Security and Safety

Most large industrial operations have some sort of security force, especially since 9/11. The security may restrict access to certain areas, log-in and -out visitors, operate and monitor security cameras and have personnel patrolling the premises. This not only potentially keeps "undesirables" out of the areas, but should restrict corporate espionage. As I've mentioned before, I worked on some projects at Kellogg Cereal in Battle Creek, Michigan. Kellogg has a "clean desk" policy that requires everyone to literally have all papers out of sight anytime the worker is not within sight of her (gender neutral) desk. With both Post and General Mills also in Battle Creek, I guess there is always the chance that some low-life cereal spy could come and photograph the secrets of the new process, thus beating Kellogg to the market with a highly sweetened, I mean, highly nutritious cereal. Fluor Daniel had over $150 million in design and construction work there, so keeping documents stowed was not always a simple task. But did we like it? We thought it was (...) wait for it...(Gr-r-r-reat!

Unless your security forces are a reserve unit to local police departments, as are many university police forces, the security will probably be contracted. The technological advances in security and constant law changes could make it a full-time job just to keep up. Since security firms are in business specifically for this purpose, this is a good opportunity not to "reinvent the wheel."

Well, what about Safety? Could Safety be contracted? To some extent, yes. Insurance companies have a deep interest in your facilities, since they may have to fork out big bucks in case of a problem. Most insurance companies have a Loss Prevention (or similar) department that would come to your facility periodically to check out the operation, review plans for expansion/construction, or provide other risk management/loss prevention services. Is this really a contracted service? Not directly, but you are paying for it with your premiums, so you might as well take advantage of it.

There are other safety consultants who may be more specialized in your particular area, but that actually becomes an overhead item that would probably require a cost-benefit analysis by upper management. One other safety component that could be contracted is fire extinguisher maintenance. Unless you have enough fire extinguishers that need to be serviced often enough to warrant having a full-time person, you're probably better off contracting this service.