

June 2023

STANDARD FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE SELF STORAGE ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (SSA UK)

Definition of Self Storage

Self Storage is defined as "the system of storage in which the operator allocates a finite, securable internal or external unit to which the customer has exclusive access, under the terms of a self storage licence agreement."

Membership Standard

To qualify for Membership of the SSA UK the following **minimum standards** are required. These represent only the minimum requirements and operators should strive for the best possible standards of customer service, as well as a deterrent to criminal activity in both their physical and the operational standards. Members must also comply with the Associations Code of Conduct.

Physical - The Facility

A self storage facility **MUST**:

- Have a secure defined perimeter, with a perimeter fence and entry gate which can be secured at the end of day's trading. The building itself can form part or all of this perimeter and secured access could be provided directly into the building. The perimeter must be secured with a fence, with all entry points made customer access only whenever the site is unmanned.
- Have hard stand roadways around the facility with suitable drainage that are in good repair, without potholes and other such impairments.
- Provide suitable lighting that allows clear vision over the entire site.
- Be controlled separately from any other business/storage and, where appropriate, have Customer Only access control to the self storage area.
- Have completed a risk assessment completed on the use of any mobile stairs used by customers to access units. Such stairs can only be used on paved surfaces or be attached to a fixed railing, must have a clearly marked braking system and have concise operating instructions on the stairs. In addition, all customers who are assigned a unit requiring use of these stairs must be given a safe usage demonstration prior to accessing their unit for the first time.
- Have digital CCTV systems covering all potential access and exit points with recording for at least 31 days. It is essential that the CCTV is checked for effectiveness and maintained regularly.
- Comply with all relevant Fire and Health & Safety Regulations.
- Have a monitoring system on all alarms and CCTV 24/7 by the facility staff. It is recommended that a remote monitoring provider is used outside staff trading hours.
- Include signage specifically notifying customers of any relevant Health & Safety, no-smoking and Fire Regulation requirements.
- If manned, have customer and staff amenities.
- Comply with Asbestos Regulations.
- Have a clearly displayed emergency contact phone number - or other means of emergency contact - from within the perimeter and all securable buildings.

Physical - Self Storage Units

Each separately occupied space, including internal partitioning, should be constructed out of robust materials such as steel and **MUST HAVE**:

- A separate lockable access door.
- Doors that are suitably secured to prevent access without significant force.
- Security from access through adjacent spaces.
- Be clean, dry and watertight.
- Suitable ventilation or equipment to limit condensation.
- Direct access for customers to their allocated space.
- Provided suitable mechanical assistance for access, or provide suitable stairs to upper-level storage units or containers, which must meet all known H&SE regulations.
- All locks supplied by the business to secure the storage unit be CEN 3 standard or above.

Operating Procedures – General

The operators of a self storage facility **MUST** include in their operating procedures:

- The absolute requirement to check the identity of any contractor working on site.
- Advice on the handling of cash, and when and how to bank any cash as securely as possible.
- Advice on lone working and on staff protection in the event of any incident including any “confrontation” with a customer. The inclusion of a panic button is strongly recommended.
- Appropriate training of staff in health and safety and security features of the facility.
- The security of all keys kept on the premises either company or customer keys.
- An inspection of all the facility to ensure security, fire protection and customer safety requirements are being met at least 3 times a week.

Operating Procedures - Customers

The operators of a self storage facility **MUST**:

- Emphasise all aspects of security to customers before they move in.
- Make it absolutely clear what goods are totally prohibited for storage, using the customer contract, posters and any initial meeting with customers.
- Before any contract is signed:
 - Inspect one form of photo identification and take suitable contact details.
 - If the contract is completed off site, then it must comply with ID verification processes that have provided photo recognition or bank standard identification.
 - Not accept any cash as full payment on a new let move-in. On a new let, if cash is offered then it must be accompanied by part payment of the total amount by credit card so that some element of tracing is possible when and if required.
- Train new (and, where appropriate, existing) members of staff with regard to security standards and best practice guidelines and maintain a register of such.

It is **STRONGLY ADVISED** that operators of a self storage facility **SHOULD** take a photograph or web-cam image of the customer who signs the contract. This record should remain on file with the contract.

Operating Procedures - Form of Contract

The operators **MUST** offer a contract substantially based on the SSA UK standard terms and conditions.

Specifically the contract must:

- Be produced in easily legible size format and copies made freely available to customers and prospective customers.
- Include the customer's warranty of the "true value" of the goods – either "total replacement value" or "market value", as decided by the operator.
- Be separately initialed by the customer to confirm their understanding of each of the following:
 - The storers owns or is authorised to store the goods.
 - Storage fees must be paid in advance and on time.
 - If you fail to comply with the conditions of this agreement the business will have certain rights, which include forfeiture of your deposit and the right to seize, sell and/or dispose of your goods after appropriate notice has been given.
 - The storers must secure the unit.
 - The storers must not store hazardous, dangerous, illegal, stolen, perishable, environmentally harmful or explosive goods.
 - The storers must check the unit is suitable for storing the goods.
 - The limitation of liability for loss of and damage to the storers goods.
 - Goods are stored at the storers sole risk. They must take out insurance cover.
 - How the business may use and share the storers personal data.
 - The period of notice for terminating the agreement
- Define the room(s)/space(s) to be occupied, acknowledging that not all unit sizes are exact
- Define the charge period.
- Define the price and method of payment.
- Make clear the position on insurance of the goods which are being stored.
- Define the right to occupy as a licence and not a tenancy (lease).
- Confirm that the owner of the facility has no means of accessing the unit without using force. If they do have such access, then the storage contract is used to detail the conditions on which the owner can access the space.

Operating Procedures - Insurance

A self storage company (and its facilities) **MUST**:

- Carry insurance against the property for the main perils of fire, flood, storm, vermin / pest etc
- Carry liability insurance for goods which are stored - to cover for example negligence on behalf of the operator.
- Carry Public Liability Insurance to a minimum value of £2 million.
- Carry any insurances required by legislation (e.g. Employers Liability) where applicable.
- Insist that the customers insure their goods. If insurance is provided by the Self Storage Company, the customer must be given very clear and proper insurance paperwork with explanatory notes and details of the cover provided and any exclusions.