



# News Release

SERVICE EMPLOYEES  
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## **SEIU: Homeland Headquarters Looking for New Security**

### ***Congressional Quarterly: DHS Solicits New Contract for Security Personnel after Revelations of Problems***

WASHINGTON D.C. -- After revelations of extensive security breaches at the Wackenhut-guarded Department of Homeland Security headquarters in Washington, D.C., DHS has decided to solicit a new contract for security personnel, rather than exercising the option on Wackenhut's current contract, according to the *Congressional Quarterly: Homeland Security*.

"The fact that they're putting this contract out to bid means you can guess they're not entirely confident they could get quality security from their current contractor Wackenhut," said Stephen Lerner, Director of Property Services for Service Employees International Union (SEIU) the nation's largest security officers' union.

The new contract was supposed to go into effect April 1, but DHS has been mum on whether it actually signed a new contract, and if so, with which company. Wackenhut Services Inc., the company that generated criticism for the security shortcomings, currently provides protection at DHS headquarters. DHS would not say whether Wackenhut has received another contract to provide security, according to *CQ*.

Several current and former security guards at the Department of Homeland Security's sprawling Nebraska Avenue complex have called attention to what they characterize as a lack of training and preparation of guards employed by Wackenhut. An *Associated Press* report published last month described the mishandling of an anthrax threat at the headquarters, as well as accounts of under-guarded building entrances and malfunctioning detection equipment.

Wackenhut, a subsidiary of London-based Group 4 Securicor, is the U.S. government's largest supplier of private guards, holding multi-million dollar contracts with the Department of Energy and other agencies. The company guards dozens of highly sensitive nuclear weapons sites, more than half (30) of the nation's commercial nuclear power plants, and 18 U.S. Army Bases.

At these sites, multiple security problems have been reported in the last several years, including findings that Wackenhut:

- Was caught cheating on an anti-terrorism drill at a U.S. nuclear site
- Performed poorly on an anti-terrorism drill and was found "systematically" violating weapons inventory and handling policies at a separate U.S. nuclear site

(cont.)

- Was criticized for a conflict of interest involving security testing at commercial nuclear power plants
- Had employees showing new hires at a nuclear power plant where they could take naps
- Was cutting corners on patrols at a nuclear power plant in Florida
- Has been accused by guards at U.S. Army Bases for sloppy security practices and lax training.

For more information, visit [www.EyeOnWackenhut.org](http://www.EyeOnWackenhut.org)

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