

## Stop and Search Ride Along Scheme

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## Policy Statement

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### Summary

This policy sets out the arrangements by which West Yorkshire Police will engage with its citizens and communities through an initiative called the Stop and Search Ride Along Scheme (RAS). This involves delivering an input around the use of stop and search powers within West Yorkshire and placing an observer with a police officer on routine activities. There is no guarantee that participants will observe a stop and search, but the scheme offers individuals the opportunity to gain an understanding of, and insight into, the use of stop and search powers. This means that two-way learning can take place, bringing the police closer to the public.

West Yorkshire Police is a member of the Home Office Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme (BUSSS) which aims to achieve greater transparency and community involvement by giving the general public an opportunity to accompany police officers on patrol when they may use stop and search powers. This fits with WYP's commitment towards transparency and improvement of trust, confidence and legitimacy.

The aims of this policy are to explain the Scheme, the process, and arrangements of the Scheme, and highlight and minimise any associated risks.

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### Scope

This policy applies to all police officers and police staff.

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## Principles

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### General

- The purpose of the Ride Along Scheme (RAS) is to provide transparency and an opportunity for individuals to gain a practical insight into the nature of police work across the whole range of routine patrol activities, particularly the use of stop and search powers.
- One of the primary aims of the scheme is to increase transparency with ethnic minority groups within West Yorkshire.
- In exceptional cases, such as the heightening of the Force threat level or adverse information or intelligence, any concerns about operating the RAS must be raised with Local Policing Operations (Corporate Services).
- If an authority is granted under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, the authorising officer must contact the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) supervisor for the area where the Section 60 has been authorised and task them with contacting members of

the Key Individual Networks (KINs) within the local community to offer them the opportunity to observe the use of stop and search powers under Section 60. See Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 Ride Along Scheme.

- West Yorkshire Police reserves the right to refuse participation in and to terminate the Stop and Search RAS if it is necessary for the officer or member of staff to carry out their work effectively, efficiently and safely.
- All candidates will be vetted using the Police National Computer (PNC) and Niche.
- The RAS is a popular scheme that attracts many applications. To maximise the impact on engaging with communities, applicants who have an interest in furthering their knowledge on the use of stop and search powers within West Yorkshire and/or are from ethnic minority backgrounds can be prioritised over applicants who wish to take part in the scheme for other reasons.
- Applicants who are not from either of these groups can still partake in the scheme, however they will be of a lower priority.
- To gain maximum benefit from their placement, RAS observers must be as close as possible to the activity they are watching. As such they may become aware of sensitive information. Participants must sign a confidentiality agreement to observe strict confidentiality in respect of any information/documents which they see, hear or read.
- Participants must also sign to acknowledge that:
  - They understand they will be subject to security checks;
  - They may witness a crime or incident and can be called on to give evidence; and
  - Routine live time filming will not be permitted, and participants will not be allowed to photograph members of the public.
- In addition to the specific vetting and generic risk assessments detailed in this policy, the RAS attachment will be subject to an ongoing dynamic risk assessment by the officer and their supervision.
- The officer(s) and their supervision will monitor events and risk assess any issues likely to affect the safety of the participant and/or the officer(s). Factors to consider include community tension and critical incidents.
- To extend the RAS to as many people as possible, participants will usually be restricted to one observation in any one calendar year. Repeat participation is at the discretion of the local district Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member who has ownership of the RAS.

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### Eligibility

- To participate in the RAS individuals must meet the following conditions:
  - Aged 18 or above;
  - Resident of the West Yorkshire policing area. Where possible, the ride along will occur within the district the participant resides;
  - No serious or recent convictions; and

- Read and agree to the confidentiality agreement and observer briefing sheet.
  - Members of the press who express an interest must be directed to the Press Office.
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#### Process

- Applicants will be asked to complete and submit an application form on the West Yorkshire Police website.
  - Once an application form has been submitted, the relevant district SPOC will record the details of the application in the RAS applications spreadsheet located within the Local Policing SharePoint site.
  - If the applicant is successful in the vetting stage of the process, the district SPOC will make arrangements for the applicant to attend and take part in the scheme.
  - The details of the vetting outcome and RAS date offered must be recorded in the RAS applications spreadsheet.
  - In the event that the scheme becomes oversubscribed, the district SPOC can prioritise applicants with an interest in the use of stop and search powers in West Yorkshire and those from an ethnic minority background.
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#### Risk assessment

- A generic RAS risk assessment has been developed and must be complied with at all times.
  - It must be made clear to observers that they must follow any instructions given by accompanying staff member(s) at all times during the ride along. For example, if observing incidents they may be asked to leave or remain in a police vehicle to ensure their safety.
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## Health and Safety

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#### General

- West Yorkshire Police has a duty of care towards the observer, members of the public with whom they may come into contact, and its staff.
- Health and Safety and Data Protection legislation will be balanced with the need for the Force to develop trust and confidence amongst all sections of the community through this scheme.
- Specifically, the protection of life, the prevention of injury and the need to maintain individuals' privacy in certain sensitive cases will take precedence over the RAS.
- While every effort will be made to get the observer as close to the work of frontline officers as is possible, there may be occasions where, for reasons of safety or privacy, the observer is asked to withdraw to a safe distance.

- RAS observations must not exceed eight hours' duration, and participants must have a minimum rest period of 20 minutes after at least six hours of observation.
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#### **Equipment**

- West Yorkshire Police will equip the observer with a high visibility (hi-vis) tabard, marked "Observer", and any other equipment deemed appropriate to ensure their safety.
  - When attending to take part in the scheme, the observer must ensure that they are wearing suitable clothing and footwear.
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#### **Medical conditions**

- Any medical conditions or injuries that will expose the observer to any additional risk of harm will be assessed and managed.
  - The organiser will discuss any disclosed medical conditions or recent injuries with the applicant when they are offered a position on the scheme.
  - Where a condition that could affect the placement is disclosed, the organiser will speak to the participant and discuss any reasonable additional measures or adjustments required to counter any specific risks beyond those set out in the generic risk assessment.
  - The application form allows the participant to bring a chaperone with them when they take part in the scheme. A chaperone will require the same vetting checks as the participant. A chaperone will not be limited to taking part in the scheme once in a 12-month period.
  - If the applicant has a physical disability that requires the use of a modified vehicle, e.g. a wheelchair user, the district SPOC can either request the loan of a modified marked police vehicle from Sussex Police or arrange through the local Customer Services for the hire of a permanently modified vehicle in line with the Hire Vehicles policy.
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## **Vetting**

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#### **Principles**

- On receipt of an application, the relevant team or department supervising a candidate must arrange for checks to take place on PNC and Niche.
- Individuals must confirm that the candidate has no serious or recent convictions and does not pose any security risk if they are an external candidate (member of the public).
- Prior to an internal staff member being offered a position on the scheme, the same initial vetting must take place that is conducted on external applicants.
- Any concerns raised as a result of initial vetting must be raised with an officer of the rank of Inspector or above.

- Once an application has been accepted onto the scheme, a further check of PNC and Niche must take place. Due to the length of time between the applicant applying to the scheme and the ride along taking place, the applicant may have recent criminal convictions that were not recorded at the time of the initial application. This final check must take place within 48 hours prior to the ride along occurring.
  - Where the candidate has a historic conviction for a minor offence, and/or poses a security risk, it will be the decision of the Inspector who has ownership of the RAS regarding the applicant's suitability to take part in the scheme.
  - If the applicant is deemed to be suitable, the details of the previous convictions, intelligence etc. must be discussed with the officer conducting the ride along.
  - If the applicant is not deemed to be suitable, they must be told that they are not eligible to participate. The RAS applications spreadsheet must be updated to reflect this.
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## Process

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### Principles

- Where an application is approved, the district SPOC will agree a suitable date with the applicant and provide them with a copy of a confidentiality agreement and an observer briefing sheet, in advance of the ride along.
- When the participant attends the agreed place of appointment, the facilitating officer must ensure that the completed confidentiality agreement and observer briefing sheet are collected and held together with the original application form. These completed forms will be scanned and added to the Local Policing SharePoint folder by the district SPOC to ensure these are maintained for a 12-month period. Local Policing are responsible for the deletion of these documents after 12 months.
- Prior to the ride along, the briefing package will be delivered to the participant by the facilitating officer. The package contains a high-level view of the structure of West Yorkshire Police and outlines the usage of stop and search powers. It also includes a redacted Body Worn Video (BWV) clip of a stop search encounter. The package must be delivered as a presentation, and the PowerPoint must not be shared externally.
- There is no mandatory requirement for the RAS to take place with the use of a vehicle. Depending on the location where the scheme is occurring, it may be more suitable for the scheme to occur on foot patrol. This is at the discretion of the facilitating officer.
- If a vehicle is used for the ride along, this can either be a marked or an unmarked vehicle. Due to additional health and safety considerations, a marked vehicle must not be used for responding to an incident using blue lights and audible warning instruments with an observer inside the vehicle,

unless to stop a compliant vehicle. If it becomes clear that a vehicle is failing to stop, then the officer must not attempt an initial phase pursuit.

- At the conclusion of the ride along, the participant will complete an online feedback form. This form can be completed on the facilitating officer's handheld device or by the applicant on their personal mobile phone.
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**Storing records**

- The keeping of records in relation to the participants of the ride along must be maintained by Local Policing within the Local Policing SharePoint RAS folder.
  - The application form and confidentiality agreement must be retained for one year.
  - The personal data within the RAS applications and the feedback form will be anonymised after a 12-month period.
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**Health conditions**

- Prior to taking the participant on an observation, the facilitating officer must refer to the RAS risk assessment and discuss the fitness and personal circumstances of the applicant with that individual to ensure they are suitable to participate.
  - If the participant becomes unwell during the participation, the ride along must be terminated.
  - Where any serious medical condition or other personal circumstances give cause for concern, the facilitating officer must discuss this with the applicant and any adjustments to the scheme must be made. This could include increasing the frequency and length of breaks throughout the scheme, or concluding the scheme at an earlier time.
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## Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 Ride Along Scheme

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**Principles**

- When an authority is granted under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, the authorising officer must contact the NPT supervisor for the relevant area where the authorisation is in place.
- Under the Section 60 ride along, the participant can take part in the scheme repeatedly within a 12-month period if multiple Section 60s are authorised within the Key Individuals Network (KINs) community within this time.
- The KIN will be contacted by the NPT supervisor for the area where the Section 60 is authorised and offered the opportunity to take part in the ride along to observe the use of S60 stop and search powers within their community.

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- It must be explained that there is no active involvement required from the KIN, and their role is to observe.
  - It must also be explained that there is no guarantee that they will observe the use of the powers as part of the ride along.
  - Prior to the ride along taking place, the KIN must be vetted to the same standard as any applicant to the scheme.
  - The facilitating officer must follow the process as with a standard ride along.
  - The facilitating officer will deliver the RAS briefing package to the KIN and issue them with an observer tabard.
  - At the conclusion of the ride along, the KIN must be offered the opportunity to complete the feedback form.
  - The officer facilitating the ride along must scan and email a copy of the confidentiality agreement and the KIN participant details to the relevant district SPOC.
  - Following a S60 ride along, the district SPOC must add the details of the KIN who took part in the scheme to the application spreadsheet.
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## Additional Information

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### Compliance

This policy complies with the following legislation, policy and guidance:

Equality Act 2010

Data Protection Act 2018

Human Rights Act 1998

Official Secrets Act 1989

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Working Time Regulations 1998

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