

BILL 22

Mark Joseph is my name. I am the President of Northeastern Investigations Inc. and Northeastern Protection Service. I founded this Nova Scotia Corporation 27 years ago.

Today we employ more than 100 personnel in Nova Scotia alone and provide services throughout several provinces across Canada, which in turn employs many more. We have remained a Nova Scotia company despite the greater opportunities that may be presented to us outside of the province.

My business is based on Public Safety through the many corporate and private clients we work for. We provide protection based services to commercial and private citizens daily in Nova Scotia that number in the thousands. On any given day we will provide services to clients that will expose us to tens of thousands of people. One of our major retail clients counts their customer traffic in excess of 24,000 per day. There is a lot of public safety at stake with that many people involved.

We have developed a training program for our employees that is based on the national standard as created by the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB). We have contributed to the development of the standard through one of our senior managers being part of the CGSB committee in Ottawa. This is a commitment that comes at a cost of time, travel and resources, yet we have remained committed to being part of the solution.

Unlike the Canadian General Standards Board, the province of Nova Scotia has not bothered to have meaningful consultation with industry experts here in Nova Scotia, namely the dedicated professionals and stakeholders who have made this profession their career.

I would like to be clear that I am in favour of the new Act; I believe it is time but I fail to understand the lack of respect for the professionals working in this industry daily. Our voices and expertise has been minimized by the department.

I was on the original industry committee back in the early '90's to draft new legislation along with some of my colleagues and current members of the Department of Justice Registrars Office. That Act was shelved and we were never consulted or given an explanation as to why. Then in 2007 all of a sudden it was top of the agenda again.

The Department of Justice in Nova Scotia has claimed this new Act fosters enhanced public safety. Yet when the experts in our industry were asked to present their opinions and advice, we were ignored and dismissed.

The Department of Justice fails to understand there are many members of our industry that wish to help put together a new Act and regulations that address public safety and training; sadly for Nova Scotians, our expertise has been minimized.

As a Nova Scotian who operates a "*Public Safety*" business with our head office located in this province by choice, I would like to see the new Act and regulations include the advice and opinions of stakeholders. The current version does not and it puzzles me as to why, with industry experts at their disposal.

I recommend an Industry and Public Advisory Committee for the Act and the regulations as is the case with other Acts in this province.

I further would like revisions to the "*Portable Licensing*" component - this was enacted in the Ontario Act and I can state as a company registered and licensed in Ontario, this does not aid the public safety whosoever. Basically a "Security Officer" is licensed and could work anywhere and could hold himself out to any one or any company as a qualified Security Officer without being employed by a credible, licensed Security Agency.

This is one example of the risk and liability. It would be the same as a Police Officer working today for HRM and tomorrow for the RCMP because it pays better for that day. I find it odd that there are so many other controls in this Act for employees and businesses but the Portable Licensing component falls short of the intended goals.

In closing I am committed to changes in the Act and regulations and this province. I will volunteer to a committee to develop better regulations pertaining to Bill 22 to foster greater public safety.

I thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Mark Joseph
President
Northeastern Investigations Inc.
Northeastern Protection Service

Response to Proposed Private Security Legislation Bill 22

My name is Roger Miller; I am the Vice President of Northeastern Investigations and the representative of the Canadian Society for Industrial Security. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to the committee today.

Since 1992 I have worked passionately with my counterparts in the industry and government to help draft a revised Act for private security personnel. During that time there have been very committed people on both sides of the table working for a common goal that was in the interests of the citizens of Nova Scotia. Some of the same people who were at the table in 1992 have remained at the table for all of these years; these people sit on both sides of the table – industry and government.

As I read the Act presented to the Legislature I was to say the very least disappointed. At worst I was angered, angered by the total lack of respect for the industry people who have made this Act a large part of their life and volunteered their time to assist government, and yet we have been almost entirely ignored by the very government elected to work with us. I was angered to the point of wanting to be outside of the security industry. This is after 25 years I have dedicated to my career, after being presented a National Lifetime Membership Award in part "...for advancement of the security industry in Canada...". To have the efforts of so many people dismissed by a select group of bureaucrats is insulting. To believe that this government is willing to continue with fundamentally flawed legislation despite receiving expert advice is a slap in the face to professionals throughout Canada. To follow the lead of other provinces that have enacted legislation that isn't working for them is short sighted at a minimum.

Let me point out some specifics about why this Act needs to be revisited:

- The Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) committee convened to review and develop a National security standard. They have accepted after much debate and analysis the term "*SECURITY OFFICER*". The province of Nova Scotia disagrees with the experts from across the country and makes that term illegal, in spite of any rational explanation. I suggest the reasoning is simply because that is what was done in another province. This is Nova Scotia and we should be leaders not followers who are acquiescing to other jurisdictions.
- Employees who at the discretion of the Registrar receive a suspension while their conduct is investigated may be out of work, out of a pay check and obviously out of the required income that they need to live on – for as long as 35 days or more

based on this Act. Ironically the NS Department of Labour only allows an employer a maximum suspension of an employee for six days without compensation or rendering a final verdict. This is inhumane to expect an employee, some very close to the minimum wage, to go without income for 35 days. Who does this benefit?

- Portable Licensing – I could demonstrate for hours how this affects the safety of Nova Scotians, and how it could affect the businesses of Nova Scotians by compromising their security. This is a step in the wrong direction that has not worked well in other provinces and it will prove to be detrimental to public safety in Nova Scotia. As a Law Amendments Committee you are being warned that this is a matter of public safety for all of us. The desire of government to make it a “simple” process for the staff is short sighted and serious. Our workforce has mobility now so the argument that it creates mobility is less than accurate.
- Is this committee aware that someone leaving federal, provincial or municipal detention today could be installing a security system in your home tomorrow? Yes, your home or your business or that of your mother, or other family members. There is no legislation that oversees this discipline of the security industry. We asked for this, seventeen years ago it was in the draft and the justice department was 100% behind the idea. In recent years we were told by Department of Justice staff that this was too big to encompass in the time they had to work with. Too big? Does this mean Nova Scotians who purchase a security system for their home or business don't deserve public safety at the same level as those who hire a security person? Industry asked for this and was willing to work with the government to write the material to include this but there was no desire to include this on behalf of government. In one meeting we were asked by staff “*if we include this (electronic security) will you support the Act?*” We could easily have conceded this one point but we were not willing to compromise our ethics for a piece of the pie. Remember we were told it was too big, not that it was irrelevant to public safety – just too big to deal with.
- We have asked to be included in the Act an advisory board for the industry to assist with developing the regulations but we were told by staff that that wouldn't work. The Education Act provides for Advisory Boards, the Police Act provides for Advisory Boards. Is this government saying that the sensitivity of this Act is at a higher level than the two aforementioned Acts? The role of an advisory board could be determined specific to this Act. To this recommendation we have been told that the government is not prepared to place this in the Act. I would hope that through the presentations you will develop an open mind to this concept and break new ground that will show a true commitment to governing in the best interests of Nova Scotians.

- Nova Scotia is the first province in Canada where respective industry associations have created a single voice to collaborate with government to create new legislation. The Security and Investigators Alliance (SIA) was created out of governments' desire to work with one group that could represent a large segment of the private security industry. The industry responded to government in a timely manner. SIA represents five individual groups that speak for a large percentage of professional security providers. Again, Nova Scotia has the benefit of expertise in all disciplines, yet moves forward without using the information provided.
- There have been comments made in the media by a number of MLA's that indicate the security industry is not supporting new legislation, these comments are untrue. Our industry has been active for almost 20 years working with government to develop good, strong, effective legislation for Nova Scotia. We have been ignored, and in return we have acted professionally and ethically. I am urging you as representatives of the people you are elected to serve to take every possible step you can to correct the flaws before it is too late.

We will commit to fairness and we will support new legislation that will benefit all sides, industry, government, business and citizens alike. In turn we are asking for a commitment from the government that we will be treated fairly, something that has not happened thus far.

This is not about party politics this is about protecting people and property in Nova Scotia. If the people in industry and in government fail to do the absolute best they can do to enact appropriate legislation there is much more at stake than egos, public safety is being placed on the line. By dismissing the concerns I have presented to you this evening you will effectively dismiss the public safety concerns that accompany the issues. I urge you to consider these concerns and respond with a meaningful commitment to better understanding and addressing them.

Thank you,

Roger Miller