll call software will automatically generate a report in the event of a fire or other emergency containing crucial information in relation to who is within the building and their movements around the site. This software operates via the access control smart card or fob that an employee uses to gain access/exit to a building. In the event of an emergency, the fire roll call software alerts occupants to the emergency whilst simultaneously activating the report at a safe pre-determined remote point.

Please note: In order for the fire roll call software to effectively carry out its function, employees and visitors must always present their card or badge. The use of smart card or RFID controlled turnstiles can help in this situation.

Integrated security systems
Sites can benefit from a fully integrated access control system with CCTV, intruder alarm, fire detection and building management systems. One way to attain this is by adopting the use of Internet Protocol (IP) technology, which allows these systems to ‘talk’ to each other to maximise their effectiveness. Separate access control and intruder alarm systems, for example, could allow an employee to access an area, through an external door, that is set with an alarm. However, unless the employee has the authority to unset the system, the access would result in a false alarm being activated. An effectively integrated system would recognise that the user does not have the authority to unset the system, so would not allow them in the area to begin with, until someone authorised grants them access by unsetting the alarm.

What key considerations should be taken into account when considering access control?
The outcome of an initial risk assessment for each site will determine the level of security you require and in turn influence your choice of access control system to be used. BSIA access control members and professional security consultancies can assist with this.

BSIA members are subject to rigorous checks before they are admitted into membership, meaning you are selecting quality companies to achieve peace of mind. Below are just some of the reasons why you could benefit from using the services of a BSIA member:

• Independently inspected to the quality standard ISO 9001 with a UKAS accredited inspectorate.
• Compliant with relevant British and European Standards and codes of practice.
• Financially sound.
• Professional.
• Staff vetting conducted (where appropriate).
• Technically proficient.
• Committed to quality training and development.
• Up-to-date with the latest developments in British and European policy and legislation.
Case study

Aspray motor employs BSIA member’s “excellent all-round system”

A BSIA member worked with Aspray motor to provide an integrated security system comprising access control, time & attendance and personnel for their eleven sites throughout the UK, employing over 500 people. They chose a system from a BSIA company because of the Smart Card application and the way in which the system could be distributed across different locations. They also saw there was room for future development if necessary.

Aspray Transport has long established itself as a leader within the carrier industry for the next day distribution of locks and hardware, nuts, bolts, engineering, fastener products and related industries. The first integrated system was installed and this has now been extended to all eleven depots, also incorporating the company’s turnstiles.

The system performs all of the security, time and attendance and personnel management functions which Aspray required but is not used to its full potential. IT Manager for Aspray motors, Marcus Newport, comments: “Functionally the system is relatively easy to use – and it’s expandable. The in-built help files and guides and website features are valuable additional tools in running the system.”

On the subject of how the workforce found the use of Smart Cards, Marcus said: “Very easy to use – simply swipe where required – great for both clocking in and out and access control.”

Aspray have now also implemented a Fire Roll Call system, although fortunately they have not had to use it in a real situation, as well as extending the system to two new sites.

When asked if he would recommend a BSIA supplier to others, Marcus replied: “Yes,” summing up his experience in a few words, he concluded: “We have an excellent all round system for access control, time and attendance and Personnel, including the turnstiles.”

Is there any legislation I should be aware of?
The Disability Discrimination Act was amended in 2005 and has significant impact not only in terms of the design of new systems, but also means that many systems may need to be upgraded to ensure compliance.

The BSIA has created a guide to help design access control systems following the introduction of the revisions which can be downloaded from www.bsia.co.uk/publications

Other legislation to be considered in relation to the utilities sector is:
National minimum care standards
Health and Safety at Work Act
Occupiers Liability Act
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Where can I go for further information?
For more information on the work of the BSIA Access and Asset Protection Section, visit www.bsia.co.uk/sections/access-asset-protection

To find an access control provider in your area, visit www.bsia.co.uk/find-a-security-company