The Different Methods through which Privatised Police are held Accountable.



Industry Self-Regulation-private security companies are accountable to their customers for business (market self-regulation), to aid this organisations can set standards within the industry.

State Regulation-private security companies or personnel can be held accountable through a government organisation such as the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

Criminal and Civil Liability-private police/security can be held to account by the criminal and civil law.

Democratic accountability (McLaughlin, 2001, 89; Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2014, 5)-private police have accountability to the public much in the same way as the public police.

In case of those contracted by the

police (e.g. g4s)-they can be held to

account by the public through

complaints processes (Independent

Office for Police Conduct, 2018). These

can be effective in misconduct cases

(e.g. g4s 999 call scandal; Khomani,

2016).

The British Security Industry Association (2018) –private body that sets standards within the industry.

SIA has 'approved contractor scheme'-standards may be more effective as they come from state body.

SIA set up by Private Security Industry Act 2001 (PSIA),
Licenses + registers approved companies and
individuals, sets a standard of conduct and has power to
enquire about + inspect private security companies
(Security Industry Authority, 2015). SIA has scale of
punishments it can use against companies that commit
an offence under the act (ibid), it can; give advice, a
verbal or written warning, an improvement notice
which is removed when certain conditions are met,
revoke or suspend a licence and finally prosecute.

Private police have legal accountability (McLaughlin, 2001, 86) same as both public police and citizens for offences under PSIA or 'regular' laws.

These purportedly high standards are internally developed and essentially voluntary. Therefore, like other forms of industry self regulation, they cannot hold companies accountable very effectively (Stenning, 2013, 341).



Stenning (2000, 340)-state regulation can have issues with not being known about (SIA's power to investigate may overcome this) and practical implementation (it may only 'catch the smaller fish' (Security Industry Authority, 2018)).

Police and Crime
Commissioner (pcc) holds
chief constable and
therefore rest of force
(including private
contractors accountable to
the public.

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Stenning (2000) argues there is less reluctance to prosecute private police than public making it a more effective mechanism of accountability. McLaughlin argues there are still problems with it being retrospective and selective.



Both of these may face problem of not being known by public & therefore effectively rendered useless as a method of accountability (Stenning, 2000, 340). Pcc is complex method of accountability Police complaints processes have particularly chequered history (Smith, 2006).