



# Government Security & Vetting Services



# Who are we?

We are the ADS Government Security Services Team who oversee the Security Vetting & Screening Services within ADS.

Within ADS, we sit in the Services division.

The team is led by Paul Williams, Head of Government Security & Vetting and Sam Newman, Deputy Security Controller.

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Subject to meeting requirements, we may be able to assist with the sponsorship of national security vetting (NSV) level security clearances for your company.

Security Vetting is an ADS Member only service and is looked at on a case-by-case basis.



# What do we do?

The Government Security Services Team are responsible for and oversee;

- The ADS Security Vetting function
- ADS Screening Services offering BPSS, BS7858 and other background checks
- 'Go to' area within ADS for to provide advice on classified material, assets, FSC/List X, IPSA, Personnel Security, sites and much more
- We host quarterly Security Briefings bringing together Government Officials, Prime Companies and SME's



# Why do I need National Security Vetting (NSV)?

People require NSV level security clearances for different reasons. Here at ADS, we can offer to sponsor NSV clearances through HMG and Warwickshire Police (WP).

The main reasons you may require NSV clearance are:

- You have won a contract that states an NSV requirement.
- You require access to certain HMG and/or Police sites or facilities.
- You have a letter or email from an HMG/Police official confirming the requirement.
- You have a requirement to access classified material within HMG and/or Police.

There are many other reasons you may require NSV.

**As part of our onboarding process, you will be required to fill out our clearance requirement form providing the reason why you require NSV cleared employees and the evidence to support this.**

# What is classified material?

Classified material means the item in question is classified under the Government Security Classification policy (GSC).

There are 3 different levels of classification, each detailed below. You can find further information on the GSC [HERE](#).

## OFFICIAL

Most of the information that is created or processed by the public sector. This includes routine business operations and services, some of which could have damaging consequences if lost, stolen or published in the media, but are not subject to a heightened threat profile.

## SECRET

Very sensitive information that justifies heightened protective measures to defend against determined and highly capable threat actors. For example, where compromise could seriously damage military capabilities, international relations or the investigation of serious organised crime.

## TOP SECRET


HMG's most sensitive information requiring the highest levels of protection from the most serious threats. For example, where compromise could cause widespread loss of life or else threaten the security economic wellbeing of the country or friendly nations.

**What levels of NSV are there  
and what do they give me  
access to?**

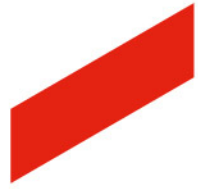
# Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS)

BPSS is the recognised standard for the pre-employment screening of individuals with access to government assets. BPSS is not a formal security clearance, but its rigorous and consistent application underpins the national security vetting process

The BPSS allows for access to HMG assets on a need-to-know basis, the BPSS is sufficient to allow an individual access to:

- UK OFFICIAL information and assets
  - Exceptional supervised access to UK SECRET assets following written authorisation from their security team.
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# Counter Terrorist Check (CTC)

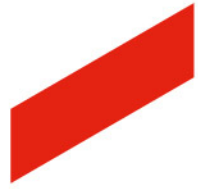
A CTC is required for individuals who are employed in posts that:

- Involve proximity to public figures assessed to be at particular risk from terrorist attack.
- Give access to information or material assessed to be of value to terrorists. However, it is not designed to manage access to sensitive information.
- Involve unescorted access to certain military, civil, industrial or commercial establishments assessed to be at particular risk from terrorist attack.

A CTC does not give access to any classified material. However, BPSS must have been completed first which does give some access to classified material.

You must have been a **resident in the UK for the last 3 years** to apply for CTC level clearance.





## Security Check (SC)

A SC is the most widely held level of security clearance.

SC is required for posts involving regular and uncontrolled access to SECRET assets and/or occasional, supervised access to TOP SECRET assets, and for individuals who:

- While not in such posts, will be in a position to directly or indirectly bring about the same degree of damage.
- Will have sufficient knowledge to obtain a comprehensive picture of a SECRET plan, policy or project.
- Are being considered for employment where it would not be possible to make reasonable career progress without security clearance for access to SECRET assets.
- Require access to certain levels of classified material originating from another country or international organisation.

You must have been a **resident in the UK for the last 5 years** to apply for SC level clearance.



## Developed Vetting (DV)

DV is one of the most detailed and comprehensive form of security clearance in UK government.

It is needed for posts that require individuals to have frequent and uncontrolled access to TOP SECRET assets or require any access to TOP SECRET codeword material. It is also required for individuals who:

- While not in such posts, will be in a position to directly or indirectly bring about the same degree of damage.
- Require frequent and uncontrolled access to Category I nuclear material.
- Require access to certain levels of classified material originating from another country or international organisation.

You must have been a **resident in the UK for the last 10 years** to apply for DV level clearance.

# Applying for a NSV Clearance Application

A BPSS check first needs to be undertaken before any NSV Application can be applied for.

BPSS is a series of checks confirming an applicant's;

- Identity
- Right to work
- Employment /Activity History (3 years)
- A Basic DBS check

The information gathered from these checks provides a risk assessment for someone's suitability to apply for and hold a NSV Clearance.

ADS Security Vetting will provide you with our BPSS Clearance Check Document, and guidance for you to conduct these checks on an applicant if they have not already been cleared to BPSS level whilst in employment with your company.

The relevant NSV Application BPSS-VR paperwork can then be uploaded to our secure portal and the ADS Security Vetting team will process the NSV Application accordingly.

# NSV Application Timeframes

## **ADS Application Processing Timeframe**

The ADS Security Vetting SLA for submitting Applications to UKSV from the point of receiving the completed NSV Application - BPSS VR document is 28 Days, however we average at around 5-7 days.

You should contact us for any urgent applications that need to be prioritised.

## **Applicant Application Submission Timeframe**

New/ Renewal Applications: The applicant will have 30 days to complete and submit their online NSV application to UKSV

Transfers: The vetting team will submit the application on behalf of the applicant

## **UKSV Timeframes**

There is no given timeframe for how long a clearance application will take to complete.

Each vetting case is entirely unique and dependant on the individuals' circumstances and background.

You should expect to wait at least 6- 8 weeks for a SC Clearance Application to complete and anywhere from 6-10 months for DV Level Clearance.

In some case's clearances can be issued much quicker or can take much longer.

The ADS Security vetting team will not receive any updates regarding the progress of an application from UKSV once vetting checks are in progress.

# NSV has been granted, what happens now?

## Aftercare

Once the NSV has been granted, the clearance holder must follow the “Aftercare” requirements as outlined in the ADS Security Vetting Policy.

At SC Level the applicant is required to complete an annual security appraisal form (SAF).

At DV level the annual security appraisal will be initiated on the UKSV portal.

This must be completed by both a clearance holder and their line manager.

## Leavers/Lapses

The security vetting team must be informed immediately when a clearance holders' employment is terminated or when they no longer require to hold their clearance. A lapse request form should be completed and submitted to the security vetting team to action this. We will then lapse the clearance with UKSV.

## Change in Personal Circumstances

The clearance holder must inform the vetting team about any changes in personal circumstances listed in the ADS Security Vetting Policy. Failure to do so could result in the clearance being revoked.

## Expiry Reminders

We will start to notify you 6 months prior to the expiry date of a clearance and check to see if a renewal application needs to be submitted.

The renewal process is the same as a new application.

## Overseas Travel

The clearance holder must report ALL upcoming international travel, whether for business or pleasure. Some countries require the clearance holder to have a special security briefing before and on return from travel.

**Security issues/concerns** – If you have any security concerns you should speak to the security vetting team immediately.



# What else do you do?

## **NATO Clearances**

We can sponsor NATO clearances if you have the requirement. You must hold either an SC or a DV first.

## **Site visits**

If you need to visit a site that requires details of your NSV Clearance, we will liaise directly with the site to provide them with your NSV Clearance details.

## **International Visits & NATO Passes**

We can submit RFV requests through the International Visits Control Office (IVCO) should you be required to attend a classified meeting in another country.

## **Training**

We can provide training to both cleared and uncleared personnel to help you improve your company security culture.

## **Security Briefings**

We hold quarterly Security Briefings at our London office with speakers from NPSA and MoD.

# ADS Screening Services



ADS has now partnered with Agenda Screening Services and can now offer Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) and BS7858 Screening checks alongside a range of other Screening Services.

Pre-employment & Background Screening is an important part of mitigating risks during the recruitment process, but screening may also need to be undertaken retrospectively.

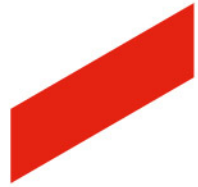
The screening services we can now offer are designed to protect your organisation by ensuring that all personnel are screened to the highest standards, giving you peace of mind and confidence in your security processes.

In collaboration with Agenda we can now offer;

- BPSS
- BS7858
- Qualifications Check
- Social Media Check
- Financial Check
- Overseas Criminal Records Checks







# FAQs



## What is the NSV Application Residency Criteria?

SC – 5-year UK Residency requirement  
DV – 3 Year UK Residency requirement

Please speak to the vetting team for more information.

## How old do you have to be to apply for NSV Clearance?

SC is a minimum of 17 years of age.  
DV is a minimum of 21 years of age.

## I'm worried about the process of clearance

Don't be! There are some fantastic short videos from the [Cabinet Office](#) on their YouTube channel describing different parts of the process.

## A person isn't a British national, can they apply?

Yes, there are no nationality requirements for holding an NSV Clearance. However, it is worth noting that if a person is a non-British national or dual national, they may have restrictions placed on their Clearance. And you should take into consideration any risk this may pose to your company and the contract the individual will be working on.

## A person has criminal charges, can they still apply?

We are not the decision makers on a clearance, UKSV are, so it's not our place to say. However, the best thing to do is be open and honest about everything in the initial applicant and not to try and hide anything. An initial DBS Check would highlight any risk for your company and the contract the individual will be working on.

## How long will a clearance be issued for?

As a rule, a 'New or Renewal' SC Clearance will be issued for 5 years. A DV for 3 years. Transfer applications, the remaining validity of the clearance will be issued to ADS upon transfer.

# How do I get in touch with you?

- Email us;  
[security.vetting@adsgroup.org.uk](mailto:security.vetting@adsgroup.org.uk)
  - Call us on 0207 091 7824
- 



*Securing  
UK advantage*

[adsgroup.org.uk](https://adsgroup.org.uk)