Key Findings from

THE STATE OF SECURITY MANAGEMENT

A Baseline Phenomenological and Empirical Study

Funded by

ASIS FOUNDATION™

MODULE 4:

Define the Security Management Field

To thrive and advance as a profession, we must have a better understanding and vision of where we came from and who we are.

Is security management a profession? Today, most leaders believe it is. *In Security and Loss Prevention: An Introduction* (2018), Philip Purpura writes that the security field

"...has reached the status of a profession, based on the fact that it has a history and body of knowledge recorded in books and periodicals; a theoretical foundation; academic programs; and associations that promote advancement of knowledge, training, certification and a code of ethics."

A report from the US Bureau of Justice Statistics (2010) called for a concise definition of private security to implement a national data collection effort on the industry. A 2010 report from Edith Cowan University stated that security "eludes a consensus definition."

Our research concludes that the field of security management meets many of the criteria of a profession but needs to go farther in terms of a body of knowledge,

academic programs, and theoretical foundation. A profession's shared understanding of what the field entails provides its identity.

When asked to define security management, the thought leaders in our study generally included such terms as "holistic security," "risk management," and "strategy." When asked to choose from several definitions, our survey participants favored these:

- A business function designed to protect an organization's assets and ability to perform its mission by identifying, assessing, and managing current and potential security-related risks (42 percent).

- A strategy to protect an organization against all possible threats it may face (23 percent).

Some offered their own definitions of security management, such as these:

- The measures a business undertakes

to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from a range of threats and challenges to the ability of the business to achieve its objectives.

- A strategic and tactical coordination, implementation, and administration of required measures and approaches to sustain and secure any kind of operation from intrinsic and extrinsic detrimental influences.

- A collection of practices designed to promote, enhance, and offer a safe and secure environment, protecting the company's staff, contractors, assets, guests, and brand.

SECURITY THOUGHT LEADER PERSPECTIVE:
A Leading Definition

"Security management: Managers and executives directing ways to reduce losses in organizations and having the authority and resources to establish programs to meet those objectives."

–Professor Martin Gill
Handbook of Security, 2006

- A discipline that enables an organization to accomplish its objectives more safely and effectively through the development and execution of security strategies.

The lack of an agreed definition has serious implications. If a professional community cannot define itself, how can it articulate its identity to executives and decision makers and advocate for optimal influence and resources?