

MAY 2026

THE CALIFORNIAN

THE QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER OF



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DAVID CHANDLER, CALSAGA PRESIDENT



Welcome to the Q2 2026 edition of The Californian: The Quarterly Newsletter of CALSAGA.

It has been a productive and fast-moving year for our association. I've had the opportunity to connect with many of you at recent industry events. I always appreciate the time to hear your perspectives and discuss the issues that matter most to your businesses and our industry.

As we head into May, I want to remind you that this is your last chance to register for Security University Sacramento, taking place May 12th–13th. This management training program provides timely, practical education, and I encourage you and your teams to take advantage of this opportunity to participate.

Looking ahead, planning is well underway for the 2026 CALSAGA Annual Conference at Harrah's SoCal. This event remains a highlight of the year and a key opportunity to bring our community together. We are building on your feedback to enhance the program and overall experience! Exhibitor registration is open now. Attendee registration will open later this month.

CALSAGA also continues its active opposition to SB 1203. This legislation presents significant concerns for our industry, and we are working closely with our Legislative Committee and lobbyist to advocate on your behalf. If you have not yet done so, I strongly encourage you to submit a letter of opposition. Member engagement is critical, and your voice makes a meaningful difference as this bill moves through the legislative process. As always, we are committed to keeping you informed and representing your interests.

Thank you for your continued support of CALSAGA and your engagement in the work we do. I look forward to seeing many of you in Sacramento at Security University and at the Annual Conference in October.

Be Safe,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D Chandler". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

David Chandler

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

SB 1203: PROTECTING THE INTEGRITY OF CALIFORNIA'S PRIVATE SECURITY INDUSTRY

I hope by now you are aware of SB 1203 and that you have [submitted a letter to opposition to staff@calsaga.org](mailto:staff@calsaga.org) so that it can be distributed to senators' offices. If not, let's bring you up to speed:

SB 1203 raises serious concerns for the private security industry and the clients and communities we serve. While the bill is presented as a measure to enhance training and oversight, its framework introduces mandates that could fundamentally disrupt how security companies operate—without clear evidence that such sweeping changes are necessary.

At the center of concern is the bill's approach to training and administration. SB 1203 would shift key aspects of workforce development away from you, the employer, and into a structure that introduces third-party involvement in ways that are unprecedented for our industry. This raises questions about flexibility, cost, and the ability for companies to tailor training to the unique needs of their clients and environments. Security professionals operate in diverse settings, and a one-size-fits-all model risks reducing effectiveness rather than improving it.

Additionally, the financial and administrative burdens associated with SB 1203 could have unintended consequences. Increased costs may disproportionately impact small and medium-sized companies, limiting their ability to compete and potentially reducing overall service capacity across the state. These pressures could ultimately be passed on to customers, affecting affordability and access to quality security services.

CALSAGA remains committed to supporting policies that strengthen professionalism, accountability, and public safety. However, those goals must be achieved through collaboration with industry stakeholders—not through mandates that create inefficiencies and limit operational independence.

We strongly encourage all members to make their voices heard. Submitting a letter of opposition is one of the most effective ways to ensure policymakers understand the real-world impact of this legislation. Together, we can advocate for solutions that enhance our industry without compromising its ability to serve and protect.



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SB 1203

VOTE NO ON SB 1203

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- ✓ ADD YOUR COMPANY LETTERHEAD & SIGNATURE
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HOW SECURITY CONTRACTORS CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES CONTRACTUALLY



SHAUN KELLY, THE LIBERTY COMPANY, CALSAGA PREFERRED BROKER

Insurance matters, but contracts often decide who carries the first and heaviest burden when a claim arises. Too many security contractors focus on certificates and policies while signing service agreements that quietly expand liability far beyond the scope of their work.

A bad contract can undo a good insurance program. A strong contract, on the other hand, can help define responsibility, manage expectations, and prevent your company from absorbing exposure that properly belongs elsewhere.

Why Contract Language Matters So Much

When an incident occurs, plaintiff attorneys and carriers alike will look at the contract to understand duties, indemnity obligations, insurance requirements, and the allocation of responsibility between the parties. If the agreement is overly broad, vague, or one-sided, your company may be defending more than your actual role in the event warrants.

For security contractors, that risk is amplified because many clients use aggressive vendor agreements that were never designed with security-specific exposures in mind.

Key Provisions to Review Carefully

- Avoid language that requires you to indemnify the client for the client's sole negligence or for liabilities beyond your own services.
- Additional insured requirements. Make sure any additional insured obligation is narrow, reasonable, and aligned with your operations.
- Limitation of liability. Where possible, seek language that keeps your contractual exposure proportional and commercially reasonable.
- Scope of services. Define what your guards are and are not responsible for. Ambiguity creates room for blame expansion after a loss.





AI ISN'T YOUR ATTORNEY COURT RULES THAT AI-GENERATED DOCUMENTS & QUERIES ARE NOT PROTECTED BY PRIVILEGE

JAIMEE K. WELLERSTEIN, ESQ., BRADLEY + WELLERSTEIN, CALSAGA LEGAL ADVISOR

Across the country, AI is becoming an increasingly popular tool for all kinds of issues. However, its ubiquity does not mean that it's suitable for all purposes, and new court rulings are making it a much riskier proposition in any legal-adjacent matters.

In *US v. Heppner*, the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled that documents generated through any public AI platform were not protected by attorney-client privilege or the work product doctrine. The Court granted access to documents generated with AI by the defendant.

The Defense argued that the AI-generated documents were created before the case and were shared with his attorneys, and that they were generated based on input from his counsel, in an attempt to shield them from production.

The Court ultimately ruled in favor of discovery on several grounds:

1. The AI Documents were not communications between a client and their counsel, but rather made between the client and a public AI tool. This was compared to "asking a friend for legal advice" in the ruling.
2. The AI Documents were not confidential because the client shared his prompts with a 3rd party commercial platform which is publicly accessible and whose terms of service explicitly states that it collects data on both prompts and outputs and may disclose it to 3rd
3. The AI Documents were not created for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from counsel. The AI Terms of Service expressly disclaim the ability of the AI tool to give legal advice.

What This Means for Security Companies

While this case did not arise in the security industry, the impact is directly applicable. Businesses and employees are relying more and more on AI for the generation of documents and, in some cases, advice. Anything generated by public AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and Grok should be treated as though it is discoverable, even if later discussed with counsel.



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LEAD, LISTEN TO, AND LOVE YOUR PEOPLE: WHY VALUING EMPLOYEES MATTERS IN SECURITY

ANNE LAGUZZA, THE WORKS CONSULTING, CALSAGA NETWORK PARTNER

When I first started working in the security industry, the idea of valuing your people was almost unheard of. With high turnover rates, it can be easy to slip into the mindset that security officers can be treated as interchangeable: fill the post, cover the shift, move on.

But, what would happen if you challenged that mindset? How would your company culture change look like? How would your employee retention rates change?

What would happen if you instead led with: Lead, Listen to, and Love Your People?

Love? Did that just make you cringe?

Stay with me.

I'm not talking about vague feel-good leadership or blind recognition. Loving your people means being intentional about how you value the individuals who show up every day to protect others, often under challenging circumstances. It means recognizing effort, consistency, and reliability - not just dramatic acts of heroism.

Sometimes, all an employee did that day was show up.

Let's address the industry's notoriously high turnover rate again. That showing up matters more than many leaders realize. One officer showing up for their shift is one less urgent call to fill a post, one less operational headache, and one less vacancy to replace. Showing up is not a small thing; it is the foundation of your business.



2026 SECURITY INDUSTRY LABOR TRENDS: WHAT LEADERS NEED TO KNOW

JILL DAVIE, TEAM SOFTWARE BY WORKWAVE, CALSAGA NETWORK PARTNER

For security leaders, the labor landscape is always shifting. But understanding these shifts goes beyond merely keeping up; it is essential for staying profitable and operational in a high-stakes industry. As we look toward the remainder of 2026 and beyond, the data tells a compelling story.

A Cooling National Market — But Not for Security

The broader U.S. labor market has stabilized considerably. Quit rates are holding low, signaling reduced worker confidence and less market mobility. Despite this cooling, a labor shortage persists — as of late 2025, there were still 7.1 million open jobs against 7.8 million unemployed workers.

Looking further ahead, structural headwinds make this shortage unlikely to resolve on its own. An aging workforce, slowing immigration and a labor participation rate projected to drop from 62.4% in 2025 to 61.4% by 2035 suggest that competition for reliable personnel will remain fierce across all sectors.

The security industry, however, is operating in a league of its own. Our hire rate is 2.1 times the national average — 7.6% versus 3.6% nationally. While that reflects strong service demand, it also signals a constant need to replenish staff. Voluntary separations tell an equally challenging story, with the industry quit rate averaging 3.5% over the last 12 months compared to a national average of just 2%. We are bringing people in; keeping them is the harder battle.

The First 60 Days Are Everything

The data on early turnover is stark. By day 30, 18% of newly activated employees are already gone. By day 60, that number climbs to 26.4%. The good news is that employees who make it past the 45-day mark are significantly more likely to stay long-term — making the early employment experience one of the highest-leverage investments a security firm can make. A structured onboarding process that actively engages new hires from day one through at least day 90 is no longer optional. It is the single most effective tool for stopping the leak.



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GUARDING RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS? WHY CONTRACTUAL CLARITY IS A MUST-HAVE

TORY BROWNYARD, BROWNYARD GROUP, CALSAGA ASSOCIATE MEMBER

A smash-and-grab robbery in January at an Anaheim Hills jewelry store followed an all-too-familiar pattern. An SUV crashed through the front door. Eight suspects wearing ski masks entered the store, hammers and crowbars in hand, and fled with thousands of dollars' worth of jewels.

These types of horrifying scenes are playing out with increasing frequency throughout the Golden State, raising risks for retailers and the security guards and firms who protect them. Without clear and specific contract language, a fast-moving crime can quickly turn into a slow-moving liability claim that puts a security firm at serious financial and reputational risk.

Retail Theft is Rising

While overall crime statewide is declining, retail theft is a particularly concerning outlier. The latest data from the Public Policy Institute of California shows that reported shoplifting and commercial burglary incidents increased by 3% from 2023 to 2024 and are now up 47.5% compared to 2019.

The Bay Area alone reported 30 violent jewelry store robberies between March and September 2025. About half were smash-and-grabs similar to the January 2026 Anaheim Hills robbery. The others were mob-style, a likely indicator of Organized Retail Crime (ORC).





Slash Your Legal Risk

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COMPLIANCE YOU CAN PROVE

HOW THE POLICE CREDIT UNION CAN HELP FAMILIES BUILD FINANCIAL STABILITY

THE POLICE CREDIT UNION, CALSAGA NETWORK PARTNER

Life in private security brings both honor and unpredictability. Between changing shifts, variable overtime, and the emotional demands of the job, it can be challenging to find financial balance. Many private security professionals and their families experience income fluctuations and unexpected expenses that make it difficult to plan ahead. Amidst unexpected expenses and

fluctuating income, it is important to remember that financial stability isn't about making more money. Instead, it requires financial habits that bring security and confidence, no matter what each month looks like.

Automate Your Emergency Fund

An emergency fund acts as a buffer against life's surprises, helping your family stay on track when the unexpected happens. Despite its importance, less than half of Americans have a large enough emergency fund to cover 3 months of essential expenses. For families who often face variable pay schedules, automating savings is one of the most effective ways to stay consistent. Setting up automatic transfers from your checking account into a designated savings account ensures that money is set aside before you have a chance to spend it. Even small, regular deposits, like \$25 or \$50 per paycheck, can grow into a meaningful cushion over time.

Automating your savings eliminates the guesswork. You don't have to remember to move money manually or decide each month whether to save. With The Police Credit Union's digital banking tools, members can set up recurring transfers that align with their pay cycles, helping savings grow in the background. The key is to create a habit.



BEYOND SAFETY: DESIGNING FOR EFFICIENCY IN MODERN SECURITY OPERATIONS

JOHANN HAUSWALD, PLIXAI, CALSAGA NETWORK PARTNER

For years, innovation in private security has focused on one priority: frontline safety. That focus isn't going away, but it's no longer enough.

The firms pulling ahead today aren't just asking, "Are our officers safe?" They're asking, "Are we operating efficiently at scale?" Not as a tradeoff, but as a force multiplier.

The Challenge: Capturing What Matters

Officers generate hours of activity every shift, yet much of what happens on-site remains difficult to document consistently. Recording is often manual, reporting is time-consuming, and critical moments can be missed entirely.

This isn't unique to private security.

“

Research on body-worn cameras in policing shows that while cameras improve transparency and evidence collection, their impact depends heavily on how consistently they are used and how easily footage can be accessed and reviewed.

In practice, many organizations still face:

- Incomplete or inconsistent incident documentation
- Time lost reviewing footage or writing reports
- Limited visibility for clients into what actually happened

A Simple Shift: Automating the Moment of Capture

One of the most practical ways technology is improving both safety and efficiency is by removing the need for manual recording decisions altogether.

For example, body-worn cameras can automatically begin recording when an officer enters a designated site or geofenced area - and stop when they leave.

But the real value isn't just automation - it's integration.

- Scheduling systems (where officers are assigned)
- Dispatch tools (call-offs, site changes, coverage gaps)
- Tour and patrol systems (checkpoints, routes, activity logs)

...recording becomes aligned with operations, not just location.

That changes the equation:

- Coverage becomes consistent across assigned shifts - not just when a button is pressed

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THE PHYSICAL SECURITY INDUSTRY IN 2026: THREE EVERY PROVIDER NEEDS TO KNOW

CARISSA GAPPA, TEAM SOFTWARE BY WORKWAVE, CALSAGA NETWORK PARTNERS

The physical security industry in 2026 stands at a critical juncture. Compliance mandates, technological advancement and evolving client expectations are converging in ways that will separate the providers who thrive from those who fall behind. Success will no longer hinge on deploying more guards or installing additional cameras. It will hinge on smarter, integrated operations that deliver measurable value in real time.

Tech-Enabled Guarding Is Now the Baseline

The traditional "guard with a clipboard" model is giving way to "guard with a tech stack." Large providers are bundling AI cameras, remote monitoring and mobile workflows to meet heightened client demands — and to outpace smaller competitors who lack the capital for such investments.

Clients increasingly expect digital proof of service rather than paper logs. They want GPS-verified guard tours, incident reports with photo evidence and real-time alerts when something goes wrong. When a client asks what happened at a specific site at 2 AM last Tuesday, they expect a complete answer in seconds — guard activity, access control events, camera footage and incident response unified into one cohesive record.

Platforms that connect back-office operations to field activity are making this possible, giving providers the operational efficiency their business demands while delivering the transparency clients now expect as standard.

California Is Setting the Compliance Bar — and Others Will Follow

Starting in 2026, California Privacy Protection Agency rules require risk assessments for automated decision-making tools and opt-outs for biometrics. By 2027, cybersecurity audits kick in for firms exceeding \$100 million in revenue.

For security providers operating in California, privacy-by-design is no longer optional. Consent tracking, purpose tags and audit-ready reporting need to be built into your systems now — not retrofitted later.



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UNLOCKING HIDDEN PROFIT: WHY SECURITY GUARD COMPANIES SHOULD LEVERAGE THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT (WOTC)

Marcel Abandonato, MJA & Associates, CALSAGA Associate Member

In today's security industry, margins are tighter, labor costs are rising, and competition is more intense than ever. Security guard companies are constantly hiring—and that creates a powerful, often overlooked opportunity to significantly increase profitability through the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).

For many CALSAGA members, WOTC isn't just a tax credit—it's a strategic advantage that can directly improve bottom-line performance.

What is WOTC—and Why It Matters to Security Companies

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a federal incentive designed to reward employers who hire individuals from certain targeted groups, including veterans, individuals receiving government assistance, and those facing barriers to employment.

For security companies that hire at scale, this is especially relevant.

- Credits typically range from \$2,400 up to \$9,600 per eligible employee
- There is no limit on the number of employees you can claim
- Credits can be carried forward up to 20 years if unused



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CALIFORNIA SECURITY FIRMS CAN'T AFFORD TO TREAT BREAK COMPLIANCE AS A SIDE ISSUE

Gurmit Dhaliwal, Celayix, CALSAGA Associate Member

For many California security companies, break compliance does not fail because leaders do not care about it. It fails because field operations move fast, coverage requirements are unforgiving, and the systems supporting the work are often too fragmented to keep up.

A missed meal period is rarely just that. In a security operation, it may also signal that relief did not arrive on time, that a schedule changed without sufficient visibility, that a supervisor lacked real-time insight, or that a time record was left to be corrected after the fact. What appears to be a small exception on paper can actually reflect a larger operational weakness.

That is what makes break compliance such a persistent challenge.

Under [California law](#), employers generally must provide a 30-minute meal period when an employee works more than five hours, a second 30-minute meal period when an employee works more than ten hours (subject to limited waiver rules up to 12 hours), and paid rest periods based on total hours worked.

California law also emphasizes that timing matters, not just whether a break appears somewhere on the timecard.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



SHELA BORR, CALSAGA AMBASSADOR COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

The CALSAGA Ambassador Committee is proud to feature Manzanita Security in this quarter's Membership Spotlight. Following last quarter's recognition of a long-standing member celebrating a major milestone, we are equally excited to highlight one of our newest voices within the CALSAGA community. As a recent member who joined in Fall 2025 and an active participant on the Ambassador Committee, Manzanita Security represents the next generation of engaged, forward-thinking security professionals. With a mission centered on accountability and a relentless commitment to protection, the company approaches safety not just as a service, but as a critical foundation for operational success.

At its core, Manzanita Security is built on the belief that effective security requires both discipline and adaptability. Their approach emphasizes professionalism, responsibility,

and forward-thinking strategies that align security operations with the border goals of the organizations they serve. This mindset allows them to deliver protection that is not only reliable, but also integrated and strategic.

The company is supported by an executive team with approximately 30 years of combined industry experience, bringing a balanced perspective of field expertise and operational leadership. This foundation enables Manzanita Security to remain agile while maintaining a high standard of service in an evolving security landscape.

A CALSAGA member for approximately one year, Manzanita Security recognizes the organization as a driving force behind elevating the private security profession. From their perspective, CALSAGA plays a critical role in strengthening the industry's legitimacy by advancing accountability in licensing, training and background screening standards. By raising the baseline for compliance and professionalism, the organization helps ensure that the actions of a few do not undermine the reputation of many.

In addition to advocacy, Manzanita Security values CALSAGA's role as a trade association that delivers meaningful member benefits.

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THE FOUNDATION GAP IN PRIVATE SECURITY TRAINING

J.D. NANNERY, APEX SECURITY TRAINING,
CALSA MEMBER

Security Training Must Start with a Good Foundation

Across much of the private security industry, training is delivered in reverse. Officers are handed tools first, such as firearms, batons, TASERS, and chemical agents, before they have a working grasp of the legal authority that governs their actions, the professional standards expected of their role, or the liability that follows every use-of-force decision. This sequence may satisfy certification requirements, but it does little to prepare personnel for the real responsibility of making lawful, defensible decisions in dynamic environments.

Security training must begin with a strong foundation. Tools by themselves, do not create capability; capability is built on legal knowledge, sound judgment, and professional discipline. Aligned with the structure set out in Title 16 CCR §643, Training Course for Security Guards, this approach begins where competence actually begins: with legal authority and communication, long before tactical capability is introduced.

Judgment Before Capability

Security professionals work in environments where their decisions may later be examined in administrative review, civil litigation, or criminal proceedings. In those forums, the question is rarely how effectively force was applied — it is whether force was reasonable to apply at all.

A training model that starts with a strong foundation — rather than placing tools in an officer's hands first — front-loads the disciplines that answer that question: Powers to Arrest, Appropriate Use of Force, Observation and Documentation, Communication and Public Relations, and Officer Safety and Scene Assessment.

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SOC SPOTLIGHT: SCALING SECURITY OPERATIONS THE RIGHT WAY

ASHLEE CERVANTES-THOMAS, GUARDIAN
SECURE SOLUTIONS LLC, ASSOCIATE MEMBER

As organizations grow, so do the demands placed on their security operations. What starts as a manageable flow of calls, reports, and coordination can quickly evolve into a 24/7 operational challenge.

This is where a Security Operations Center (SOC) becomes a critical asset.

A Security Operations Center is a centralized team of trained professionals responsible for managing security communications, coordinating responses, and maintaining operational visibility at all times. In many ways, the SOC functions as the heartbeat of an organization's security mission. Ensuring consistency, accountability, and rapid response when it matters most.

Some companies choose to manage operations internally through an in-house Dispatch Center, while others partner with a shared SOC to support their growth. Understanding the difference and knowing when to transition is key to long-term success.

If you're looking to build or revamp your In-House Dispatch Center in 2026, consider these 5 things: Before building your own dispatch operation, it's important to look beyond the surface. These five areas often determine whether an internal model is sustainable or whether a shared SOC is the smarter option.

1. Communication Demand

The volume and frequency of incoming calls, service requests, and incident reports vary widely by organization size and activity level. What works for a small operation receiving occasional calls may quickly break down as call volume increases. Growth almost always brings complexity.



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