

The PICA

Investigative Reporter

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS OF CALIFORNIA

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President's Message

By Dave Boykoff, *President*

As you know, ChoicePoint and Lexis Nexis have had more than their share of negative news coverage. ChoicePoint made questionable marketing decisions when they chose to sell their product to non-regulated businesses.

ChoicePoint unfortunately sold their product to many unregulated and possibly disreputable entities that misused confidential data. That would include private information such as individuals unlisted phone numbers, social security numbers and residential addresses.

It is apparent that PICA must take an active role to let our legislators know that our industry respects an individual's privacy. In our recent conversation with ChoicePoint, they acknowledged that PIs were *not* the source of problems with the dissemination of sensitive and confidential information.

As of March 17, 2005, I was notified that IRB would be editing the ability for private investigators to obtain a subject's complete social security number. Their policy is to truncate the subject's social security number by limiting access to the last four digits of the number. ChoicePoint has already implemented this policy as well.

Merlin, a well-respected and popular information

company, has plans to begin omitting complete social security numbers on their searches.

We all recognize the value of a complete social security number in conducting background investigations, locating a missing child, locating a witness in a criminal or a civil action and verification of financial information.

It should be noted that no legislation has been passed to limit accessibility to social security numbers to the investigative industry. These previously mentioned data source firms have on their own volition, decided to limit their client base by implementing this premature and ill-conceived arrangement.

It is inconceivable that these companies, with whom we have had a loyal and long relationship, would choose to inaugurate this "shoot in the foot" policy. If we, as investigators have limited access to vital information then our client base will shrink and we will not be able to buy product or service from these firms.

I personally have had communication with one of the above referenced firms in which they attempted to validate their reasoning. The e-mail stated that they were taking a pre-emptive strike by truncating social security numbers so that the legislature would not preclude them from providing us with any social security number information. This reflects poor judgment. I will recommend firms that will

continue to provide full and complete data to members of our organization upon request. It is my hope that NCISS will continue to recognize the value of our services.

April 18 is Legislation Day in Sacramento. I invite each PICA member to attend this significant event. We are demonstrating our commitment by our active participation in conjunction with CALI. It is, therefore, imperative that PICA's membership convey to the politicians in Sacramento our continued commitment to act as professionals.

For further information on this critical event, please contact our Leg. Chair Dee Modglin at 415-826-3598 or e-mail her at dmodglin@earthlink.net.

The annual NCISS Conference was held on March 31st in New Orleans. Our Past President, Ken Shigut, attended as our representative. This year's conference agenda was targeted towards maintaining accessibility of social security numbers. We all know the benefit of having sensitive information made available to our industry. Ken's presence at this conference underscored PICA's dedication to this serious issue. Ken is requesting that PICA members consider making a financial donation to help fund NCISS in their effort to help prevent limited access of sensitive information. Please contact Ken at 818-344-2193 or e-mail Ken@shorelinepi.com.

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PICA Northern California District News

The March 5th meeting of the Northern California District was well-attended, as speaker Jude Daggett (pictured at right in the wheel chair) presented a seminar on Electronic Surveillance and Detection Methods.

Mr. Daggett manufactures electronic countermeasures equipment, tracking systems, and audio and digital communication equipment. Involved in security and surveillance since 1983, Daggett is identified as an expert in audio/room and telephone transmitters; hard wire tapping; bug,

tap, camera and tape recorder detectors; cellular telephone and GPS jammers; computer monitoring and GPS tracking systems.

Daggett has supplied tracking devices and other equipment in the past to the CIA, FBI and police departments around the world.

The actual possession and/or use of many of the items spoken about violate Federal and State laws. As a professional investigator, however, the knowledge of these items, their use and capabilities, can provide an excellent founda-

tion when discussions center around corporate security and eavesdropping. Mr. Daggett can be reached at 650-344-4324.

For more information on the next Northern California District Meeting, please visit the PICA website at www.pica-association.org.



PICA Los Angeles District News



The first meeting of 2005, which was conveniently held at the 94th Aero Squadron at the Van Nuys Airport, started out well as Criminal

Defense Attorney Seymour Amster (pictured to the left accepting a plaque from District Director Howard Leader) gave a presentation on the difference between a good investigator and a "not so good" investigator. He spoke about what he and other criminal defense attorneys expect from their investigators and discussed how he can put on the best defense possible.

Interestingly, Mr. Amster prefers all investigation material in writing, as he reviews cases at all hours of the day and night. This is in contrast to most criminal defense attorneys who do not, thus avoiding the "sharing of information" with the prosecutors that legally must occur in California courts.

Mr. Amster is located on web at www.lacriminaldefenders.com.

For more information on the next Los Angeles District Meeting, please visit the PICA website.



PICA Orange County District News

The Orange County District held its first meeting of the year on March 30th at La Sera (formerly Revere House) in Tustin.

Comments from District Director RJ Kirschner: "I would like to thank Roy Miller from Miller Computer Group for an outstanding Marketing Presentation and Briefing on the Child Rescue Network. The food was great and the net-

working and interaction was very productive for all attending. Attendees stayed as late as 9:30pm watching a live demo of Case-Works.

Attendee Richard Lane wrote on the PICA List-serve: "PICA Meeting A SUCCESS. Last night's PICA meeting for OC was about the best I have attended so far, the FOOD and SPEAKER were great. Thank you R.J. Kirschner for your

great job in organizing everything."

The next quarterly meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 22, 2005. Location & Speaker to be announced.

For more information and a demo, go to www.Case-Works.com.



Roy Miller talks about Case-Works to Steve Wachtel at PICA's ABM & Conference

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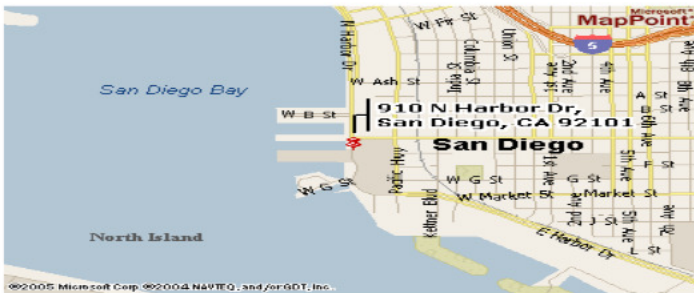
PICA San Diego District News

Leg Day Flight-Line Volunteer Take-Off!

PICA's San Diego District invites you to join us for lunch, and an important Pre-Leg Day Meeting, aboard the U.S.S. Midway.

Charlene Zettle, the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs—BSIS is our special guest speaker. There will be a Legislative Update and Kick-Off for Leg Day in Sacramento, which takes place Monday, April 18, 2005.

Following lunch and Ms. Zettle's presentation, you will take a guided tour of one of America's Great Fighting Ships.



Who: Members and guests of PICA, CALI & SDCIA
When: Thursday, April 7, 2005 1:30 pm—4:30 pm
Where: Aboard the U.S.S. Midway, San Diego Waterfront
Info: www.midway.org
Why: To encourage interest & participation in Leg Day, 2005
Cost: \$25.00 which includes lunch and a guided tour
RSVP: Dave Cisek at (800) 454-1002 or spotcheck@sbcglobal.net

PICA Central Coast District News

The PICA Central Coast District held its' March Madness Meeting on St. Patrick's day at the Olive Garden Italian Restaurant.

The meeting was well attended by 25 members of PICA, CALI and other Guests. Those in attendance were treated to amazing feats of magic and a stirring presen-

tation by J. Corey Freidman (shown to the right accepting an encribed pen from Dave DeVorre, PICA's Central Coast District Director) of Nick Harris Detectives. Mr. Freidman's well explained discourse on Bail Enforcement, its' laws and some tricks of the trade were received by the attentive audience.

Special Thank you's go out to Corey, Larry Baugher, Steve Bowman and Danielle De Vorre for their generous gifts of door prizes, and Ann Marie Batesole who coordinated the attendance and is also recognized for her tireless efforts on behalf of PICA.



PICA Inland Empire District News

The February 10, 2005 meeting to kick off PICA's new Inland Empire District was a huge success.

About fifty people attended to hear a truly excellent presentation about new avenues to market for worker's comp investigations and how to conduct them with prosecution

in mind. The speaker, Paul Fick (pictured to the right accepting plaque from Steve Wachtel, PICA's 1st Vice President), spoke about "The Lie is the Fraud and the Fraud is the Lie." He also invited all attendees to a special training seminar being hosted by the Riverside D.A.'s Office on worker's comp investigations.



Congratulations to newly elected Inland Empire District Director Bill Reese.



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Truncating SSNs and Site Inspections Future Access to Credit Headers in Jeopardy

Michael Dores, CA Private Investigator and President of Merlin Information Services

As a result of media coverage following recent criminal access to data at ChoicePoint and Lexis/Accurint, the spotlight is once again shining directly on the data providers who make credit header information available to private investigators. A credit header includes the personal identifying information found at the top of a credit bureau report – current and historical addresses, a social security number (SSN), and an age or date of birth. Access to credit headers is currently regulated by the Gramm Leach Bliley Act, also known as the GLB, and the “Banking Privacy Act of 1999”. In an attempt to dissuade the U.S. Congress from even stricter regulation, including possible FTC oversight of the public record industry, companies that own and disseminate credit headers are about to announce new security measures that will impact private investigators and all other professionals who use credit header information to perform their jobs. There are two significant changes that will affect all customers: Site inspections and masking the last four digits of Social Security numbers (truncating SSNs).

Within the next thirty days, all reputable data providers will announce that customers who access their credit header information must be recertified and pass a site inspection, which involves new application forms and a personal visit to each customer’s office. The criteria for passing the inspection will vary depending on the data provider. In addition, these providers will be truncating SSNs in the results of a credit header search by displaying the last four numbers of the SSN as “xxxx”, ie 999-99-xxxx. Each of the major suppliers will likely have its own list of industries and/or appropriate uses for access to full SSNs. As an example, Lexis/Accurint published its guidelines on March 20, available at <http://faq.accurint.com>.

As a private investigator and the owner of a company that provides credit header data to PIs, I strongly advocate that licensed investigators who have passed a site inspection should have the same access to non-public data as insurance companies, financial institutions and law enforcement. However, as a reseller of credit headers, Merlin Information Services and all the other medium sized data providers will have to adhere to the policies of the major credit header providers—to do otherwise is to risk being completely shut off from reselling credit headers. At the same time, Merlin and the other resellers will continue to lobby major suppliers of credit headers to treat PIs as licensed professionals rather than a “risky” industry classification. This battle is becoming increasingly difficult to fight.

In reality, truncating SSNs presents relatively few negative consequences compared to having no credit headers at all. Even when SSNs are truncated, the databases that contain credit header information, such as Merlin’s *Link to America*™ or IRB’s 25-cent search, will continue to be searchable by entering a known SSN. Also, any truncated SSN that is displayed in the results of a name or address search will continue to be a hyperlink to a new search, returning exactly the same results as a full SSN search. In essence, even though the full SSN will not be displayed, the current search functionality by SSN will remain the same.

Will this cause some inconveniences? Yes, especially if you find a truncated SSN at one data provider’s site and want to use it to search at another site, which will be impossible. However, this inconvenience is a small price to pay until we are able to convince the major credit header providers, and ultimately Congress, that licensed private investigators should be given full access to credit header information.

Data providers are truncating SSNs and requiring site certification of licensed PIs to protect the PI industry from losing access to credit headers altogether. Each PI can do his or her part by joining their state PI associations and by supporting the lobbying efforts of NCISS, the National Council of Investigative and Security Services. At www.nciss.org, you can join and donate to this organization that is working hard to protect your interests.

If every licensed PI donated substantially to the NCISS Legislative Fund, we will have a much better chance at defeating upcoming federal legislation that will be extremely damaging to all private investigators. Law enforcement, financial institutions and insurance companies all have powerful lobbyists working to protect their interests. Private investigators, most of whom represent

small businesses, must unite to voice our concerns in Washington. If you have never been politically active or given money to support your profession, now is the time to do so, as legislative decisions are being considered that will seriously affect your access to investigative data.

<p>Advertising Rates for the PICA Investigative Reporter</p> <p>PICA Members:</p> <p>Full Page \$200.00</p> <p>1/2 Page \$100.00</p> <p>1/4 Page \$50.00</p> <p>Business Card \$25.00</p> <p>Non-Members:</p> <p>Full Page \$250.00</p> <p>1/2 Page \$135.00</p> <p>1/4 Page \$75.00</p> <p>Business Card \$35.00</p>



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NCISS, the National Council of Investigation & Security Services, Inc., is the National Voice for the Private Investigation & Security Industry. PICA is a member of NCISS, and we encourage every PICA member to also be a member. Whereas PICA continues to monitor legislative activity taking place in the California Legislature, NCISS performs a similar function in Washington D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—March 23, 2005

Data Breaches Require Targeted Response

Recent developments following breaches at data brokers and financial institutions have led to calls for immediate regulatory and legislative action. Private investigators agree that regulatory and/or legislative mandates for timely notification of breaches are an appropriate response. We support Senator Feinstein's bill, S 115 "Notification of Risk to Personal Data Act." The recent disclosures have also led data providers to renew and upgrade their vetting of clients, including private investigators, who require the data. The National Council of Investigation and Security Services (NCISS) agrees that data providers should do appropriate due diligence to assure that information is used only for legitimate purposes.

Legislative Responses Should be Focused

Investigators are extremely concerned that in the current atmosphere public officials will be pressured to create an overbroad regulatory scheme that will be harmful to the court system and commerce. And ironically, some of the suggestions being made would be counterproductive to the goal of fighting identity theft and other frauds. Statutory solutions should focus on securing personal data, not restricting its use by legitimate entities.

The National Council of Investigation and Security Services (NCISS) has learned from experience that the best of legislative and regulatory intentions can lead to harmful unintended consequences. The 1996 amendments to the Fair Credit Reporting Act ultimately led to an unanticipated requirement that employees suspected of theft be notified when an employer retained third parties to investigate the theft. It took years before Congress was able to remedy that error with passage of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act (FACTA).

Privacy groups have been using the public's legitimate concern over the recent breaches to push a far broader agenda. Their suggestions would result in limiting the ability of businesses to verify the identity of customers, to conduct background checks, and collect debt. If barriers are erected to prevent legitimate business from accessing identifying information about an individual, then the identity thieves will have an easier time. If one can't confirm a Social Security number or other unique identifier, then the ID thief will have an easier time claiming to be Bob Jones.

Private Investigators Use Data for the Public Good

Private investigators use data from brokers to facilitate justice. We use the data to locate witnesses, find heirs, locate lost children, obtain child support, and detect fraud. Police authorities do not have adequate resources to solve ID theft cases, and many victims end up using private investigators. If the services investigators use to solve these cases are restricted, we'll not be able to serve clients as effectively and an additional burden will be placed on public authorities.

Recent Legislation

Congress has not been idle in recent years with regard to identity theft and personal information. FACTA, which includes many provisions affecting identity theft, was enacted only last Congress. In addition, more severe penalties for ID Theft were imposed with enactment of the Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act. The impact of these statutes is only now being felt. Congress should gauge the success of these measures before acting broadly to limit access to information that is so essential to commerce.

Contact: **Bruce H. Hulme, Chairman**
NCISS Investigations Legislative Committee
Tel & Fax: 1-914-767-0625
Email: specialinvestigations@worldnet.att.net



THE PHILLIPS DETECTIVE BUREAU LETTER

The year is 1898 and you're a new Private Eye in a bustling San Francisco. There is no Pinkerton Detective office in this city. They really won't need one because many bright and interested San Francisco Police Detectives like Edward Byram (see notes below) regularly did Pinkerton cases by "moonlighting" in addition to their official SFPD duties.

After working all manner of assignments throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico you're ready to move your practice into high gear. It's January 23, 1913 and you sit down at your typewriter. The noises and smells that make their way through the open window into your 2nd floor offices give proof that San Francisco is excitedly alive today.

Both you and your new partner have decided that it's time to raise your daily retainer fee; costs of living dictate doing so.

You begin writing a letter seeking work from H.W. Jackson who you know is the decision maker at the Arcata & Mad River R.R. Co. The newspapers have informed you of the many theft related problems that the railroad has faced.

A moment's pause staring out the window at the men leaning forward as they walked as if they would really get there faster if they did so. The women and children are all excited as they are about to enter the fancy new stores.

Now you must decide... what daily retainer fee are you prepared to ask for your services and that of your partner?

You have recently retained two prominent attorneys after all and your reputation for supplying mechanics for the inside work has got the attention of hard pressed businessmen.

After what seemed like an eternity but was actually less than a minute you type these words on the paper before you: "We are prepared to give you a rate of \$5.50 per day and expenses, which is less than the rate of the older Agencies." Did that last part sound too defensive you ask yourself?

No, there is no going back at this point as times are changing for San Franciscans. With a little effort, bolstered by a cold brew, later in the day it might be possible to imagine Private Eyes getting as much as \$10.00 a day.

In a hundred years, maybe even as much as \$100.00!

Progress and time moves amazingly fast and today we regularly earn \$500, \$850 and even more per day for the work that we perform as CA Licensed Private Eyes.

Still... one can wonder about the lives and times of those who went before us and paved the way. The P.I. Museum will seek ways to bring the richness of such times to us all.

Even to help make them come alive so as to educate, inform and entertain new legions of Private Eyes along with those who would attempt to abridge our access to data.



(Ben) Benjamin R. Harroll, PI#7085, Founder & Curator

www.pimuseum.com

(619) 239-6991

The P.I. Museum was founded in 1978 and operates on the generosity of other Private Investigators, Interested Parties and Mr. Harroll's personal interest and financing.

NOTES: PICA IR Newsletter Vol.2, Issue 2 July 12, 2004 contains the full story about Edward Byram in the 1880's.

Please support CALIP ICA efforts on April 18th's Ledge-Day.

THE PHILLIPS DETECTIVE BUREAU LETTER

F. F. PHILLIPS, PRINCIPAL

PHONE SUTTER 825

W. CRIPPEN, GENERAL AGENT

RESIDENCE PHONE
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SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

January 23, 1913.

Mr. H. W. Jackson, Sup't.
Arcata & Mat River R. R. Co.
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Dear Sir:

I have organized a new Detective Service of my own and have associated with me Mr. W. H. Crippen, a Detective of National wide experience for the past sixteen years. My experience has been secured in all portions of the United States, Canada, and Mexico for fifteen years, seven years of this time in San Francisco and California.

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We make a specialty of supplying Mechanics for inside work in manufacturing plants and commercial establishments, and our experience in the past has been that this class of business has proven highly profitable to the Managers and Proprietors of such establishments.

Any legal matters preliminary to the case at issue we supply free of charge, having two of the most prominent Attorneys in the City retained for this purpose.

Hoping to be favored by your patronage whenever occasion necessitates the use of any one with our capacity.

Yours truly,

F. F. Phillips

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President's Message (continued from page 1)

PICA's San Diego District in conjunction with CALI and SDCIA, is hosting a luncheon to further discuss the importance of our concerns regarding the limitations or access to social security information. Charlene Zettle the Director of Consumer Affairs has graciously accepted our invitation to attend this event. This is a great opportunity for Ms. Zettle to observe the ongoing joint commitment among the associations; CALI, SDCIA and PICA.

This April 7th event will be held on the WWII Combat Ship U.S.S. Midway. For further information please contact Dave Cisek at 800-454-1002- or e-mail him at spotcheck@sbcglobal.net

I hope to see you all at the PICA events, especially in Sacramento on April 18 to personally thank you for your political and appreciated concern.

Dave Boykoff, President

CORRECTIONS & OMISSIONS

Karen DiCarlo of Pacific Coast Transcription became a PICA member in November 2004, but was omitted from the New PICA Member list in the January 21, 2005 issue of the PICA Investigative Reporter. The Editor apologizes for the omission.

Pacific Coast Transcription is based in Thousand Oaks, CA, provides Digital Transcription Service, and can be found at www.pctranscription.com.

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Federal Legislative/Regulatory Update

BY S. PIERRE PARET

THE ACME DETECTIVE AGENCY

A number of legislative developments that could have a significant impact on PICA members have occurred during the past few months, since the convening of the 109th Session of Congress.

Identity Theft Legislation Gains Momentum

The big news on Capitol Hill is of course the legislative and media frenzy regarding identity theft, fueled by the recent disclosures that personal identifier data from ChoicePoint and LexisNexis has been accessed fraudulently. The media and public attention these incidents have garnered has given new momentum to legislative efforts to address the issue of identity theft and access to credit header and Social Security numbers.

There are indications that there is more to the ChoicePoint story than has thus far been released to the public. Much of what has been conveyed by the media is incorrect and/or exaggerated. For example, many initial stories reported that the information has been "hacked" from ChoicePoint's computers, though this later proved to be untrue.

Nevertheless, the impact of these disclosures will be profound. Although the newfound attention given to identity theft will virtually ensure promulgation of legislation at the federal level, this is now a mainstream issue and more elected officials are taking an active interest, which could result in more reasoned and moderate response.

The real danger is that Congress will act rashly. A number of bills have been quickly introduced, some better thought-out than others. One bill, which clearly reflects the newfound notoriety of identity theft among politicians, links identity theft to methamphetamine use, violent crimes, "...particularly burglary, child abuse, and crimes of substantial cost and personal pain to victims, including identity theft." (see S. 430, the "Arrest Methamphetamine Act of 2005"). This politicization of the issue is a worrisome trend.

Hearings were quickly scheduled in the House and Senate on the issue of identity theft. On March 10, 2005, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs held a hearing on the subject of "Identity Theft: Recent Developments Involving the Security of Sensitive Consumer Information." The hearing room was filled to capacity, with a substantial number of individuals unable to get in. The Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Secret Service, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency presented testimony.

Though scheduled to testify, ChoicePoint and other nongovernmental witnesses were unable to present their testimony due to the Senate schedule and will do so at a later hearing. Hearings in the House are scheduled for later in March.

ChoicePoint had announced earlier in the week that it would "...discontinue the sale of information products that contain sensitive consumer data, including Social Security and driver's license numbers, except where there is a specific consumer-driven transaction or benefit, or where the products support federal, state or local government and criminal justice purposes." ChoicePoint concurrently announced the appointment of a former TSA official to serve as an "independent executive to oversee credentialing, compliance, and privacy programs."

It is safe to say that Congress *will* pass legislation relating to identity theft. Legislation would not only affect private investigators, but also several larger industries, such as banking and data brokers. ChoicePoint, LexisNexis, and others have mobilized to weigh in on the debate. NCISS and other private investigation and security associations have also continued to work with decision-makers in Washington to protect industry interests.

Six bills relating to identity theft have been introduced as of early March, each with provisions that would have a negative impact on PICA members and other private investigators throughout the country. (Continues to page 13)

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[Editors Notes:

Link to March 15, 2005 Senate Committee Hearing on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs:

<http://banking.senate.gov/index.cfm?Fuseaction=Hearings.Detail&HearingID=144>

Link to March 10, 2005 Senate Committee Hearing on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs:

<http://banking.senate.gov/index.cfm?Fuseaction=Hearings.Detail&HearingID=142>

** These links provide the Member Statements and the Witness Testimony in pdf format, as well as a video archive of the hearing.]

Federal Legislative/Regulatory Update (continued from page 12)

Federal Legislative Issues			
Bill Number	Title	Sponsor	Status
S. 29	Social Security Number Misuse Prevention Act	Sen. Feinstein (D-CA)	Pending Committee Action
S. 116	Privacy Act of 2005	Sen. Feinstein (D-CA)	Pending Committee Action
HR 220	Identity Theft Prevention Act of 2005	Rep. Paul (R-TX)	Pending Committee Action
S 500	Information Protection and Security Act	Sen. Nelson (D-FL)	Pending Committee Action
HR 1080	Information Protection and Security Act	Rep. Markey (D-MA)	Pending Committee Action
HR 1078	Social Security Number Protection Act of 2005	Rep. Markey (D-MA)	Pending Committee Action

Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act Implementation

Last year, Congress passed the Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act (Public Law 108-275). Among other things, this bill created a new crime of "aggravated identity theft." The United States Sentencing Commission, which prepared sentencing guidelines for federal courts, is in the process of implementing this law. In the tumult created by the ChoicePoint matter, this sort of measured, effective approach to combating identity theft is likely to be forgotten in favor of political and PR expediency.

Outlook

The outlook is not as bleak as it may seem at first glance. Greater involvement by "big players" such as the banking industry and the big data providers, combined with greater media and public scrutiny, will likely result in a spirited but more thorough public policy debate. The increased prominence of the identity theft issue on Capitol Hill has resulted in more attention, by more members, and it is likely that a number of additional bills will be introduced in the coming months, resulting in a dilution of momentum and jockeying among different approaches as articulated in the various bills. Nevertheless, this is an issue with the potential to seriously impact PICA members and others throughout the nation, so continued vigilance is critical.

If you have any questions or comments regarding issues addressed in this article, please feel free to contact the author, Pierre Paret, at 703-836-0333.



Executive Protection Training for PIs:

Use It or Lose It

By Nathan T. Harrison and Jon Felperin

Executive protection (EP) is a growing market. Currently, not many private investigators engage in providing executive protection services. The training and experience that many PIs have does not necessarily qualify them to provide personal protection services. However, many PI skills do transfer directly to the EP task, such as surveillance skills, knowledge of civil and criminal liability and risk analysis.

As in many areas of private investigation, executive protection is also an acquired skill. Private investigators would find themselves more marketable with the proper kind of EP training.

The biggest myth about EP training for either security personnel or the private investigator is that once you have attended an accredited executive protection school or seminar, and the training is over, you now feel qualified for any assignment, in any part of the world. But this is far from the truth. As a matter of fact, initial EP training equates more closely to receiving one's PI license for the first time.

There are many videos and books available on executive protection work to aid in your training. Executive protection training should never stop. Some investigators may think training stops when the case is closed; but don't fall for this myth.

EP training is a way of life. To be successful in the arena of executive protection, you must adjust your lifestyle accordingly. This is especially true for the agents on the "long term" protection detail. If you are not out there surveying driving routes, or thinking about how you would handle someone who will not take "no" for an answer, then your skills will begin to deteriorate.

EP training should have a main focus on advance work, and a secondary focus on studying various types of threats and risks that are applicable to you or your client. This kind of study should be a constant habit when traveling or scheduling anything that involves you and your principal. A back up plan, for a back up plan, is always the best contingency.

To train in advance work is somewhat complicated. Advance work is the study of factual or estimated information, and the activities or arrangements made as it pertains to the location of the arrival of a future client. Advance work takes time, and must always be done before the client is destined to a particular location. To do it correctly is almost always a tedious task, even for the seasoned professional.

The fact that a private investigator is physically familiar with the lay out of the region he is working in does not necessarily mean he knows how to advance a location properly. Good customer service and social skills make it easier in collecting data and information that will be pertinent to the advance, and the overall protection, of the client. If you want to practice advance work, then concentrate on being organized first.

One thing that should be required in any protection program is the study and exercise of martial art training. Without focusing too much on the self-defense aspects of executive protection, martial art training builds an inner peace that aids in the management of controlling emotions and actions-- especially the actions of others who could be a physical threat.

Then take your martial arts training further and apply it to close protection work. It does not matter how long you have trained, in whatever art you know. The question is, can you apply your moves and techniques on an adversary while trying to manage your own fear, and the location of someone you are hired to protect?

Remember that the protection agent who is six foot six, weighs three hundred pounds, and is in excellent shape, is useless, if he does not know how to say please and thank you. You must be able to acknowledge mistakes and accept criticism. The real skills that matter most are manners, professionalism and mental awareness.

[Editors Note: EP agents must have proper permits in the State or Country that they are working. In California, a PI license does not permit EP work, except incidental to an investigation, and generally in a long-term sense. At some point it becomes Security work, requiring a PPO or a Guard Registration and employment by a PPO.]

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