TAKE HEED!
RECERTIFICATION MISTAKES
OR OMISSIONS?
EASILY AVOIDABLE IN YOUR
RECERTIFICATION PACKAGE

by Jim Massaro, ISP® Recertification Subcommittee

We have all been there, collecting our recertification documentation to ensure we have 60 Continuing Educational Units (CEUs). It means collecting training descriptions/synopses, agendas, attendance certificates and wondering if each requested CEU is really industrial security (IS) related—not to mention wondering “when exactly do I need to send in my package?” Wow! And, finally when we submit that “complete” package, we assume we have just unburdened ourselves of the albatross around our neck, but wait…the package is coming back for some very easily avoidable mistakes or omissions!

It makes sense that the more up-front preparation and research we can do in the process, the easier the process will be; there is less chance of having to provide additional clarification to NCMS Headquarters or last minute scrambling to make corrections or submit additional information. It is not every day we submit our recertification package…it is only required once every three years, but it is tough to remember all of the things we have accomplished since the last submission. The good news is a new online submission repository is now available and will help immensely in collecting and maintaining data, and it will even help us to make fewer mistakes! It may not solve all our problems, but it will remind us of the information we need to send in for credit verification.

We’ve all worked hard to pass the ISP® certification exam, and we don’t want that effort to be wasted by letting our recertification deadline pass without taking the appropriate action. Consider for a moment why we achieved the certification in the first place, personal pride being first and foremost because each of us wants to do the best job humanly possible. There are secondary reasons such as the fact that employers are now recognizing the importance of the certification because it gives our companies an edge over the competition in the job market and may also result in

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Take Heed! continued...

a personal salary increase or bonus for the ISP®. In addition, recertification is not really difficult to do, especially now with the online recertification in place and the numerous ways to attain CEUs.

Since the electronic submission process is now live, the hardcopy package is no longer available effective 31 Dec 2014. As mentioned earlier, the chance for making a mistake has been substantially reduced. However, omissions are just as easy to do when completing the submission electronically. With a little double checking and diligence, recertification should be relatively easy. Common omissions and mistakes include:

1. Forgetting to submit agendas with our certificates of completion. An agenda is always required so NCMS can verify the number of CEUs claimed.

2. Submitting a certificate of attendance that states the CEU value is greater than the calculated values. This is why an agenda is always required, as NCMS must verify the number of CEUs claimed.

3. Incomplete and missing data - Attendance records should have name, topic, date, and number of CEUs awarded. Chapters are encouraged to use a business card format attendance record or an attendance template of their own to record attendance at chapter training for one or two hour training/presentation sessions, although a full page attendance record/listing can be used at the chapter’s discretion. Full page attendance certificates may be used for special events, workshops, seminars etc. Each individual should receive an attendance record to use towards recertification and as support material for Vulnerability Assessments.

4. Including time that does not count for a CEU award. Examples are including the time spent taking a test for the associated course (i.e. - CDSE courses), lunch and breaks, visiting exhibits, etc. CEUs are only awarded for class time and online training that incorporates the training element.

5. Counting CEUs that are not industrial security, industrial security management, or information security-related. This is a common problem with an ISP® submitting college courses for credit that are related to business or general management. This also includes seminars, conferences, etc. that are not related to industrial security. Of note, industrial security is the status reached when the appropriate measures and procedures are implemented to gain access to, handle or generate classified information during the performance of a classified contract or program.

6. Not submitting enough CEUs. While an attendance certificate may say “6 CEUs,” NCMS has to verify it independently because units are calculated differently across different organizations. Consequently, NCMS often awards fewer CEUs than claimed because breaks, lunches, exhibit time etc., have been counted. NCMS advises to ALWAYS submit more CEUs than needed because it is very likely that some of them will not be counted or will earn less than face value.

7. Recertification submission is too close to the expiration date, which may cause a last minute scramble for both the candidate and NCMS. The recertification date cannot change, and the worst case is that the ISP® certification will lapse. Candidates cannot continue to earn CEU credit to include in the current recertification period after their recertification date. Candidates must recertify by the last day of the month in which he/she originally became certified (or last recertified). The recertification package can be submitted as early as six months prior to the recertification deadline.

Ensuring your information is correct and complete in light of the above will ensure you have completed all the requirements and are well on your way to recertification. Remember -- it is your responsibility to have all the information submitted within six months of your original certification/recertification month. So get started now with your online application by posting your attendance certificates, agendas, and course descriptions to your online recertification document repository. GOOD LUCK! ✨