
STOP AND SEARCH

Version 4

1. Policy statement

Stop and search is an essential tool to tackle crime and keep the public safe. PFEW supports the recording of stops as it helps legitimise the use of stops and improve police accountability to the public by making officers responsible for their actions.

2. Responsibility

The National Board is responsible for all policy formation.

3. Summary

Stop and search is a valuable policing tool in the fight against crime. The recording of stops helps improve police accountability and protects officers from false allegations and misrepresentation from public encounters.

PFEW believes that the recording of stops promotes better two way communications between the police and the public. Police officers use encounters as a legitimate policing tool needed for community safety and protection from crime and anti-social behaviour. It is one of the best examples of intelligence led policing and the easiest way of targeting persistent offenders and filtering crime hot spots.

PFEW welcomes the adoption by all forces in England and Wales of a new voluntary code of conduct on stop and search, which is part of the Home Office's Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme. This should help to reduce potentially discriminatory stops, improve recording practices and increase understanding, accountability and trust thereby helping police officers protect the public and improve relations with black and ethnic minority communities. Disappointingly, PFEW notes that HMICFRS¹ has found that, despite all Chief Constables signing up to the scheme, many forces were not complying with it due to an 'apparent lack of commitment by chief constables to ensuring stop and stop is used properly and legitimately'. This should be addressed urgently.

People from black and ethnic minority backgrounds are nearly three times more likely to be stop searched than a white person but HMIC found no convincing explanation from forces as to why this should be the case. PFEW welcomes the College of Policing's work to ensure the evidence base on stop and search is as far as possible being developed, collated and evaluated to enable lessons to be

¹ HMIC PEEL - Police legitimacy 2015: an overview, February 2016

learned and best available practice shared and that the College’s Authorised Professional Practice, training and information products are reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with the evidence and best practice. This includes incorporating unconscious bias in national training programmes.

HMICFRS also found that police use of stop and search has declined. Officers need to be given the confidence to use this policing tool correctly. PFEW notes that most forces have cut training budgets to cope with the significant cuts to police budgets. This means that important issues such as stop and search are being overlooked due to a lack of resources. In order to improve the outcome of stop and search in the future, Chief Constables must provide sufficient training to officers to ensure that stop and search is used and that all encounters are fair and transparent.

4. Procedures/implementation

PFEW will work with the College of Policing to review APP, training & delivery models.

Responsibility is delegated to the National Secretary and/or appropriate sub-committee.

	Author	Date	Review date	Change
Version 1	KP-EP	March 2015	March 2016	
Version 2	KP-EP	March 2016	March 2017	Changes to section 3 to incorporate findings from HMIC PEEL Legitimacy report, published February 2016
Version 3	KP-EP	March 2017	March 2018	No change
Version 4	KP	January 2019	March 2020	Minor changes

Signed by:



National Secretary



National Secretary