

# Sector profile: recruitment and retention in the door supervision sector

**July 2021**

## Introduction

This document draws on recent research conducted in 2 surveys and research we have conducted in the past. It also uses data from the SIA licensing system. It provides a 'snapshot' of the door supervision sector as it is now and considers employment issues within the sector.

## Summary

Data from our licensing system shows that the number of door supervisor licences and licence applications is the highest it has been in the last 10 years.

Responses from our surveys suggest that some companies within the sector have found it difficult to recruit and retain door supervisors.

Responses indicated that the main barriers to retention are:

- some door supervisors have found alternative work during the pandemic and are reluctant to return to the sector
- some who have previously worked as door supervisors are reluctant to come off furlough pay

Responses to our surveys also indicated that barriers to recruitment and retention are:

- low pay
- unsociable hours
- job insecurity
- high levels of physical and verbal abuse
- training costs
- the licence application fee (application or renewal)

## Working in the door supervision sector

Telephone surveys we conducted in 2021 indicate that pay rates are usually around £10-£12 per hour. This is roughly the same as was recorded in the research we conducted in 2006. Some responses indicated that poor employment practices still exist and that some door supervisors are paid cash in hand.

Survey findings also indicate that:

- door supervisors often work unsociable hours and inconsistent shift patterns
- shift lengths range from 3-6 hours, with a 4-hour shift being the most common

- some door supervisors view the work as a 'stop-gap' - a convenient source of income while they look for other work or pursue other career options
- door supervisors with permanent or long-term contracts are more likely to view their role as a career
- the sector has seen a rise in the use of zero-hour contracts
- door supervisor roles are sometimes taken as a second job to supplement the person's main source of income, which means that they are more likely to:
  - drop their door supervisor work in favour of their main job
  - take cash-in-hand payments for their door supervisor work (because their main employer is paying their PAYE/NI contributions)

## Cost of entry into the door supervision sector

The SIA licence fee has reduced recently, back to its original (2004) level of £190. Taking inflation into account, the licence application fee is now cheaper in real terms than it was in 2004. If the licence application fee had increased each year in line with inflation it would now be £298.

Open-source research we conducted this year (2021) indicated that the cost of the door supervisor licence-linked training course is generally between £200 and £250. This year we introduced a requirement for first aid training, which has added around £50 to the cost of training.

Survey responses indicate that some companies charge staff for their uniform (if required) and relevant insurance.

## Demand for door supervisors

The perception of those we have spoken to is that demand for door supervisors is slowly returning to pre-covid levels and that it will eventually rise above that.

## Door supervisor licences and licence applications

Reports generated from our licensing system show that the number of active door supervisor licences is the highest it has been in the last 10 years – see appendix 1.

Similarly, the number of door supervisor licence applications in the last financial year (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021) was the highest it has been in the last 10 years – see appendix 2.

## Recruitment of door supervisors

Some companies have reported that they find it difficult to recruit door supervisors. Their responses indicate that:

- applicants often do not turn up for interview
- a large proportion of applicants that do turn up for interview are not suitable

Door supervision companies report the main barriers to recruitment and retention as:

- low pay
- unsociable hours
- job insecurity
- high levels of physical and verbal abuse
- training costs
- the licence application fee (application or renewal)

Some door supervisors have found alternative work during the pandemic and are reluctant to return to the sector for these reasons.

Some of these alternative jobs are:

- security guard (not guarding licensed premises)
- security at covid testing centres or vaccination centres
- delivery driver
- supermarket staff
- online retail (warehouse fulfilment)
- bar staff

Respondents indicated that such roles are more attractive because they offer one or more of the following:

- higher pay
- more secure work
- more regular work
- more sociable hours
- longer shifts
- job security
- less hassle

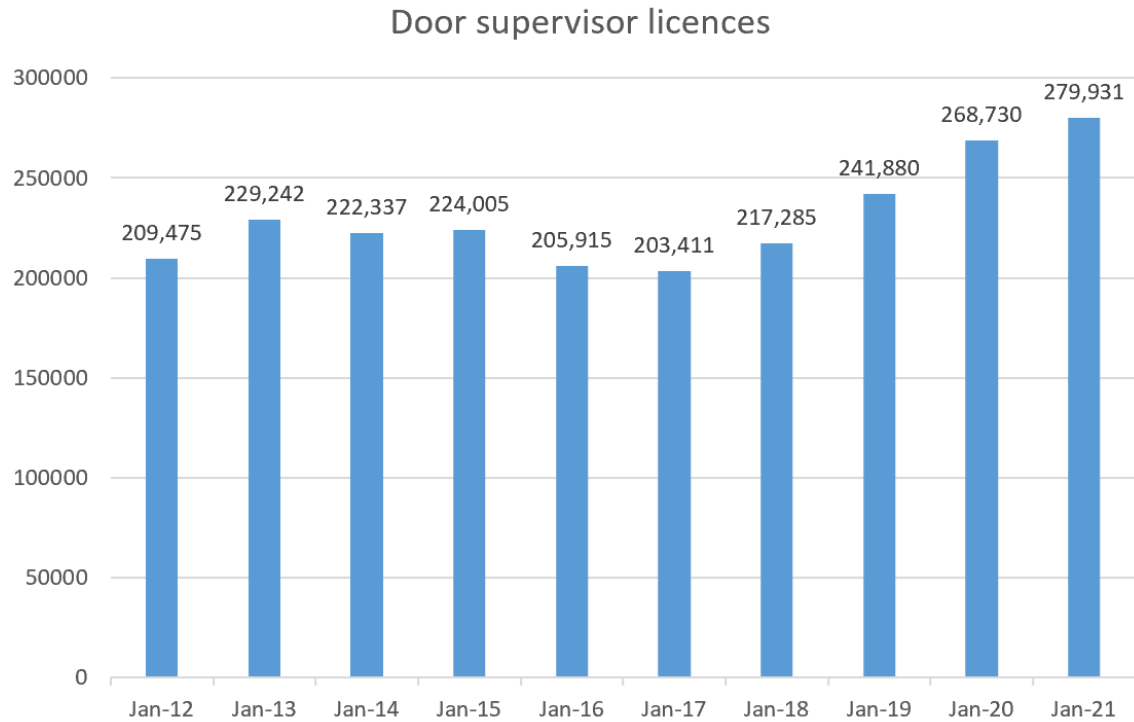
Some companies reported that people who have previously worked as door supervisors are reluctant to come off furlough pay, and some do not want to pay the application fee to renew their licence.

## Survey findings and data used to produce this sector profile

We have collated information from several different sources, including:

- Telephone research, SIA, 2021
- Covid impact survey, SIA, 2021
- 'Future scoping of the private security industry' research, SIA/IFF, 2019
- 'Industry skills profiling' research, SIA/IFF, 2018
- 'Impact of regulation' research, SIA, 2006
- Desk-based internet research, 2021
- Reports generated from our licensing system, 2021

## Appendix I



## Appendix 2

