



WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE SERVICE  
**SPECIALIST CRIME PORTFOLIO  
ORGANISED CRIME DIVISION**

COMMERCIAL AGENTS UNIT  
297 HAY STREET  
EAST PERTH WA 6004  
TELEPHONE: (08) 9231 7199  
FACSIMILE: (08) 9231 7188

## **Commercial Agents Unit**

### **What is the Commercial Agents Unit?**

The Commercial Agents Unit is a licensing and investigative arm of the WA Police. The unit is responsible for licensing the security/crowd control/investigation industries and has police officers to conduct investigations into those industries. The Commercial Agents Unit is where you make application for a licence.

### **Where is the Commercial Agents Unit?**

Commercial Agents Unit is located on the ground floor of Cambridge House at 297 Hay Street, EAST PERTH 6004. This is also the postal address.

### **What are our Office Hours?**

*When can I make an application for a Licence?*

- Office Hours for Commercial Agents Unit are Monday to Friday **9.00am – 4.00pm.** (Public Holidays excluded).

### **Can we give you a licence today?**

In most instances, the simple answer is YES.

Under normal circumstances, (where there are no issues to be considered – ie criminal history) it will take approximately 45 minutes to process a new application for a licence.

Please be aware that for this reason **new applications will not be processed after 3.00pm.** At 4.00pm, officers are responsible for relevant administration duties.

Students attending this office should do so prior to 3.00pm to allow sufficient time for the Licensing process to occur.

# Licensing Requirements:

## What documents do I need to get a licence?

- 4 x Passport Photo's
- 2 x character References (see below).
- Identification. Minimum of 100pts ID.
- Letter of Intent from an Employer.
- Relevant Training Certificate.

## Character References (Testimonials).

Character references are a legislative requirement. Refer Section 47(c) of the Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996.

What will the Commercial Agents Unit accept?

There is debate over the provision of character references and regularly, character references are refused as they lack sufficient detail.

The Licensing process relates to assessing a persons fitness and propriety to hold licences. The provision of character references is an essential part of that process.

Commercial Agents Unit Staff are required to **meticulously scrutinise character references**. Where it is seen as necessary, licensing staff will contact the author of references to determine the accuracy of the contents of the reference.

The Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996 [Section 47(c)] stipulates that:

- “Testimonials from 2 persons as to the applicants ***character*** given not more than 24 months before the application is lodged.
- The Oxford English Dictionary defines Character (in part) as “A ***detailed report of a persons qualities***”

Character reference should:

- Be written by the person whose signature appears on the reference.
- Contain current contact details of the author and display the date written. (He/she may be contacted to verify detail).
- Include the length of time the applicant has been known to them.
- Not be from a family member or serving Police Officer.

Character references have been received at this office in such simple terms as follows:

- Fred Smith is an honest, trustworthy and reliable person.

This is not appropriate and will not be accepted.

The reference should clearly demonstrate that the author has known the applicant for a significant period of time.

Pro forma's and/or identical references (signed by two separate persons) that have obviously been written by the one person will be scrutinised closely and inquiries may be conducted.

Failure to meet these basic requirements will result in the refusal to accept those references and the application being rejected.

## **Criminal History/Integrity Checks.**

Applicants for Licences will be scrutinised for 'fit and proper.' [Section 52(c) of the Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996.]

While the Commercial Agents Unit endeavours to process applications as quickly as possible, there are occasions where applications are refused or rejected because the required documents are not supplied.

It is not uncommon for applicants to apply for a licence after completing the training course only *to be refused a licence* on the basis that they do not satisfy the criteria of 'Fit and Proper'.

The Commercial Agents Unit thoroughly check all applications to establish if a person is 'Fit and Proper' to hold licences. These include:

- Criminal History checks conducted in all jurisdictions of Australia and New Zealand.
- Integrity checks on the applicant (and known associates) are undertaken.

There is no mechanism in place to conduct a suitability check of applicants prior to applying for a licence.

The basis for the issue (or refusal) of a licence is the opinion of the Licensing Officer. As a basic rule of thumb, 'recency and relevancy' of issues relating to character and criminal history are influencing factors.

## **Fee Not Refundable.**

Where a person cannot satisfy all criteria when applying for a licence, the application **will be** refused.

Please note that application fees are **not refundable**.

Licensing and applications fees are set by the Government not the Commercial Agent Unit.

***Consider very carefully, before attending at the Commercial Agents Unit, if there are any issues that may affect the issue of your licence.***

**M.E.CLARKSON**

**LICENSING COORDINATOR  
ORGANISED CRIME DIVISION  
COMMERCIAL AGENTS UNIT**

[mark.clarkson@police.wa.gov.au](mailto:mark.clarkson@police.wa.gov.au)