



PSIRA
Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority



LOCKSMITHS

MORE THAN JUST A KEY CUTTER

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

COIDA	Compensation of Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act
FET	Further Education and Training
LASA	Locksmiths Association of South Africa
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
PSiRA	Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority
PSiR Act	Private Security Industry Regulation Act 56 of 2001
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SASSETA	Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an analysis of the regulation of the locksmith sub-sector in South Africa. It is aimed at influencing the policy processes within the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority insofar as the locksmith sub-sector is concerned. The locksmith sector has evolved over time and modern technological advancements have had a significant influence on the daily functioning of locksmith operatives.

As part of the private security industry, the locksmith sub-sector is regulated by the Private Security Industry Regulations Act 56 of 2001 (PSiR Act). Methods of analysis comprised both desktop and field research. Structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with a view to understanding the intricacies of the locksmith sub-sector in the South African context. Mention must be made that the subject of the locksmith sector in South Africa remains under-researched.

Research findings indicate that the registered locksmith business is in decline as a result of unfair competition with unregistered service providers and inadequate enforcement by the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority. This presents a challenge in terms of effectively regulating and controlling this sub-sector. There is also regulation governing suppliers of locksmith equipment, which in essence is security equipment in terms of the definition found in the PSiR Act. Of concern within the sector is the absence of standardised training and the limited number of locksmith training centres.

The report finds that the locksmith sub-sector is not effectively regulated and this poses a security threat to South African society. This is compounded by the fact that PSiRA inspectors are not knowledgeable on the locksmith sub-sector. As a result of technological advancement, the report finds that the regulatory aspect of the sub-sector is lagging behind in terms of its effectiveness. Recommendations discussed in this report include the strengthening of the PSiRA regulatory mechanisms, the standardisation of locksmith training, and the establishment of relationships between the Authority and other state law enforcement agencies.



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1. Introduction

The private security sector in the Republic of South Africa, as regulated by the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSiRA), is divided into various divisions which, among others, include the locksmith sub-division or sector. The locksmith profession is considered to be an honourable profession, and locksmiths have held positions of trust within communities and businesses for hundreds of years. Professional locksmiths are guardians of security. For this reason, a locksmith must be exceptionally honest, trustworthy, and of good character.¹ A good reputation is essential for each and every locksmith to maintain the confidence of customers. In 2017, the then Minister of Police, Honourable Fikile Mbalula, released crime statistics for the financial year 2016/2017. The statistics highlighted that although property related crimes had decreased by 0.05%, the overall crime statistics had increased by 0.12%.² These crime statistics demonstrate that collaboration among stakeholders in crime prevention, including the locksmith is critical. The 1996 National Crime Prevention Strategy highlighted that government cannot deal with crime on its own.³ The institutions of government, in all three tiers, must work together with civil society to overcome crime.⁴ This is one of the key elements of the 'social crime prevention' approach.⁵ The locksmith industry is one of the most important sectors in the private security industry.⁶ Every time a locksmith recommends, repairs, or installs a lock or a security device, he/she is indirectly preventing a crime from occurring.⁷

The surging demand for improved home and business protection has created

a vast new market for the locksmith's skills.⁸ For this reason locksmiths should be up-to-date on crime trends, especially property related crimes, and also on new product developments in the security field.⁹ The best way to keep current is to subscribe to popular trade journals, which offer up-to-the minute information on products, as well as useful articles on lock servicing and installation.¹⁰ By keeping informed on news and trends in the security field, professional locksmiths can turn crime fighting into a lucrative business.¹¹

This report seeks to achieve the following: first, to identify the needs and challenges of the locksmith operatives. Secondly, to provide practical solutions to the challenges faced by locksmith operatives. Thirdly, to confirm or dispel the research hypothesis. Fourthly, to answer the research questions rationally. Fifthly, to inform the policy document on locksmithing which will later be translated into regulations, and lastly, it seeks to help PSiRA achieve its legislative objects, and to identify and address the shortcomings in the Authority's regulation of the locksmith sub-sector.

2. Background

The developments in the private security industry in the Republic of South Africa emphasised the importance of effective regulation in the private security industry and the broadening of the definition of security services in terms of the PSiR Act. The definition of security service has been expanded to include the locksmith division, which was not previously formally regulated. Locksmiths play a very important role in attending to the security needs of society.

¹ <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).

² <https://www.saps.gov.za/services/crimestats.php> (accessed on 28 November 2017).

³ *The 1996 National Crime Prevention Strategy*. Available on <https://www.csvr.org.za/docs/crime/1996nationalcrime.pdf> (accessed on 20/10/2017).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

The private security sector in South Africa is divided into divisions or sub-sectors which vary according to the type of service they render to their clients. For example, the following are part of the private security industry: the guarding division; the assets-in-transit division; the special events division, locksmith division and several other specialised divisions.

The challenges and the needs of each sub-sector are different and the type of regulation required in each division differs depending on the type of service offered. In order for PSiRA to effectively exercise control over the sub-sectors, PSiRA is mandated to conduct on-going studies in order to understand what is happening in each sub-sector. This is one of the main reasons for conducting the study on locksmithing as a sub-sector within the private security industry. As at the end of financial year 2016/2017, the PSiRA database showed that there were 461 registered locksmith businesses as compared with 622 registered businesses in the financial year 2014/2015. The cause of this decline is examined in this study.

3. Historical Background of Locks and the Locksmith Industry

Locksmithing is an ancient skill that has been practised for many centuries. From the earliest days of human kind, people needed some way to protect their valuables. Today, we use locks to protect our cars and cash; thousands of years ago, our ancestors protected their food supplies and farm animals in a similar way. Ancient paintings on Egyptian walls show a lock being used to protect the king's treasure. The early locksmith who made that lock was as important and highly respected as modern locksmiths are today.¹²

¹² <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).

¹³ *The Complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing*, Bill Phillips, 2005.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

The earliest locks may no longer be around, and there are few written records of them.¹³ How likely it is for old lock to be found depends on the material it was made from and on the climate and various geological conditions it was exposed to over the years.¹⁴ There is evidence to suggest that different civilisations probably developed locks independently of each other.¹⁵ The Egyptians, Romans and Greeks are credited with inventing the oldest known types of locks.¹⁶

3.1 Egypt

The oldest known lock was found in 1842 in the ruins of Emperor Sargon II's palace in Khorsabad, Persia.¹⁷ The ancient Egyptian lock was dated to about 4000 years old. It relied on the same pin tumbler principle that is used in the manufacturing of today's most popular locks.¹⁸

Historians have found evidence of locks being commissioned by the Egyptian king, Khafre, during his rule in 2500 BC, for protection of tombs built during his reign, including some in the pyramids of Giza.¹⁹ The Egyptian lock consisted of the three basic parts: a wood crossbeam, a vertical beam with tumblers, and a large wooden key.²⁰ The crossbeam ran horizontally across the inside of the door and was held in place by two vertically mounted wooden staples.²¹ Part of the length of the crossbeam was hollowed out, where the vertical beam intersected it.²² The vertical beam contained metal tumblers that locked the two pieces of wood together.²³ Near the tumbler edge of the door there was a hole accessible from outside the door that was large enough for someone to insert the key and the arm. The spoon-shaped key was about twelve inches to two foot long with pegs protruding from one end.²⁴ After the key was inserted

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ <https://www.onlinelocksmithcourse.com/blog/locksmith-throughout-history>. (accessed on 13/11/2017)

²⁰ *The Complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing*, Bill Phillips, 2005.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*



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into the keyhole, it was pushed into the hollowed out part of the crossbeam until its pegs were aligned with their corresponding tumblers.²⁵ The correct key allowed all the tumblers to be lifted into a position between the crossbeam and vertical beam so that the pins no longer obstructed movement of the crossbeam.²⁶ Then the crossbeam could be pulled into the open position.²⁷

3.2 Greece

Most early Greek doors pivoted at the centre and were secured with rope tied in intricate knots.²⁸ The cleverly tied knots, along with beliefs about being cursed for tampering with them, provided some security.²⁹ When more security was needed, doors were secured by bolts from inside.³⁰ In the few cases where locks were used, they were primitive and easy to defeat.³¹ The Greek locks used a notched boltwork and were operated by inserting the blade of an iron sickle shaped key, about a foot long, into a key slot and twisting it by 180 degrees to work the bolt. They could be unlocked just by trying a few different-sized keys.³²

3.3 Rome

Like the Greeks, the Romans used notched boltwork.³³ However, the Romans improved on the lock design in many ways, like sheathing the boltwork in an iron case and using keys of iron and bronze.³⁴ Because iron rusts and corrodes, few early Roman locks are in existence.³⁵ A number of keys from this era can still be found. Often keys were ornately designed to be worn as jewellery, either as finger rings or as necklaces using string.³⁶ Not much

changed in the design of locks until around 870–00 AD when the first metal locks started to appear.³⁷

Two of the most important innovations of the Roman locks were the spring loaded bolt and the usage of ridges or wards on the case.³⁸ The extensive commerce during the time of Julius Caesar led to a great demand for locks among the many wealthy merchants and politicians.³⁹ The type of locks used by the Romans, the warded bit-key lock, is still being used today in many older homes.⁴⁰ Because the lock provides so little security, typically it's found on interior doors, such as closets and bedrooms.⁴¹

The Romans are sometimes credited with inventing the padlock, but that is controversial.⁴² There is evidence that the Chinese may have independently invented it before or about the same time.⁴³ The demand for locks declined after the fall of Rome in the fifth century because people had little property to protect.⁴⁴ The few locks used during this period were specially ordered for nobility and the handful of wealthy merchants.⁴⁵

3.4 Beyond the industrial revolution

The basic design of how a lock and a key worked has remained relatively unchanged for centuries.⁴⁶ With the industrial revolution in the 18th century, precision in engineering and component standardisation greatly increased the complexity and sophistication of locks and keys.⁴⁷

Locksmithing is traditional trade, and in most countries requires completion

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *The Complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing, Bill Phillips, 2005.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ [http://www.historycooperative.org/an-ancient-profession-the-history-](http://www.historycooperative.org/an-ancient-profession-the-history-of-locksmithing/)

[of-locksmithing/](http://www.historycooperative.org/an-ancient-profession-the-history-of-locksmithing/) (accessed on 13/11/2017).

³⁸ *The Complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing, Bill Phillips, 2005.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ <http://www.historycooperative.org/an-ancient-profession-the-history-of-locksmithing/> (accessed on 13/11/2017).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

of an apprenticeship. The level of formal education varies from country to country, from a simple training certificate by an employer, to a full diploma from a college. Locksmiths may be commercial, mobile, institutional or investigational. They may specialise in one aspect of the skill, such as an automotive locksmith, a master key system specialist or a safe technician.

Historically, a locksmith constructed or repaired an entire lock, including its constituent parts. Many of today's locksmiths work on existing door hardware, including door closers, hinges, electric strikes, and frame repairs, or service electronic locks by making keys for transponder-equipped vehicles and implementing access control systems.

Although the fitting and replacement of keys remains an important part of locksmithing, modern locksmiths are primarily involved in the installation of high quality lock-sets and the design, implementation, and management of keying and key control systems.

4. Research Hypothesis, Question and Methodology

The hypothesis for this study is as follows:

The locksmith industry forms part of the South African private security sector. It therefore follows that the locksmith industry is subject to the Private Security Industry Regulation Act 56 of 2001. It is also important to note that effective regulation of the locksmith industry is critical for purposes of ensuring safety and security in South African society.

The locksmith industry in South Africa operates in line with the relevant legislation and PSiRA plays an important role in effectively regulating and controlling the industry.

The research questions for the study are:

- What caused the decline in the number of locksmith service providers registered with PSiRA?
- How effective are the current mechanisms of regulating the locksmith as a sub-sector of the Private Security Industry in South Africa?
- How can the current regulatory mechanisms be improved to help PSiRA achieve its objectives as enshrined in section 3 of the PSIR Act 56 of 2001?

The research methodology comprised of both desktop and field research and the qualitative method of research was used to gather, analyse and process data. Structured and unstructured interviews with research participants from the Locksmith Association of South Africa as well as the locksmith service providers registered with PSiRA were conducted with the sole purpose of collecting data. The research participants were selected randomly from the list of registered locksmith service providers on the PSiRA database. The following cities were visited for the purpose of conducting such interviews: Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth.⁴⁸

5. Literature Review

Attempts were made to conduct a literature review but no article, book or journal written about locksmithing as a sub-sector of the private security industry in South Africa was located. The search for articles, journals and books in South Africa was a futile exercise.

An American author, Bill Phillips, has written a book called *The complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing*. This book provided a great deal of

⁴⁸ A validation workshop which was scheduled to take place could not take place due to financial constraints.



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information relating to technical aspects of locksmithing as well as legal and business aspects of the profession. A short history of the lock was provided and the tools of locksmith trade were analysed. Various types of locks and keys were described.

The shortage of literature in this field of study posed a real challenge to the study.

6. The Role of the Locksmith in Society

In our contemporary society everyone needs a locksmith sooner or later. Our world is filled with locks. They protect our homes, our cars, our property and our loved ones. The average car may have as many as eight locks on it – ignition, doors, trunk, glove department and petrol cap. Offices, factories, retail stores and other businesses have locks on file cabinets, desks, toolboxes, cash registers, employee lockers and safes. Most commercial buildings have state-of-the-art electronic security systems, burglar alarms, motion detectors, and security lighting.⁴⁹ Some people have a lock on their bikes, firearms, travellers' briefcase, and post box; laptops are also locked to the office desks.

The role of locksmith in our current societal setting is more than just that of a key cutter as was previously assumed. Locks provide us with a wonderful feeling of safety and security when they are working efficiently. When a lock is broken, when key is lost and when one has locked the key inside a vehicle, the only solution is the professional locksmith. Their services come at a price. The locksmith helps people to keep on schedule when they lock themselves out of their vehicles. The locksmith shields families and properties from burglars and intruders.⁵⁰ Locksmiths protect millions of rands worth of cash, documents,

equipment and merchandise in banks, factories, offices and retail stores from theft and vandalism.

In essence, locksmiths provide security services and obviously peace of mind to their customers.⁵¹ A skilled professional locksmith can build a successful career and earn a comfortable living from keeping customers, their families, and their property safe.⁵²

Clients of locksmith service providers vary from one area to another and from one store to the other. Although many service providers rely on business from domestic clients, larger establishments with an acknowledged reputation and a certain level of compliance do get business from the corporate world, universities, industry, municipalities, sheriff of the court and government departments.

6.1 The consumer's perspective

Demacon commissioned by PSiRA conducted a locksmith consumer survey during the year 2017. The findings of the survey was that households largely used locksmiths for residential lockouts, repairing of keys and locks and the opening of safes. Business largely used locksmiths for business lockouts, repair of keys and locks and the opening of safes, predominantly for locking and unlocking of buildings or units and replacing of locks. Households and business respondents made use of word-of-mouth referrals and internet searches to identify locksmith companies. Households and businesses regarded services of locksmith service providers as reliable to highly reliable, reflecting a high level of satisfaction in rating the services offered by the locksmith companies. Households and businesses were of the opinion that locksmiths play a valuable role in keeping their houses, business premises

⁴⁹ <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

and buildings safe. The largest segment of respondents were of the opinion that the locksmith trade did not make them susceptible to exploitation of privacy or home invasion at a later date.⁵³

The survey indicated that household and business had not experienced dishonest or corrupt behaviour from locksmiths that were utilised. Household and businesses rated the services offered as affordable to very affordable. A very small percentage of respondents were of the opinion that the costs associated with locksmiths prevented them from using their services. Almost none of the respondents are aware of any measures in place that hold locksmiths accountable for their services offered. Almost 16% of households and 25% of businesses were aware of the fact that locksmiths operating in South Africa are by law obliged to be registered with PSiRA.⁵⁴

Overall the findings were that locksmith services are widely used by households and businesses nationally. Locksmith services are viewed as affordable and effective, and reliable to very reliable. The industry plays an important role in contributing to the safety of residential units and business premises. The industry appears not to be susceptible to abuse and respondents have reported limited occurrence of corrupt behaviour or dishonesty. What was evident is that clients were unaware of the legal measures holding locksmiths accountable for services rendered. Approximately 20% of respondents knew that locksmiths need to be registered with PSiRA, and less than 25% of the respondents were of the opinion that PSiRA had any influence of the quality of services offered by the locksmith industry.⁵⁵

7. Segmentation of Locksmith Duties

The average locksmith performs a variety of skilled jobs, depending on the needs and requests of his or her customers. Some locksmiths specialise in working on just one type of skill. For instance, a locksmith may choose to work as a safe technician, access control officer etc. Other locksmiths work on all types of locks. This is normally referred to as general locksmithing. Here are some of the types of services rendered by locksmiths.

7.1 Duplicating of keys

Key duplication is one the most common locksmithing tasks. Customers will frequently bring in a key and ask locksmith to make copies. This simple service can make up a large part of a locksmith's income. A medium sized shop may sell as many as six hundred duplicate keys per week, of course depending on the location of the business. It's important for a locksmith to be able to provide fast service and make a copy of a key that works as efficiently as the original key.⁵⁶

When a locksmith makes a new copy of an old key, the new key must have the same basic shape and characteristics as the old key. For this reason, a locksmith keeps a large selection of different key blanks, or uncut keys, on hand to match up with the key which the customer has. One of the most important skills a locksmith acquires is the ability to quickly recognise and identify the key blanks used by different manufactures. This assists the locksmith to identify which key blank to use in duplicating the customer's key.

While many hardware stores, laundromats and drugstores offer key duplication, few stores keep a wide variety of key blanks in stock, so they will usually only be able to copy the

⁵³ Demacon, *Locksmith Consumer Survey Findings*, October 2017.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).



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simplest and most common key types. Also, a professional locksmith is much more skilled at making copies that fit and work perfectly as compared to semiskilled key cutters who only do key cutting as a secondary job.⁵⁷

Occasionally, a locksmith may need to make a special key by hand for an old-fashioned or obsolete lock which does not have a key. For example, a customer may have lost the key for an antique desk or cabinet. In this case, it may be impossible to replace the old lock without damaging the piece of furniture. So, the locksmith may custom-make a key by hand-filing a key blank. The locksmith will only be forced by circumstances beyond his or her control to perform this type of task.⁵⁸

7.2 Installing locks

A locksmith may receive a call to install a lock on a front door, an inside door, a window, a toolbox, or just about anywhere else a customer requests.⁵⁹ However, the largest portion of a locksmith's business comes from ordinary front door lock installations, replacements, or security upgrades.⁶⁰

Many locksmiths expand into installing commercial locks. Any facility or business that the public frequents is probably large enough to require security measures, and thus has the potential of buying security merchandise from the locksmith.⁶¹ Stores install security systems to discourage pilferage and theft as a crime prevention strategy. There are also office security devices to install and service, desk locks and filing cabinet locks. Schools, hotels and office buildings may contract a locksmith to install locks.⁶²

⁵⁷ *Ibid*
⁵⁸ *Ibid*
⁵⁹ *Ibid.*
⁶⁰ *Ibid*
⁶¹ *Ibid*
⁶² *Ibid*
⁶³ *Ibid.*
⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

7.3 Repairing of damaged locks

Locks get damaged in one way or another and for various reasons. Clients do not always replace all the damaged locks with new ones. Any type of lock can be repaired, cleaned or dirt, oil and rust removed from its delicate inner mechanisms.⁶³ A locksmith may replace a damaged part, lubricate a rusted lock, remove a broken key from a lock, or thaw out a frozen car lock in winter time.⁶⁴ Damaged locks resulting from attempted forced entry need to be repaired.⁶⁵

7.4 Lock opening

Another important locksmithing skill is 'emergency lock opening', which involves the use of a number of specialised trade tools and techniques.⁶⁶ For example, a locksmith can pick open a lock. This technique might be time consuming depending on the skill and experience of the locksmith and the type of lock being opened. Sometimes a locksmith may force a lock open using a hammer, a wrench, an electric drill, or bolt cutters.⁶⁷ For example, when a child is locked inside a building or vehicle, some force is used to open the locks quickly.

7.5 Vehicle work

It is normal for a locksmith to travel out to assist locked-out drivers get back into their cars. It may be necessary to use specialised tools to unlock the door or boot.⁶⁸ It is even possible for the locksmith to make a new key at the scene, using the tools carried in his mobile workshop if this is practical.⁶⁹

7.6 Evaluating homes and businesses

A locksmith who knows enough about security alarm systems might be asked to inspect a commercial establishment

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*
⁶⁶ *Ibid.*
⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
⁶⁸ <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).
⁶⁹ *Ibid*

or residential premises and provide suggestions for installing an electronic device to protect the premises.⁷⁰ The proposed security system could focus on areas of primary concern to the owner, such as employee pilferage, shoplifting, break-ins, or other risks.⁷¹ Locksmiths offer this type of service to their clients for a consultation fee or voluntarily when the locksmith sees a need to advise a client on security features of his/her home or business.

7.7 Safe work

Servicing of safes involves repairing, cleaning, changing combinations, and opening without the use of a combination.⁷² One of the most common tasks in safe work is changing combinations or recombinations.⁷³ Business often requires this service when an employee leaves the place of employment.⁷⁴ The locksmith changes combinations to prevent anyone who knew the old combination from gaining access to the safe.⁷⁵ Locksmiths either remove the locking mechanisms and repair them at his workshop or do the work on site. Repair work may involve something as simple as replacing a broken handle. It is not uncommon for a locksmith to demonstrate how to properly dial a combination. In addition, banks call upon locksmiths to service and repair safe deposit boxes.⁷⁶ During the field research some of the businesses were specialists in this skill. For example, AA Locksmiths & Grinding Specialists of Durban and Action Locksmiths (Pty) Ltd of Johannesburg are among those specialising in this area of work.

7.8 Installing burglar alarms

The increase in crime statistics has increased the demand for security products. This has made burglar

alarm installation a growing area of specialisation for many locksmiths.⁷⁷ Burglar alarms, both residential and commercial, are an excellent source of specialised business.⁷⁸ Some of these alarms are installed to wake up property owners in the event of an intrusion; others are installed to scare away criminals. There are also those alarms which are connected to armed reaction companies who respond to them whenever activated. These fall under the armed response sub-sector of the private security industry.

8. Role of the Locksmith Association of South Africa

It was mentioned that belonging to a locksmith association improves one's credibility among other locksmiths and in the community.⁷⁹ Locksmith associations provide membership certificates that are displayed in shops and logos that are used in advertisements.⁸⁰ The Locksmiths Association of South Africa (LASA) is an association which was started by a group of locksmiths in 1974.⁸¹ It is the representative body for the locksmithing industry in the Republic of South Africa.⁸² LASA has branches in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern (Limpopo) Province and Western Cape.⁸³ This association arguably introduced elements of professionalism to the locksmith industry. According to LASA national administrator Ms Dora Ryin, LASA currently has 202 registered members.⁸⁴

9. Current Training Standards

For any trade or career to develop and improve, there is always a need for training to take place in one form or another. At present, LASA is providing training for aspirant locksmiths at its

⁷⁰ *Ibid*

⁷¹ *Ibid*

⁷² *Ibid*

⁷³ *Ibid*

⁷⁴ *Ibid*.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*

⁷⁶ *Ibid*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

⁷⁹ *The Complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing, Bill Phillips, 2005.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid*.

⁸¹ See <http://www.LASA.co.za/> (accessed 20 November 2017).

⁸² *Ibid*.

⁸³ *Ibid*.

⁸⁴ Dora Ryin, LASA national administrator, 20 November 2017.

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training centres in the provinces of Western Cape, Free State, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal.⁸⁵ LASA together with the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) and South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) developed unit standards and coursework for a national certificate in locksmithing, which was registered with SAQA in 2006.⁸⁶ The duration of the course is one year. LASA training centres provide certificates and statements of results for key cutters, general locksmiths and safe technicians that are required for registration with PSiRA.⁸⁷ LASA, together with SASSETA are offering the course at Tshwane FET College based in Mamelodi, east of Pretoria. According to LASA national deputy chairperson, Mr Johann Du Preez, this location was selected in an effort to afford previously disadvantaged communities the opportunity to enter in to the locksmithing sector and the venue is convenient in relation to transport for the township dwellers.⁸⁸

The costs of the LASA course (National Certificate in Locksmithing) in the training year 2014 was over R46 000. The cost of training is excessively high and does not advance the transformation that would encourage previously disadvantaged people entering the locksmith sector. It was found that LASA training centres in the provinces of Gauteng, Western Cape and Eastern Cape were not in use, which renders them white elephants. It was not established during the research as to whether training centres in the provinces of Free State and KwaZulu-Natal are in use or not. The inactivity of the LASA training centres could be attributed to two things, lack of interest and cost of training. Previously SASSETA funded the LASA training.

However, the funding has since been stopped. The current training costs for LASA training are yet to be determined. LASA is waiting for SASSETA to make a determination on training costs and the structure of locksmith training going forward.

The other training of locksmith in South Africa is provided by The School of Advanced Locksmithing (Pty) Ltd which is registered with PSiRA as a training service provider. A veteran locksmith, Mr Gerald Mindel owns the school and their course is registered with SASSETA as a locksmith skills programme.⁸⁹ The school is based in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province. The school is currently offering a course on a fulltime basis for nine weeks at a fee of R30 000. Only three students were enrolled in the class at The School for Advanced Locksmithing (Pty) Ltd.

9.1 Challenges related to training

During the study, shortcomings were highlighted in relation to training despite credits given regarding training standards and methods as provided for by the training service providers.⁹⁰ SASSETA and LASA training is out-of-step and irrelevant because they simply enrol students who are not interested in locksmithing, 'to just fill the numbers'.⁹¹ It was stated that people who are interested in the trade do not get the funding.⁹² SASSETA manuals are outdated and SASSETA has paid incompetent people to develop manuals.⁹³ LASA training centres across the country are run and managed by locksmith operative themselves, which raises the question of conflict of interests.

One of the locksmith operatives stated that "I train my staff because I believe I am the best locksmith in town, why should I send my staff to be trained by

⁸⁵ For more information, see <http://www.lasa.co.za/training/training.asp> (accessed on 27 November 2017).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Du Preez J, LASA National Deputy Chairperson 10 November 2017.

⁸⁹ Mindel .G, *The School of Advanced Locksmithing Director*, 31 October 2017.

⁹⁰ Anonymous participant 04 November 2017.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Anonymous participant 31 October 2017.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

my competitor".⁹⁴ Another interviewee mentioned that he did not know whether the LASA training is adequate or not.⁹⁵ Another viewpoint held by a participant was that the indiscriminate awarding of grants to train young disadvantaged students 'to impart skills at any cost' is damaging the professionalism of the industry as the majority of these students drop out because they cannot obtain employment while others operate unregistered in the townships.⁹⁶

The other major challenge related to training is the shortage of training centres in the country. Nationally, there are only six locksmith training centres. This shortage defeats some of the objectives of the Authority, that is, encouraging ownership and control of security businesses by persons historically disadvantaged through unfair discrimination as well as to promote the empowerment and advancement of persons who suffered from unfair discrimination in the private security industry.⁹⁷

There is a developing trend of unregistered training providers advertising on Gumtree and other advertising platforms, in particular training relating to car transponders and immobiliser equipment. This threat taps into risks associated with the locksmith industry because if unlawful service providers train individuals who do not register with the Authority, such people are not subject to regulation, whereas they are skilled enough to open many types of vehicles. PSiRA will have to deploy resources to trace and stop this type of training from being conducted and open criminal cases against such training providers for contravening section 20(1) read with section 38(3) of the PSiR Act. The Authority should also liaise with the SAPS detective services and National Prosecuting Authority at national level to ensure

that dockets opened by PSiRA against unregistered service providers are properly investigated and successfully prosecuted by relevant authorities.

10. PSiRA's Role in Regulating the Locksmith Industry

Currently PSiRA, through its law enforcement department, is regulating the private security industry as a whole including the locksmith sub-sector. PSiRA inspectors conduct inspections, be it either complaint triggered or routine inspection. During the inspections the inspectors mainly examine the registration status of the business, staff and the address from which the business is operating. One of the participants stated that inspectors are targeting registered locksmith operators and unregistered operators are let off scot-free.⁹⁸

In the financial year 2016/2017, PSiRA's law enforcement department received 96 complaints from LASA of allegations against locksmiths trading while unregistered. Of the 96 complaints received, 91 were against businesses based in Gauteng and five were against businesses based in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Law enforcement department management have allocated those complaints to the inspectors who conducted inspections and investigations. Although there are no exact statistics of how these complaints were resolved, it was confirmed that some service providers who were alleged to have been unregistered were found to be registered during inspections and/or investigation.

There were also criminal cases opened against locksmith service providers who were traced and found to be unregistered. There were also locksmith service providers who could not be tracked down by the inspectors for various reasons, including the fact

⁹⁴ Anonymous participant 07 November 2017.

⁹⁵ Anonymous participant 03 October 2017.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Section 3(k) & (q) of the PSiR Act.

⁹⁸ Anonymous participant 02 October 2017.



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that they do not have addresses or are working from their vehicles. The statistics with regard to the number of criminal cases opened and also the locksmiths found to be registered is unavailable. It was also stated that PSiRA does not know how to solve the problems of the locksmiths.⁹⁹

10.1 Training of inspectors

A minor challenge faced by the law enforcement department of PSiRA is that the inspectors are not trained to identify tools used in the trade. This means that a locksmith found in his business premises might misinform the inspector that he or she is not a locksmith but a key cutter and the inspector will not be able to pick up the difference. In order for the Authority inspectors to properly regulate the locksmith sub-sector, they need to be trained about the tools and trade of locksmithing to enable them to differentiate between key cutter and locksmith as soon as they see the tools of trade.

Another opinion relating to inspections is that PSiRA should be firm in terms of ensuring compliance and carry out a thorough background check of all operational locksmiths and their employees, since they have access to high security areas.¹⁰⁰ The general feeling among many research participants is that key cutters should be registered with the Authority. Various reasons have been advanced for this assertion. A viewpoint held by a participant was that all the locksmiths started as key cutters and therefore key cutting is just the beginning of locksmithing and for that reason the industry should not be split.¹⁰¹ Another reason in favour of key cutter registration was that PSiRA should have the knowledge of who is out there with the machine doing the job and not focus on the money side.¹⁰²

Another viewpoint was that perhaps

inspectors need not conduct inspections on service provider premises because all the information is on the PSiRA database. It was also observed that inspectors know very little about locksmithing, and for this reason it was suggested that PSiRA inspectors should meet with the industry once or twice per year in order to share information about unregistered service providers and any other information that could help PSiRA inspectors work effectively.¹⁰³

10.2 Fees

The current PSiRA fee structure for businesses is determined by the number of registered employees the business has in a particular financial year. In the current financial year 2017/2018, a small business with less than 20 employees pays R5 900.00 in annual fees whereas a large business with more than 800 registered employees pays R37 200.00 per annum. The majority of the research participants believed this structure was designed to suit the guarding division. It was argued that by virtue of being a locksmith operative and having opened the doors of their businesses does not necessarily mean that they make money. One of the participants criticised the fees that are being paid to PSiRA and said that she did not know what are they paying for.¹⁰⁴ One respondent stated that the annual fees are unreasonably high and should be reduced and be paid on monthly basis, and he further stated that key cutters should be registered and pay even less annual fees.¹⁰⁵ Another respondent stated that they pay PSiRA annual fees but do not receive any benefit and suggested that renewal of registration should only be every two years.¹⁰⁶ Overall, the annual fees are considered to be very high by the majority of locksmith operatives who participated in this study.

⁹⁹ Anonymous participant 05 October 2017.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Anonymous participant 31 October 2017.

¹⁰² Davis L, Trustee of Leo Davis Locksmith & Hardware Trust, 06

November 2017.

¹⁰³ Ibid 31 October 2017.

¹⁰⁴ Anonymous participant, 01 November 2017.

¹⁰⁵ Anonymous participant, 02 October 2017.

¹⁰⁶ Anonymous participant, 07 November 2017.

10.3 Unfair competition

Another opinion held by the participants was that the decline in numbers of registered locksmiths is caused by inability to cope with the complexities of present day locksmithing, and unfair competition due to lack of regulations.¹⁰⁷ Competition comes from hardware stores, builder suppliers, and dry cleaners etc. who take key cutting business away from the locksmith.¹⁰⁸ It was also observed that unregistered individuals are purchasing cheap transponder equipment from China and are competing with registered locksmiths unfairly.¹⁰⁹ Some previously registered locksmiths are now operating illegally.

11. Technological Developments in the Locksmith Sector

With the developments in technology around the world, the locksmith sector has also advanced. The evolution in the locksmith sector and the motor industry has led to the introduction of the transponder and electronic locks and access control systems.

11.1 Transponder

A transponder is a wireless communications, monitoring, or control device that picks up and automatically responds to an incoming signal.¹¹⁰ A transponder chip disarms a vehicle immobiliser when the car key is used to start the engine. The majority of keys to vehicles built after 1995 contain transponder chips.

While automobiles have been with us since the beginning of the 20th century, the automobile lock was adopted slowly.¹¹¹ By the late 1920s however, nearly every vehicle had an ignition lock, and closed cars had door locks as well.¹¹² Current models can

be secured with half a dozen locks.¹¹³ Automotive security is becoming ever complex, and as such the art of auto locksmithing itself is becoming more specialised with the need for modern equipment and constantly updated know-how.¹¹⁴ The introduction of transponder-equipped vehicles has shaken up automotive locksmithing. Locksmiths are desperately trying to keep up with the new technology, but it keeps on changing. There are a lot of vehicles today that use transponders. There are both original and aftermarket transponders and many non-transponder keys look like transponder keys. Making a transponder key is expensive, requiring equipment that is costly. One needs special equipment to identify the type of transponder key and to program it, and in many cases (especially with Japanese models) one needs to buy a special high-security key machine.¹¹⁵

As a matter of fact, it can be tricky figuring out which keys are and which are not enhanced electronically. However, even if one decides not to make transponder keys, a device that identifies which keys are transponder keys must be purchased.¹¹⁶ A small handheld transponder detector can identify transponder keys.¹¹⁷

As much as technology is a good thing, some of the participants held a different view. One participant stated that he foresees the future of the locksmith industry declining even further as a result of the industry becoming technologically advanced, especially in the vehicle section.¹¹⁸ It was felt that it was becoming too expensive to keep up financially upgrading equipment to service clients.¹¹⁹

¹⁰⁷ Anonymous participant, 20 November 2017.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ See <http://www.internetofthingsagenda.techtarget.com/definition/transponder> (Accessed on 02 February 2018).

¹¹¹ *The Complete Book of Locks and Locksmithing*, Bill Phillips, 2005.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ *Master Locksmith Association 2014 Handbook*.

¹¹⁵ <https://autolocksmithusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/01-Locksmithing-An-Expanding-Career-Field.pdf>. (Accessed on 05 February 2018).

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ *Simpkin, T.J, Locksmith at AA Locksmiths & Grinding Specialists*, 21 November 2017.



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Everyone in the vehicle electronics field, such as alarm companies, radio fitment centres, the central locking industry, local tracking industry, auto electricians and almost all mechanical workshops are in possession of electronic key programming equipment of one make or another.¹²⁰ On the general locksmithing side, many hardware stores have key cutting machines and give security advice when it comes locks plus give a locksmith service.¹²¹ The majority of these businesses are not registered with PSiRA, and many work from home thereby causing many locksmiths to leave the industry.¹²² Because of the above reasons, the industry has become very 'cut throat' and many cannot survive in it.¹²³

11.2 Electronic security

The evolution in the locksmith sub-sector did not only affect the automobile division but access control as we know it has been drastically changed. The key in the ordinary sense of the word is being replaced in access control by electronic tags, cards, finger prints and codes. Many businesses and offices use these new methods of access control by phasing out the ordinary key with electronic security. This is due to the reliability and the security features of electronic security. With usage of electronic tags, cards, finger print and access codes each and every entry into the building or premises or access to a safe can always be linked to a particular user. With technology evolving so fast, in years to come there will be less and less usage of the standard key in South Africa and around the world.

12. Challenges Faced by the Locksmith Industry

Although challenges faced by locksmith service providers differ, to a large extent

there are similarities. In most cases, the difference comes as a result of the geographical location of the business and socio-economic status of the area where the business is operating.

12.1 Unregistered locksmiths

In bigger cities like Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, developments have opened the way for unregistered service providers, seeing the opportunities to render locksmith services, to make quick cash without paying tax to the South Africa Revenue Service (SARS) or fees to PSiRA. By so doing, they put the registered businesses at a disadvantage. Registered businesses are required by law to pay tax, Unemployment Insurance (UIF), Compensation of Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA) and PSiRA fees.

Unregistered businesses charge less because they do not pay any fees and the majority are running businesses from their vehicle (the so-called van people). Registered businesses have challenges in that they have to keep stock in their premises which is costly and they also have to comply with the law. This makes their prices higher than the 'bogus' or unregistered locksmith service providers.

PSiRA inspectors do trace and find unregistered locksmith operatives. Inspectors open criminal cases against unregistered services providers, however such cases are not properly investigated by the South African Police Services. If they happen to take cases to court, there is hardly ever a successful prosecution. PSiRA should establish relations with the SAPS detective services and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to ensure that criminal cases opened by PSiRA are

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

properly investigated and successfully prosecuted.

12.2 Poor Quality of products

Another aspect that makes the competition unfair is that the bogus services providers sell products which are of inferior quality compared to products and services offered by registered service providers. Due to difficult economic circumstances, many consumers prefer cheaper products which arguably serve the same purpose.

12.3 Technological advances

Locksmith service providers face operational difficulties which vary from one area to another and from one business to another. Small and medium size businesses share the common challenge of keeping up with the technology of the transponder industry.

12.4 Retaining clientele

Another dilemma of locksmith operatives is to attract new clients and retain clientele. Various factors play a role in this. For example, emerging locksmiths create competition. Rezoning and demographics in municipal areas also play a part.¹²⁴ When an area which was largely inhabited by many employed people is rezoned to accommodate squatter camps, the dynamics change. If the area is inhabited by a majority of unemployed people, for instance, the locksmith business will not flourish because they do not need sophisticated locks and have little buying power anyway.

12.5 Non-regulation of suppliers and key cutters

The PSiR Act defines security equipment as follows: an alarm system; a safe, vault or secured container; a satellite tracking device; closed circuit television or other electronic monitoring device or surveillance equipment; a device used for intrusion detection; access

control; bomb detection; fire detection; metal detection; x-ray inspection or securing telephone communications; a specialised device used to open, close or engage locking mechanisms; a specialised device used to reproduce or duplicate keys or other objects which are used to unlock, close or engage locking mechanisms.¹²⁵

Much of the equipment sold by suppliers to the locksmith industry qualifies as security equipment in terms of the Act. This basically means that any business selling such tools or equipment should be registered with the Authority as provided in section 20(1) of the PSiR Act.

Although key cutters are currently not obliged to be registered with PSiRA and are thus not regulated, this exception will fall away as soon as the PSiRA Amendment Bill becomes an Act of Parliament. The definition of a locksmith in terms of this bill has been amended to include a key cutter who manufacture a key other than duplicating.

Many of the locksmith service providers are calling for the regulation of the equipment suppliers. Currently there are four main suppliers in the country, namely, Sanlic House of Keys, SA Locks, BBL, and B & B, which are not regulated by PSiRA. These suppliers should be identified and be compelled to register with PSiRA. Imports of locksmith equipment should be regulated, particularly regarding the standard of products being brought to South Africa.¹²⁶

A comment made by one of the participants held that suppliers should not sell locksmith and key cutting tools to individuals and businesses not registered with PSiRA.¹²⁷ One of the participants echoed the same sentiments and said that suppliers of

¹²⁴ Anonymous participant, 31 October 2017.

¹²⁵ Private Security Industry Regulations Act 56 of 2001.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Simpkin C. Owner of AA locksmiths & Grinding Specialists, 04 October 2017.



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machinery should not sell to everybody and PSiRA should regulate import of key cutting tools and locksmith machinery.¹²⁸

An attempt to regulate importers and products will not be without challenges. The question of who would be responsible to inspect the equipment when it enters the country arose. Whether it would be the SARS customs department or PSiRA must be decided. At present, neither of the two law enforcement agencies are trained to identify such products entering the country.

Another difficulty to the Authority and the locksmith industry is the service providers who are selling their products online. They are not regulated in any manner by the Authority. The legislation which established PSiRA does not apply extra-territorially, which will pose a great challenge in attempting to regulate online suppliers. For the purpose of registering online suppliers with the Authority, PSiRA will have to make an effort to trace online suppliers, and the country in which the business is registered and its operational location.

13. The Future and Transformation of the Locksmith Industry

Today, the average age of a locksmith business owner in South Africa is 60 years as demonstrated by the 19 research participants who took part in this study. The age was evaluated according to the ownership of the business, not from the age of the person interviewed. Of the 19 business owners whose businesses were involved in this study, 15 owners were above the age of 55 and only five business owners were under the age of 50. Out of the 19 business owners over the age of 55, only 3 had their sons as managers

or co-owners of the business. If the average age of ownership of locksmith businesses from the study is 60 then the future of the industry does not look healthy. The future of many businesses, industry and the country lies to some extent with the youth. There are very few young people owning locksmith businesses.

The locksmith industry is teetering on the brink.¹²⁹ The industry has become much more sophisticated over the past ten years and requires young personnel with knowledge and skills on the use of computers and computerised equipment.¹³⁰ In five years' time, new motor vehicles will no longer use keys. The introduction of driverless vehicles will have a serious impact on the industry.¹³¹ These are two challenges need to be addressed now, and not in five years' time. In order to stay relevant, the industry needs to provide advanced training and improve regulation enforcement.¹³²

The locksmith sub-sector is largely untransformed; white males in particular dominate it. The industry was closed and very difficult to get into. While there are a considerable number black South Africans in the industry, they are not the major players and many are mobile locksmiths and not members of LASA and PSiRA.¹³³ The study also established that locksmithing is more of a family business. Majority of these owners inherited the businesses except for a few who started or bought them.

Mr Andries Muller of PE Locksmiths stated that women are accepted in the industry as long as they have a will to work and "get their hands dirty".¹³⁴ Another perspective held was that work after normal working hours could be a challenge for women. Nevertheless, there is nothing stopping women from

¹²⁸ Anonymous participant, 02 October 2017.

¹²⁹ Anonymous participant, 20 November 2017.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Anonymous participant, 02 October 2017.

¹³⁴ Muller A, Member of PE Locksmiths, 07 November 2017.

¹³⁵ Anonymous participant 06 November 2017.

entering the industry.¹³⁵ There is a need for workshops to train women in the trade of locksmithing.¹³⁶ A woman participant stated that women should have an interest in the field to start with and also recommended that PSiRA provide stipends to interns.

Collaboration among stakeholders including PSiRA, locksmith training providers, SASSETA and the industry is critical to address and implement transformation in the locksmith sector. Previously disadvantaged people should be a priority in this process. PSiRA has, among its objectives, the responsibility of encouraging ownership and control of security businesses by persons historically disadvantaged through unfair discrimination in the private security industry.¹³⁷

14. Risk Factors Related to Locksmithing

In as much as locksmithing is a valuable and essential skill which is rendered to the community as a public service, it has the potential to be misused. If the skills are shared with the wrong people, for instance, criminals or people with criminal intentions who pose a risk and threat to the community and to property then this becomes dangerous. If house breakers who use physical force to break into houses manage to accumulate or possess the skills, knowledge and the technical know-how on the usage of picks, this is a hazard to society. Many of the tools used by locksmiths could also be used for vehicle theft and housebreaking.¹³⁸ Tools used by locksmiths are essentially house and car breaking equipment. Anyone with dishonest intentions who has access to these tools is a real threat to the country's fight against crime.

15. Recommendations

The need for the effective regulation of the locksmith industry cannot be overemphasised. Based on the research findings, the recommendations below are made.

15.1 Regulation

PSiRA should strengthen its regulatory mechanisms and invest resources for the purpose of tracing unregistered locksmith operatives and enforcing law as required and mandated by the PSiR Act as well as the Private Security Industry Regulations, 2002.

The Authority should draft regulations to ensure that PSiRA regulates all suppliers of security products to the locksmith industry. Every business selling any product or equipment which conforms to the definition of security equipment as defined in the Act, should be regulated by the Authority.

All the suppliers of security equipment must sell to only PSiRA registered services providers. It should be a requirement for every person buying equipment from suppliers to produce his/her PSiRA registration certificate or number.

15.2 Training

PSiRA, in consultation with LASA, the School of Advanced Locksmithing, SASSETA and other relevant stakeholders should update the locksmith training manuals, and add the current technological trends in the locksmith sector. The training standards of the courses provided by both LASA and The School of Advanced Locksmithing should be standardised in order to bring professionalism and promote good standards of training in the locksmith sector.

¹³⁶ Anonymous participant 07 November 0217.

¹³⁷ Section 3(k) and (q) of the PSiR Act.

¹³⁸ Koven A. Director of Action Locksmiths (Pty) Ltd. 31 October 2017.



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Training of locksmiths should be provided by PSiRA or SASSETA accredited training centres only. PSiRA must liaise with SASSETA in order plan the future of locksmith training.

15.3 Technological advancement

PSiRA should develop a cellular phone application (App) from which service providers can access information on their cell phones and be able to renew their registration and apply for registration online.

PSiRA must also keep a register of all trained locksmiths, with their full details, including residential addresses and telephone numbers where potential employers can find registered locksmiths. This should be coupled with updating the PSiRA database.

The Authority, together with all relevant stakeholders, should strive to increase the number of locksmith training centres in the country, with the vision of enrolling as many previously disadvantaged people as possible.

15.4 Training of PSiRA inspectors

The Authority inspectors must be trained on the basics of the technical aspects of the locksmith operations. This will assist them to differentiate between a locksmith and a key cutter and to understand the nature and scope of work of locksmith operatives as compared to the work of a key cutter.

15.5 PSiRA to strengthen communication

The Authority will have to utilise available resources in order to improve communication with services providers. This will assist the Authority in achieving its legislative objective of promoting a private security industry which is characterised by professionalism, transparency, accountability, equity and accessibility.

PSiRA should find innovative ways of bringing awareness to consumers about the requirements of the law relating to the services of the private security industry.

15.6 Training costs and funding

PSiRA should liaise with the School of Advanced Locksmithing, LASA and SASSETA and other relevant stakeholders in an effort to reduce the cost of training or develop a new funding model for aspirant locksmiths.

15.7 Relations with other law enforcement agencies

The Authority must liaise with the South African Police Services and the National Prosecuting Authority with the aim of establishing relations that will ensure that criminal cases opened by PSiRA are properly investigated and are successfully prosecuted.

16. Conclusion

The security of businesses, homes, institutions of health and education as well as vehicles in South Africa is heavily dependent on the quality of locks that the locksmith fits on such properties to secure them. Although generally the private security industry in South Africa has been one of the fastest growing economic sectors, the locksmith industry has seen a huge reduction with regard to the number of locksmith businesses registered with PSiRA over the past three years. The study revealed some of the reasons that caused this decline. Among these is the fact that service providers not registered with the Authority are competing with registered service providers.

Technological advancements have led to other sectors of the security industry undertaking functions that would have ordinarily been a locksmith's work;

for example, key cutters, information technology business and auto body businesses. They manufacture keys, fit alarms and replace locks. Therefore, it is recommended in this study that PSiRA should regulate all business-providing services which fit the definition of the locksmith.

It was found that the training of locksmith operatives was not standardised and not regulated by PSiRA. The locksmith operatives recommended development of training for aspirant locksmiths and it was argued that while the Authority left the issue of training unattended, the industry filled the gap. There are two registered training providers whose training standards are not regulated by PSiRA. There are certain service providers who train their own staff as well those who are illegally providing training to clients for a fee.

PSiRA's regulatory strategy specifically in relation to the locksmith sub-sector was found to be wanting. PSiRA inspectors have no, or very little knowledge about locksmiths. The Authority cannot therefore properly regulate a form of trade about which it is not well informed. The non-regulation of security equipment suppliers is a major cause for concern and the study recommends regulation of suppliers to the locksmith industry.

Suggestions were made for addressing the challenges and requirements of the locksmith industry. These will assist the Authority to achieve its legislative mandate, which is to regulate the private security industry and to exercise effective control over the practice of the occupation of security service providers in the public and national interest and in the interests of the private security industry. After all, the role that is played by locksmiths in our modern society is way more than just a key cutter.

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