



ASSOCIATION OF SAIL TRAINING ORGANISATIONS' POLICY STATEMENT ON THE SECURE STORAGE, HANDLING, USE, RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CERTIFICATES AND CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

General Principles

As an Umbrella Organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help our members assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, ASTO complies fully with the Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. ASTO also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information, and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and Access

Certificate information is kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers, and access is strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and we recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it is requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a certificate has been received and the relevant information has been forwarded to the designated person, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six months, we will consult with the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we ensure that any DBS Certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle. We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested and the unique reference number of the certificate.

Acting as an Umbrella Body

Before acting as an Umbrella Body (one which countersigns applications and receives certificate information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), we take all reasonable steps to ensure that such organisations comply with the Code of Practice. We will also take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that these organisations will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of certificate information in compliance with the Code of Practice, and in accordance with this policy. We will also ensure that any body or individual, at whose request applications for DBS Certificates are countersigned, has such a written policy and if necessary will provide a model policy for members to use or adapt for this purpose.