As of: November 2026

SPECIALIST MANUAL

SECURITY SERVICES IN PRACTICE

Security Services in Practice

Guard Services or Plant Security – Services, Legal Framework, Costs

SPECIALIST PORTALS AND BRANDS OF SECUCONCEPT

Distinguishing guard services from plant security · Service types under DIN 77200-1

§ 34a GewO (German Trade Regulation Act), qualifications, DGUV Regulation 23 · In-house staff or service provider

On-site practice · Client cooperation · Hourly rate calculation · Checklists

Quality through Trust

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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

Security Is Created On Site

Technology reports and concepts plan – but in the end, a site is protected by people. Whether at the gatehouse, on patrol, at the plant entrance, or in an emergency: the quality of a security service proves itself in everyday operations, on the night shift, and in the first minutes of an incident.

This manual answers the questions that executive management, plant and site managers, facility and security management, and procurement ask before every contract award: Do we need guard services or plant security? Our own staff or a service provider? What is legally required, what does an hour really cost – and how do you recognize quality? It combines the legal framework, practical knowledge from industrial plant security, and transparent cost calculations.

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KEY MESSAGES FOR DECISION-MAKERS

01 At a Glance

The ten most important facts for everyone who commissions, organizes, or restructures security services.

1. **Guard services protect properties, plant security protects operations:** plant security is more deeply integrated into a site's processes, hazard prevention, and emergency organization.
2. **In-house staff do not need a license under § 34a GewO:** guarding your own company with your own employees is not commercial guarding.
3. **External service providers always need one:** a company license, the instruction course (40 hours) or the expert knowledge examination for their employees, and registration in the Guard Register.
4. **DGUV Regulation 23** governs personal suitability, service instructions, site induction, and equipment – and prohibits instructions that conflict with the security assignment.
5. **Collective wages are generally binding:** in 2026, basic hourly wages range from roughly 15 to 19 euros depending on federal state and activity – well above the minimum wage of 13.90 €.
6. **A credible hourly rate** is therefore usually around twice the collective wage. Offers far below that level are a warning sign.
7. **A 24/7 post** amounts to 8,760 hours per year and requires around five to six full-time employees, including vacation, sick leave, and training.
8. **Beware of sham service contracts:** anyone who issues instructions directly to external security staff risks unlawful temporary agency work.
9. **Quality is measurable:** with a clear service specification, key performance indicators, patrol records, audits, and a permanent site supervisor.
10. **The strongest model is often hybrid:** in-house plant security management with operational knowledge, with operational services delivered by a qualified provider.

Important Note on Legal Validity

This manual provides professional guidance and does not replace legal or tax advice. Collective agreements, declarations of general applicability, and administrative practice differ between federal states and change regularly. Research status: November 2026. Cost figures are model calculations and non-binding reference values (net).

TERMS · DISTINCTION · SERVICE TYPES

02 Guard Services and Plant Security

In everyday language, guard services, property protection, and plant security are often used interchangeably. For planning purposes, the distinction is worthwhile: it determines tasks, qualifications, integration into operations – and therefore costs.

2.1 The Difference at a Glance

Characteristic	Guard services / property protection	Plant security
Protection objective	Buildings, premises, physical assets	Entire operation: people, plant equipment, processes, know-how
Typical sites	Offices, residential complexes, warehouses, construction sites, vacant properties	Industry, chemicals, energy, logistics centers, critical infrastructure (KRITIS)
Integration	Assignment with clearly defined tasks	Part of the operational organization, close coordination with plant management, HSE, and the plant fire brigade
Depth of tasks	Checks, presence, reporting, initial response	Access control, plant traffic, material and vehicle checks, emergency and incident organization
Qualification	Instruction course or expert knowledge examination under § 34a GewO	additionally certified plant security specialist, fire protection, hazardous materials knowledge, first aider
Organization	predominantly external service providers	in-house staff, service provider, or hybrid model

2.2 Service Types under DIN 77200-1

DIN 77200-1 (2022-10 edition) defines minimum requirements for security service providers and distinguishes between stationary and mobile security services as well as event security services.

Service	Content	Typical deployment
Dedicated on-site guarding / property protection service	permanent presence at a site, patrol rounds, reporting	Industry, administration, construction sites
Reception and gate service	Access control, visitor and key management, telephone	Company headquarters, plant gates
Inspection service	Checks at defined points and times	Vacant properties, technical areas
Mobile patrol service	several sites in rotation, irregular checks	Commercial districts, branch networks
Alarm response service	Response to alarms within an agreed time limit	monitored sites connected to an alarm receiving center
Event security service	Admission, stewarding, fire safety	Trade fairs, company events, public events

2.3 Typical Plant Security Tasks

- **Access and plant traffic:** ID badge and visitor management, contractor control, truck handling, traffic management on the plant premises
- **Material and vehicle checks:** goods issue, spot checks in accordance with the works agreement, cargo and seal checks
- **Hazard prevention:** fire safety patrols, first aid, support for the plant fire brigade, guiding emergency responders on site
- **Incident and emergency organization:** alerting, evacuation, cordoning off, situation reports to plant management
- **Technology:** operation of hazard management systems, video surveillance, access control, and the control center

> **From the Field**
>
> In industrial plant security – particularly in the chemical industry – the security service is part of the site's operational hazard prevention. Anyone working there must know the plant equipment, escape routes, assembly points, and alarm levels. This operational knowledge is the real added value of plant security – and it only develops through permanent teams, thorough site induction, and regular drills.

§ 34A GEWO · GUARD REGISTER · DGUV REGULATION 23

03 Legal Framework, Qualifications, and Occupational Safety

Anyone who commercially guards the lives or property of third parties is subject to German guarding law. Different rules apply to in-house staff – but occupational safety and qualification remain mandatory in both cases.

3.1 Who Needs What?

Constellation	License under § 34a GewO	Employee qualification
In-house plant security / in-house gate service	not required	no statutory requirement under § 34a; qualification based on the risk assessment and DGUV Regulation 23
External property protection and plant security	company requires a license	at least the instruction course (40 hours) at the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK)
Patrols in public traffic areas or in areas with actual public traffic	required	expert knowledge examination
Protection against shoplifters, door supervision at nightclubs	required	expert knowledge examination
Managerial functions at refugee accommodation facilities and access-controlled major events	required	expert knowledge examination

Certain vocational and advanced qualifications replace the instruction course or the expert knowledge examination, such as the certified specialist or service employee for protection and security (Fachkraft / Servicekraft für Schutz und Sicherheit), the certified protection and security officer (Geprüfte Schutz- und Sicherheitskraft), the certified plant security specialist (Geprüfte Werkschutzfachkraft), and the master professional for protection and security (Meister für Schutz und Sicherheit) (§ 8 BewachV).

3.2 Qualification Levels at a Glance

Level	Qualification	Typical role
Basic	Instruction course under § 34a GewO (40 hours)	Property protection, gate service, plant security (external)
Advanced	Expert knowledge examination under § 34a GewO	Mobile patrol service, events, shift and team leadership
Further training	Certified protection and security officer (IHK), certified plant security specialist	Site supervision, qualified plant security
Vocational training	Service employee (2 years) or specialist for protection and security (3 years)	Plant security, control center, future leadership
Management	Master professional for protection and security, plant security master	Plant security management, branch and division management

3.3 Guard Register and Reliability

Since June 1, 2019, the nationwide Guard Register (Bewacherregister, § 11b GewO) has recorded guarding companies and their employees. Before deployment, the authority verifies each person's reliability; guards on duty carry an ID card and a name tag or identification number. Clients should obtain confirmation that the deployed personnel are registered.

3.4 Occupational Safety: DGUV Regulation 23

The accident prevention regulation "Guard and Security Services" applies to all guarding and security activities for the protection of people and physical assets – regardless of whether in-house staff or a service provider is deployed. Key points:

- Suitability and competence of deployed personnel, documented
- Written service instructions and regular briefings, covering topics such as confrontations, robberies, fire safety, and first aid
- Site induction before the first assignment, equipment including high-performance flashlights
- Prohibition of intoxicating substances while on duty
- No compliance with client instructions that conflict with the security assignment

> **Safeguarding Lone Working**
>
> Night shifts and patrol rounds often take place alone. Depending on the risk assessment, a personal emergency signal system may be required; DGUV Rule 112-139 describes selection, operation, and operating instructions. For in-house plant security staff, the company itself bears this responsibility; for a service provider, it lies with that provider as the employer – but coordinating on hazards at the site remains an obligation for both parties (§ 8 ArbSchG, German Occupational Safety and Health Act).

MAKE OR BUY · HYBRID MODEL · SHAM SERVICE CONTRACT

04 In-House Staff or Service Provider

The question “in-house plant security or external service provider?” is not purely a cost question. The decisive factors are operational knowledge, resilience against absences, flexibility, management effort, and liability.

4.1 Comparison of the Models

Criterion	In-house plant security	External service provider	Hybrid
Operational knowledge	very high	depends on team continuity	high, through in-house management
Absence, vacation, sickness	own risk	contractually with the provider	with the provider
Recruitment and training	own effort	service provider	predominantly the provider
Flexibility for additional demand	low	high	high
Management and control	own line organization	via the provider’s site supervisor	in-house plant security management steers
§ 34a GewO	not required	required	for the external portion
Collective agreements and labor law	company or industry agreement of the business	collective agreement for security services	mixed

4.2 The Hybrid Model

In many industrial and critical infrastructure (KRITIS) operations, a division of roles has proven effective: an in-house plant security or security management function knows the business, sets standards, and acts as the contact for plant management and the authorities. The operational service – gatehouse, patrols, control center, peak loads – is delivered by a qualified service provider that compensates for absences and maintains a staffing reserve. Operational knowledge stays in-house without the company having to run a complete security organization.

Avoiding a Sham Service Contract

If external security personnel are managed like your own employees – that is, instructed directly, planned into your own duty rosters, or integrated into your operational organization – the service contract can turn into covert temporary agency work. Without a license under the German Temporary Employment Act (Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetz), the consequences can include a deemed employment relationship with the client, fines, and back payments of social security contributions.

How to keep the contract clean: describe services and results in the contract, not the working hours of individual persons. Professional requirements are incorporated via the service instructions issued by the provider. Operational requests are routed through the provider’s site supervisor – not directly to individual security officers.

4.3 When Which Model Fits

- **External service provider:** sites without particular process hazards, fluctuating demand, multiple properties, construction sites, vacant buildings
- **In-house plant security:** very high requirements for operational knowledge and confidentiality, large sites with a plant fire brigade and their own control center
- **Hybrid:** industry, chemicals, energy, logistics centers, and critical infrastructure facilities that need in-house steering combined with flexible delivery

4.4 Decision Matrix

Rate each criterion for your site from 1 (low) to 5 (high) and multiply by the weighting. High scores on the first three criteria argue for in-house control; high scores on the last three argue for a service provider – if both groups score high, the hybrid model is usually the best choice.

Criterion	Guiding question	Weighting
Operational knowledge	How strongly does security depend on process and plant knowledge?	×3
Confidentiality	How sensitive are know-how, access, and information?	×2
Operational hazard prevention	Is the service part of fire protection, incident, and emergency organization?	×3
Fluctuating demand	Are there peaks, projects, construction sites, or seasonal loads?	×2
Absence risk	How critical would an unstaffed post be?	×3
Management capacity	Are in-house resources for recruitment, training, and duty scheduling lacking?	×2

SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS · PATROLS · CHECKS · DOCUMENTATION

05 On-Site Practice

Good security services are recognized not by the uniform, but by clear procedures, traceable documentation, and staff who know their site.

5.1 From Contract to Ongoing Service

1	**Site survey**	Walk-through, protection objectives, risks, interfaces with technology, the plant fire brigade, and facility services.
2	**Service instructions**	Tasks, patrol schedule, reporting channels, emergency procedures, powers – issued by the service provider and coordinated with the client.
3	**Site induction**	Every security officer before their first shift: premises, technology, escape routes, contact persons, hazard points.
4	**Onboarding**	Accompanied shifts, especially for the gatehouse, the control center, and plant security tasks.
5	**Routine operation**	Duty roster, shift handover, patrol rounds, reports, defect reports.
6	**Review**	Regular site visits, audits, key performance indicators, updates to the service instructions.

5.2 Patrols and Documentation

- **Digital guard tour system:** checkpoints scanned via NFC or QR code verify the time and location of every patrol
- **Irregular times and routes:** predictable patrols are an open book for offenders
- **Defect reports with photos:** open doors, defective lighting, fire loads, damaged fences
- **Logbook and shift handover:** seamless handover of special occurrences, keys, and open items
- **Monthly report:** incidents, defects, key performance indicators, and recommendations for the client

5.3 Checks of Persons, Bags, and Vehicles

Checks when leaving the plant premises are common in plant security but legally sensitive. Security personnel have no search powers; checks are carried out on the basis of domiciliary rights (Hausrecht), employment contract provisions, and – where a works council exists – a works agreement, since gate checks concern the order of the business (§ 87 (1) No. 1 BetrVG, German Works Constitution Act). No search may be conducted against the will of the person concerned; where there is concrete suspicion of a criminal offense, the police are called in.

Legal Powers of Security Personnel

Private security personnel have no sovereign powers. They act on the basis of the domiciliary rights (Hausrecht) transferred by the client and the “everyman’s rights” (general civil rights): self-defense and defense of others (§ 32 StGB), necessity (§ 34 StGB), provisional arrest when an offender is caught in the act (§ 127 (1) StPO), as well as defense of possession and self-help (§§ 859, 229 BGB). The domiciliary rights should be transferred in writing, with the premises precisely described.

5.4 The Client’s Cooperation

- Appoint a permanent point of contact and route requests through the provider’s site supervisor
- Report changes to buildings, usage, access authorizations, and technology in good time
- Inform employees about the tasks and powers of the security service – this increases acceptance and effectiveness
- Address defect reports from the service reports promptly and provide feedback

SERVICE SPECIFICATION · KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS · COLLECTIVE WAGE COMPLIANCE

06 Quality and Contract Award

Security services are still too often awarded on the basis of the lowest hourly rate. The result is high staff turnover, constantly changing faces, and declining operational knowledge – the exact opposite of security.

6.1 Building Blocks of a Good Tender

Building block	What matters
Service specification	Protection objectives, tasks, hours, qualifications, equipment, interfaces – with reference to DIN 77200-1
Personnel	Share of permanently assigned staff, onboarding concept, substitution rule, language skills
Evidence	License under § 34a GewO, Guard Register, liability and key insurance, certificates
Collective wages	Commitment to collective wage compliance, disclosure of wage groups, rules on subcontractors
Evaluation	Best-bidder principle: weight concept, quality, and references, not just the price
Start-up	Trial phase with defined key performance indicators and formal acceptance

6.2 Key Performance Indicators for Routine Operation

Indicator	What it tells you	Target
Staffing rate	How many planned hours were actually delivered?	100%
Patrol completion	How many checkpoints were reached at the scheduled time?	as close to 100% as possible
Team continuity	Share of permanently assigned, inducted staff	high
Response time	Time until action is taken on incidents and alarms	contractually defined
Defect rate	reported and resolved defects	track resolution
Complaints	Feedback from employees, visitors, contractors	low, with analysis

Devil's Advocate: Subcontractor Chains

An offer calculated below collective wage level usually only works with subcontractors, excessively long shifts, or missing staffing reserves. For the client, this creates quality risks and – where personnel are integrated into the client's organization – legal risks as well. Have subcontractors named and approved in writing before deployment, and demand the same evidence from them as from the main contractor.

COLLECTIVE WAGES · HOURLY RATE · 24/7 POST · MAKE OR BUY

07 What an Hour of Security Costs

An hourly rate is more than the wage. The following model calculation shows how a collectively compliant billing rate is built up – and why offers far below it can hardly be credible.

7.1 Collective Wages 2026 – Examples

Region / activity	Basic hourly wage 2026
North Rhine-Westphalia, gate service (from Feb 1, 2026)	15.11 €
Baden-Württemberg, property protection / dedicated on-site guarding	15.14 €
Baden-Württemberg, mobile patrol and alarm response service	16.30 €
Baden-Württemberg, certified protection and security officer	18.40 €
Hesse, range across twelve wage groups	15.15 € – 19.08 €
Statutory minimum wage (2027: 14.60 €)	13.90 €

7.2 Model Calculation of the Billing Rate (Based on Gate Service, NRW)

Component	Assumption	Amount per hour
Basic hourly wage	NRW collective wage 2026	15.11 €
Supplements for night, Sunday, and public holiday work	avg. 10%	1.51 €
Subtotal, wages		16.62 €
Non-productive time: vacation, sickness, public holidays	22%	3.66 €
Subtotal		20.28 €
Employer's social security contributions	21%	4.26 €
Subtotal, personnel costs		24.54 €
Training, equipment, uniforms, insurance	6%	1.47 €
Subtotal		26.01 €
Administration, operations management, control center, risk, and profit	18%	4.68 €
Net billing rate		**30.69 €**

Model calculation with typical surcharge rates; actual figures depend on the collective bargaining region, wage group, deployment times, qualification, and scope of services. Each line builds on the previous subtotal.

7.3 Example: 24/7 Post – Service Provider or In-House Staff

Model	Calculation	Cost per year
Service provider at the model rate	8,760 h × 30.69 €	268,844 €
In-house staff: 5.5 full-time employees	5.5 × 42,000 € gross × 1.21	279,510 €
In-house staff incl. training, equipment, management (+8%)	279,510 € × 1.08	301,871 €

Assumptions: 8,760 hours per year, around 1,600 productive hours per full-time employee, 42,000 € annual gross salary including supplements, 21% employer's social security contributions. Recruitment, absence management, and replacement after resignations are not yet included for in-house staff.

> **Devil's Advocate: The Price Is Not the Comparison**
>
> Arithmetically, the two models are close together. The difference is made by factors no table can show: Who bears the absence risk during a flu wave? Who recruits when people resign? How quickly can the service be doubled if the threat situation escalates? And how much operational knowledge is lost when personnel change constantly? These questions decide the model – not the hourly rate alone.

FROM NEEDS ANALYSIS TO ROUTINE OPERATION

08 Checklist for Clients

This checklist is suitable for internal decision papers, tenders, and the annual review.

Phase 1 – Needs and Model	
☐	Define protection objectives, risks, and tasks for each site; guard services or plant security?
☐	Derive staffing needs from coverage hours (24/7 post = 8,760 hours)
☐	Model decision: in-house staff, service provider, or hybrid – with an assessment of absence risk and operational knowledge
☐	Clarify co-determination: involve the works council on checks and technology

Phase 2 – Tendering and Contract Award	
☐	Service specification based on DIN 77200-1 with key performance indicators and a trial phase
☐	Evidence: § 34a GewO, Guard Register, insurance, collective wage compliance, subcontractors
☐	Best-bidder principle: weight concept, quality, references, and price
☐	Clearly separate the contract, as a service or work contract, from personnel leasing

Phase 3 – Start	
☐	Site survey, service instructions, site induction for every security officer
☐	Transfer domiciliary rights in writing; hand over keys and authorizations with documented records
☐	Define contact persons and the communication channel via the site supervisor
☐	Inform company employees about the tasks of the security service

Phase 4 – Routine Operation	
☐	Evaluate the monthly report and key performance indicators; resolve defects
☐	Regular audits and unannounced checks
☐	Update the service instructions whenever changes occur and at least annually
☐	Conduct joint drills for emergencies, evacuation, and incidents

SHORT, RELIABLE ANSWERS

09 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the difference between guard services and plant security?

Guard services protect buildings, premises, and physical assets. Plant security is integrated into a company's organization and additionally handles access control, plant traffic, checks, and operational hazard prevention tasks.

Does our own in-house plant security need a license under § 34a GewO?

No. Guarding your own company with your own employees is not commercial guarding. Occupational safety, qualification based on the risk assessment, and DGUV Regulation 23 still apply.

What qualifications do external security personnel need?

At least the 40-hour instruction course under § 34a GewO. For certain activities, such as patrols in public traffic areas, the expert knowledge examination is mandatory. Higher qualifications replace both.

How many employees does a 24/7 post require?

A round-the-clock post amounts to 8,760 hours per year. Including vacation, sickness, and training, around five to six full-time employees are needed.

Why do hourly rates differ so widely?

Because collective bargaining region, wage group, supplements, staffing reserves, training, and management are calculated differently. Offers well below collective wage level point to gaps in wages, staffing reserves, or quality.

May security personnel check bags?

Only on the basis of domiciliary rights (Hausrecht) and company rules, and – where a works council exists – a works agreement. A search against the person's will is not permitted.

May we give instructions directly to the security officers?

Professional requests, yes – but via the provider's site supervisor. Direct instructions and integration into your own organization can lead to covert temporary agency work.

What is a hybrid model?

An in-house plant security or security management function steers, while a service provider delivers the operational service. Operational knowledge stays in-house, and the provider absorbs absences and peak loads.

SECURITY · CONSULTING · CONCEPTION

10 Your Partner for Guard Services and Plant Security

SecuConCept combines vendor-independent consulting, security conception, and operational delivery from a single source – nationwide, personally coordinated.

Consulting

Needs analysis, make-or-buy assessment, tender support, audits of existing services

Conception

Security concepts, service instructions, patrol and emergency plans, KPI systems

Security

Property protection and plant security, reception, mobile patrol and alarm response service, fire watches, construction site guarding

Why SecuConCept?

- **Plant security from experience:** practical knowledge from industrial plant security at major chemical sites.
- **SecuNET by SecuConCept:** more than 350 specialized companies nationwide – regional expertise with uniform quality requirements.
- **One contractual partner:** even when SecuNET partners work on site, SecuConCept remains your contractual partner and coordinator.
- **Vendor-independent and economical:** no commissions from manufacturers, up to 15% discount for framework agreement customers.

Specialist Portals and Brands

CCTV-Security.de by SecuConCept – specialist portal for mobile camera towers, alarm receiving center, alarm response, and implementation.

SecuFokus by SecuConCept – Managing Security Together.
Specialist information and tools for operators, partners, and service providers.

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

Security Service Check for Your Site

Needs, model, service specification, and costs – in one structured appointment with a clear recommendation for action.

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FOR REFERENCE

11 Sources, Standards, and Legal Status

Legal Foundations

- § 34a and § 11b Gewerbeordnung (German Trade Regulation Act – guarding trade, Guard Register); Bewachungsverordnung (BewachV, German Guarding Ordinance)
- Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetz (AÜG, German Temporary Employment Act); Arbeitsschutzgesetz (ArbSchG, German Occupational Safety and Health Act), in particular § 8; Arbeitszeitgesetz (German Working Hours Act)
- § 87 (1) No. 1 and No. 6 Betriebsverfassungsgesetz (German Works Constitution Act)
- §§ 32, 34 StGB (German Criminal Code); § 127 StPO (German Code of Criminal Procedure); §§ 229, 859 BGB (German Civil Code)
- Mindestlohngesetz (German Minimum Wage Act); minimum wage adjustment 2026/2027 (13.90 € and 14.60 € respectively)

Standards and Rules

- DIN 77200-1:2022-10 – Security services, general requirements
- DGUV Regulation 23 “Guard and Security Services”; DGUV Rule 112-139 (personal emergency signal systems)

Collective Wage Sources

- Collective wage and pay agreements for security services declared generally binding (BDSW / ver.di), including North Rhine-Westphalia, Baden-Württemberg, and Hesse, as of 2026
- IHK (Chamber of Industry and Commerce) guidance sheets on distinguishing the instruction course from the expert knowledge examination

Legal status and liability: research status November 2026. Collective wages apply per bargaining region and wage group and are adjusted regularly. This manual does not constitute legal advice. Cost figures are model calculations and non-binding reference values (net).

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