

FICCI SEEKS CLASSIFICATION OF SECURITY GUARDS AS SKILLED WORKERS

NEW DELHI, June 28 2013. Despite performing work that requires special skills and training, the private security guards continue to languish on minimum wages as unskilled workers. To ameliorate their plight and give the private security sector a boost, FICCI urged the Ministry of Labour and Employment to take steps to categorise security guards as skilled workers in the Central and State Minimum Wages Acts.

The private security sector operates across over 550 districts in the country, directly employing over 50 lakh individuals, with an approximate turnover of Rs. 20,000 crore. This makes private security industry amongst one of the largest employment generating sectors in the country. The industry is involved in highly skilled jobs like access control using baggage X-ray machines and metal detection equipment at five star hotels or guarding industrial complexes through use of CCTV surveillance systems or managing entry/exit of thousands of workers and vehicles outside IT parks or managing complex functions at private ports and airports.

Despite the vast scale of operations across India and the volume of employment generation, the sector has not received its due attention from the government. The model rules framed under the Private Security Agency Regulation Act 2005, the nodal Act for the industry clearly defines eligibility criteria for private security guards and supervisors and also details the subjects that need to be covered under the training programmes of private security workers.

The Act clearly stipulates a minimum of 160 hours of training for private security guards describing them as trained workers in multiple sections of the Act.

Regardless of performing highly skilled functions, the private security guard continues to be categorised as 'unskilled worker' and draws wages as per state minimum wages for 'unskilled category'. Even the Central Minimum wages notification No. SO 2232 (E) & 2233 dated 18.09.2008, private security guards are categorised as semi-skilled workers. This is not only gross injustice to over 50 lakh plus workers employed in the sector but also in direct contravention to the laws of the land and directives of the Supreme Court of India. Going by the job descriptions and job specification of the security personnel as mentioned above and under the law, it goes without saying that the un-armed security guards undoubtedly satisfy the definition of 'skilled work' and the security supervisors as well as armed guards satisfy the definition of 'highly skilled work'.

FICCI has also requested the government to form a special 'Task Force' under the Ministry of Labour & Employment, with representation from the industry to look into

the issues affecting the private security workers. If accepted the recommendations shall directly enhance the lives of over 2.5 crore Indians who are directly dependent on the workers of the private security industry.

Web link:

<http://ficci.com/SEdocument/20250/FICCI-Recommendations-on-Private-Security-Workers.pdf>

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