Users' basic guide to access control

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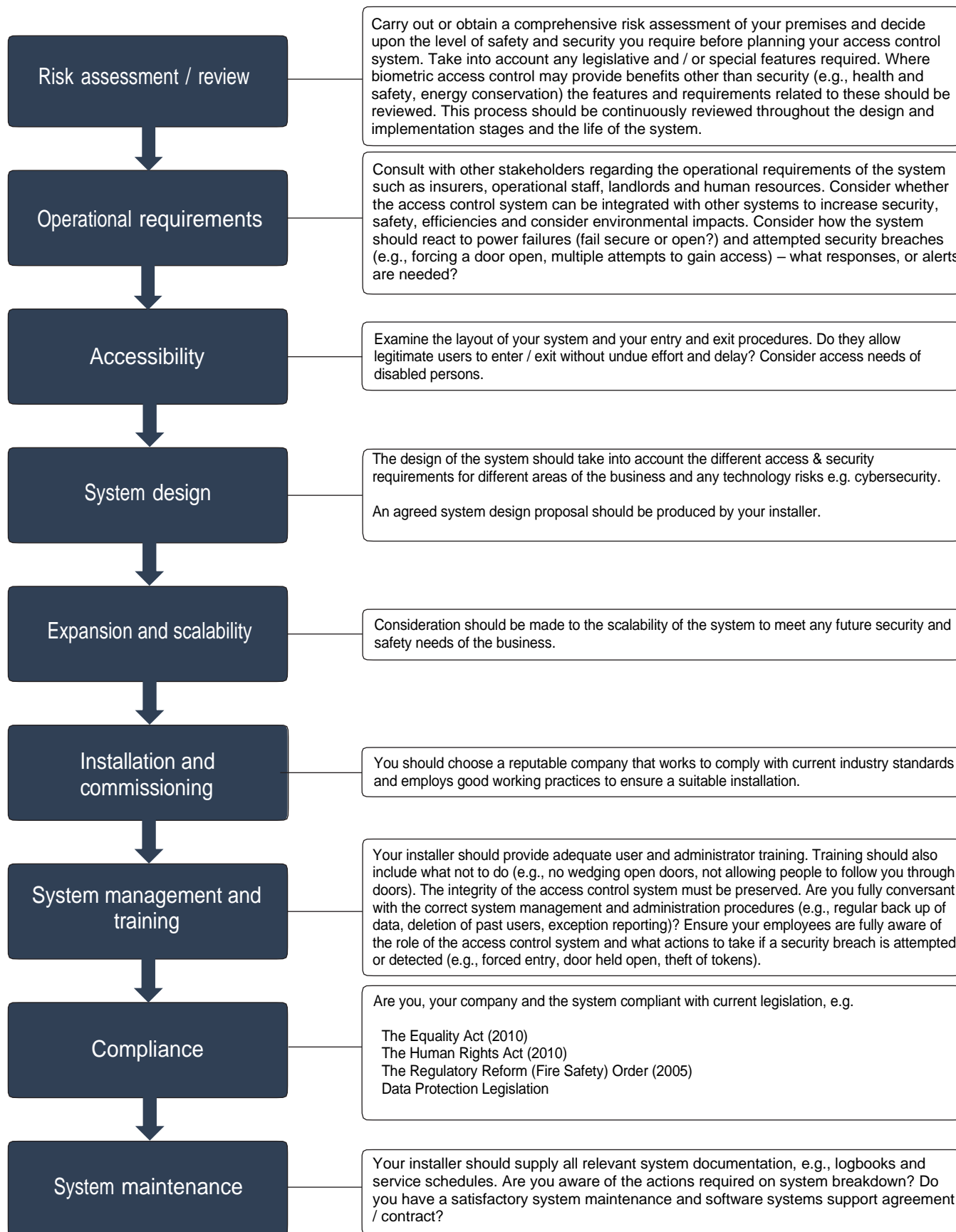
USERS' BASIC GUIDE TO ACCESS CONTROL

This is a brief summary. For full information refer to BSIA Form 132, A specifier's guide to access control systems

Risk assessment / review

Carry out or obtain a comprehensive risk assessment of your premises and decide upon the level of safety and security you require before planning your access control system. Take into account any legislative and / or special features required. Where biometric access control may provide benefits other than security (e.g., health and safety, energy conservation) the features and requirements related to these should be reviewed. This process should be continuously reviewed throughout the design and implementation stages and the life of the system.

Operational requirements

Consult with other stakeholders regarding the operational requirements of the system such as insurers, operational staff, landlords and human resources. Consider whether the access control system can be integrated with other systems to increase security, safety, efficiencies and consider environmental impacts. Consider how the system should react to power failures (fail secure or open?) and attempted security breaches (e.g., forcing a door open, multiple attempts to gain access) – what responses, or alerts are needed?

Accessibility

Examine the layout of your system and your entry and exit procedures. Do they allow legitimate users to enter / exit without undue effort and delay? Consider access needs of disabled persons.

System design

The design of the system should take into account the different access & security requirements for different areas of the business and any technology risks e.g. cybersecurity.

An agreed system design proposal should be produced by your installer.

Expansion and scalability

Consideration should be made to the scalability of the system to meet any future security and safety needs of the business.

Installation and commissioning

You should choose a reputable company that works to comply with current industry standards and employs good working practices to ensure a suitable installation.

System management and training

Your installer should provide adequate user and administrator training. Training should also include what not to do (e.g., no wedging open doors, not allowing people to follow you through doors). The integrity of the access control system must be preserved. Are you fully conversant with the correct system management and administration procedures (e.g., regular back up of data, deletion of past users, exception reporting)? Ensure your employees are fully aware of the role of the access control system and what actions to take if a security breach is attempted or detected (e.g., forced entry, door held open, theft of tokens).

Compliance

Are you, your company and the system compliant with current legislation, e.g.

- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Human Rights Act (2010)
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (2005)
- Data Protection Legislation

System maintenance

Your installer should supply all relevant system documentation, e.g., logbooks and service schedules. Are you aware of the actions required on system breakdown? Do you have a satisfactory system maintenance and software systems support agreement / contract?

The British Security Industry Association (BSIA) is the trade association for the professional security industry in the UK.

Our members are responsible for more than 70% of privately provided UK security products and services (by turnover) including the manufacture, distribution and installation of electronic and physical security equipment and the provision of security officer services and consultancy. Our members are industry professionals ranging in size from global companies to small and medium enterprises, offering quality products and services to a vast spectrum of end-users.

BSIA Ltd / Anbrian House 1 The Tything | Worcester WR1 1HD

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