



Police Reform Act 2002

2002 CHAPTER 30

PART 4

POLICE POWERS ETC.

CHAPTER 1

EXERCISE OF POLICE POWERS ETC. BY CIVILIANS

38 Police powers for [^{F1}civilian staff][^{F2}and volunteers]

[^{F3}(1) The chief officer of police of any police force may designate a relevant employee as either or both of the following—

- (a) a community support officer;
- (b) a policing support officer.

(1A) The chief officer of police of any police force may designate a police volunteer as either or both of the following—

- (a) a community support volunteer;
- (b) a policing support volunteer.]

(2) The description of officers are as follows—

- (a) community support officer;
- (b) investigating officer;
- (c) detention officer;
- (d) escort officer.

(3) ^{F4}

(4) A chief officer of police ^{F5} . . . shall not designate a person under this section unless he is satisfied that that person—

- (a) is a suitable person to carry out the functions for the purposes of which he is designated;

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- (b) is capable of effectively carrying out those functions; and
- (c) has received adequate training in the carrying out of those functions and in the exercise and performance of the powers and duties to be conferred [^{F6}or imposed] on him by virtue of the designation.

(5) A person designated under this section shall have the powers and duties conferred or imposed on him by the designation.

^{F7}(5A)

^{F7}(5B)

^{F7}(6)

^{F7}(6A)

[^{F8}(6B) The powers and duties that may be conferred or imposed on a person designated under this section are—

- (a) any power or duty of a constable, other than a power or duty specified in Part 1 of Schedule 3B (excluded powers and duties);
- (b) where the person is designated as a community support officer or a community support volunteer, any power or duty that is described in Schedule 3C as a power or duty of a community support officer or community support volunteer.

(6C) The Secretary of State may by regulations amend Part 1 of Schedule 3B so as to add to the list of powers and duties specified in it.

(6D) Part 2 of Schedule 3B makes provision about the application of legislation in relation to powers or duties of a constable that may be exercised or performed by a person designated under this section.

(6E) Any power or duty of a constable that is conferred or imposed on a person designated under this section by a chief officer of police of a police force may (subject to provision included in the designation under subsection (6F)) be exercised or performed by the person—

- (a) in the area of that police force, and
- (b) in any cases or circumstances in which it could be exercised or performed by a constable who is a member of that force.

(6F) A designation under this section may provide that any power or duty of a constable that is conferred or imposed by the designation may be exercised or performed by the person designated—

- (a) in such areas outside the area of the police force in question as are specified in the designation (as well as within the area of the police force);
- (b) only in such parts of the area of that police force as are specified in the designation;
- (c) only in cases or circumstances so specified.]

(7) [^{F9}A relevant employee]^{F10} . . . authorised or required to do anything by virtue of a designation under this section—

- (a) shall not be authorised or required by virtue of that designation to engage in any conduct otherwise than in the course of that employment; and
- (b) shall be so authorised or required subject to such restrictions and conditions (if any) as may be specified in his designation.

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- [^{F11}(7A) A police volunteer authorised or required to do anything by virtue of a designation under this section —
- (a) shall not be authorised or required by virtue of that designation to engage in any conduct otherwise than while acting as a police volunteer;
 - (b) shall be so authorised or required subject to such restrictions and conditions (if any) as may be specified in the designation.]
- (8) Where any power exercisable by any person in reliance on his designation under this section is a power which, in the case of its exercise by a constable, includes or is supplemented by a power to use reasonable force, any person exercising that power in reliance on that designation shall have the same entitlement as a constable to use reasonable force.
- (9) Where any power exercisable by any person in reliance on his designation under this section includes power to use force to enter any premises, that power shall not be exercisable by that person except—
- (a) in the company, and under the supervision, of a constable; or
 - (b) for the purpose of saving life or limb or preventing serious damage to property.
- [^{F12}(9A) The chief officer of police of a police force must ensure that no person designated by the chief officer under this section is authorised to use a firearm, within the meaning given by section 57(1) of the Firearms Act 1968, in carrying out functions for the purposes of the designation.
- (9B) However, subsection (9A) does not apply to—
- (a) the use of a weapon, designed or adapted for the discharge of either of the following substances, for the purpose of discharging either of those substances—
 - (i) the substance, commonly known as “CS spray”, that is produced by the use of 2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile;
 - (ii) the substance, commonly known as PAVA spray, that is produced by the use of pelargonic acid vanillylamide;
 - (b) the use of a weapon for a purpose specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State;
 - (c) the use of a weapon of a description specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State, whether generally or for a purpose so specified.]
- [^{F13}(9C) A statutory instrument containing regulations under subsection (6C) or (9B)(b) or (c) may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.]
- [^{F14}(11) In this section “relevant employee” means—
- (a) in the case of—
 - (i) a police force maintained for a police area in accordance with section 2 of the Police Act 1996, or
 - (ii) the police force maintained for the metropolitan police district in accordance with section 5A of that Act,
 a member of the civilian staff of that police force (within the meaning of Part 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011);
 - (b) in the case of any other police force, a person who—
 - (i) is employed by the police authority maintaining that force, and

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(ii) is under the direction and control of the chief officer making a designation under subsection (1).]

[^{F15}(11A) In the case of a police force maintained for a police area in England in accordance with section 2 of the Police Act 1996, the following are also relevant employees for the purposes of this section—

- (a) any member of staff transferred to the chief constable of the police force under a scheme made under section 4I(1) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (transfer of property, rights and liabilities to chief constable to whom fire functions of a fire and rescue authority may be delegated);
- (b) any member of staff appointed by that chief constable under section 4I(4) of that Act (appointment of staff by chief constable to whom fire functions of a fire and rescue authority may be delegated).
- [^{F16}(c) any member of staff transferred to that chief constable under a scheme made by virtue of section 107EC(1) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (transfer of property, rights and liabilities to chief constable to whom fire functions of combined authority may be delegated);
- (d) any member of staff appointed by that chief constable under section 107EC(2) of that Act (appointment of staff by chief constable to whom fire functions of combined authority may be delegated).]

[^{F17}(12) In this section, “police volunteer” means a person who is under the direction and control of the chief officer making a designation under subsection (1A) otherwise than because the person is a constable, a special constable or a relevant employee.

(13) For the purpose of subsection (12), a person is to be treated as a relevant employee only in relation to times when the person is acting in the course of the person's employment.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 38 title substituted (16.1.2012) by [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 \(c. 13\), s. 157\(1\), Sch. 16 para. 292\(2\)](#); S.I. 2011/3019, art. 3, Sch. 1
- F2** Words in s. 38 heading inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by [Policing and Crime Act 2017 \(c. 3\), ss. 38\(9\), 183\(1\)\(5\)\(e\)](#); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, reg. 2)
- F3** S. 38(1)(1A) substituted for s. 38(1) (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by [Policing and Crime Act 2017 \(c. 3\), ss. 38\(2\), 183\(1\)\(5\)\(e\)](#); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, reg. 2)
- F4** S. 38(3) repealed (1.4.2006) by [Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 \(c. 15\), ss. 59, 174, 178, Sch. 4 para. 181\(2\), Sch. 17 Pt. 2](#); S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), Sch. paras. 10, 12, 13(oo) (subject to art. 4(2)-(7))
- F5** Words in s. 38(4) repealed (1.4.2006) by [Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 \(c. 15\), ss. 59, 174, 178, Sch. 4 para. 181\(3\), Sch. 17 Pt. 2](#); S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), Sch. paras. 10, 12, 13(oo) (subject to art. 4(2)-(7))
- F6** Words in s. 38(4)(c) inserted (1.12.2007) by [Police and Justice Act 2006 \(c. 48\), ss. 9, 53, Sch. 5 para. 2\(2\)](#); S.I. 2007/3203, art. 2(c)
- F7** S. 38(5A)-(6A) omitted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by virtue of [Policing and Crime Act 2017 \(c. 3\), ss. 38\(3\), 183\(1\)\(5\)\(e\)](#); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, reg. 2)
- F8** S. 38(6B)-(6F) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by [Policing and Crime Act 2017 \(c. 3\), ss. 38\(4\), 183\(1\)\(5\)\(e\)](#); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, reg. 2)

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- F9** Words in s. 38(7) substituted (16.1.2012) by Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (c. 13), s. 157(1), **Sch. 16 para. 292(4)**; S.I. 2011/3019, art. 3, Sch. 1
- F10** Words in s. 38(7) repealed (1.4.2006) by Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15), ss. 59, 174, 178, Sch. 4 para. 181(4), **Sch. 17 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2006/378, **art. 4(1)**, Sch. paras. 10, 12, 13(oo) (subject to art. 4(2)-(7))
- F11** S. 38(7A) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by Policing and Crime Act 2017 (c. 3), **ss. 38(5)**, 183(1)(5)(e); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, **reg. 2**)
- F12** S. 38(9A)(9B) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by Policing and Crime Act 2017 (c. 3), **ss. 38(6)**, 183(1)(5)(e); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, **reg. 2**)
- F13** S. 38(9C) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by Policing and Crime Act 2017 (c. 3), **ss. 38(7)**, 183(1)(5)(e); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, **reg. 2**)
- F14** S. 38(11) inserted (16.1.2012) by Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (c. 13), s. 157(1), **Sch. 16 para. 292(5)**; S.I. 2011/3019, art. 3, Sch. 1
- F15** S. 38(11A) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 3.4.2017 in so far as not already in force) by Policing and Crime Act 2017 (c. 3), s. 183(1)(5)(e), **Sch. 1 para. 82**; S.I. 2017/399, reg. 2, **Sch. para. 38**
- F16** S. 38(11A)(c)(d) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 17.7.2017 in so far as not already in force) by Policing and Crime Act 2017 (c. 3), **ss. 8(7)**, 183(1)(5)(e); S.I. 2017/726, **reg. 2(a)**
- F17** S. 38(12)(13) inserted (31.1.2017 for specified purposes, 15.12.2017 in so far as not already in force) by Policing and Crime Act 2017 (c. 3), **ss. 38(8)**, 183(1)(5)(e); S.I. 2017/1139, reg. 2(d) (with regs. 4, 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/1162, **reg. 2**)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 38 applied (with modifications) (1.7.2004) by Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 (c. 20), **ss. 28(1)(a)(2)**, 120 (with s. 72); S.I. 2004/1572, **art. 3(k)**

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 26F inserted by [2023 c. 41 Sch. 13 para. 6](#)
- s. 28A(6A)(6B) inserted by [2023 c. 41 s. 45\(2\)](#)