



<u>Policy Title</u>	Hunts
<u>CCMT Sponsor</u>	ACC Operational Support
<u>Department/Area</u>	Operational Support
<u>Section/Sector</u>	HQ Operations

1.0 Rationale

The intention of this document is to ensure that Thames Valley Police provide an effective, measured and intelligence led response to hunts and hunt activity anywhere in the force area.

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and all actions should be proportionate, legal, accountable and necessary.

2.0 Intention

To raise awareness and give guidance to officers and police staff to respond in a manner which is fair and impartial, whilst upholding the law, maintaining order and gathering and preserving evidence if this becomes necessary. Any response will take into account other force and local priorities.

This policy takes into account of the changes in legislation by the Hunting Act 2004.

3.0 General Principles

Actions taken as a consequence of this policy will be taken in an impartial and fair way, having due regard for natural justice and human rights. Police will not be committed to activities, which would allow the police to be viewed as agents of any one party or which may compromise public perception of the police role.

The police will as far as is reasonably practicable:-

- prevent harm to all people involved
- preserve the peace and safety of the public
- prevent disorder and if it occurs minimise the consequences,

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- prevent and detect crime,
- gather and preserve evidence in the course of investigation and prosecution.

Regular contact and liaison will be maintained with all groups involved to ensure good lines of communication.

Police actions will acknowledge the need to recognise that people have the right to carry out certain lawful hunting activities, whilst acknowledging the rights of others to lawfully protest or monitor the activities.

4.0 Challenges/Representations

To ensure transparency and accountability any decision made as a result of following this policy should be clearly documented.

Challenges/representations in respect of decisions made in applying this policy should be addressed to the relevant BCU / Local Police Area Commander or their nominated representative.

Challenges/representations in respect of the policy itself should be addressed to:

Superintendent HQ Operations
The Hunt Liaison Officer
Operational Support
Thames Valley Police
Oxford Road
Kidlington
OX5 2NX

5.0 Guidance, Procedures and Tactics

Standard Operating Procedures and an officers guide to policing hunts and hunt activities have been produced and are exempt from disclosure. However, liaison will be maintained with all hunt and associated groups to outline the basic policing plan.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and will take into consideration any representations or complaints made. The review will also take account of any changes in legislation and appropriate case law.

- 5.1** This policy and the decision making process will be open to scrutiny by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) during annual and thematic inspections.

6.0 Communication

This policy will be made available to members of the public upon request and any enquiries should be addressed to the Force Hunt Liaison Officer.

This policy and associated documents will be published on the Police Management Unit Intranet site.

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A communication strategy will be developed to provide officers and support staff with an awareness of the change of legislation and resultant policy.

All officers deployed on policing hunts and hunting activities will be briefed regarding this policy.

7.0 Compliance and Certification

7.1 Human Rights Certification

(1) Legal Basis

- Hunting Act 2004
- Offences Against the Person Act 1861
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- Public Order Act 1986
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Road Traffic Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998

This is by no means an exhaustive list.

(2) Human Rights Articles Engaged

This policy has been audited for compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998. It is acknowledged that this policy has the potential to engage the following articles:-

- Article 2 Right to Life.
- Article 5 Right to Liberty & Security.
- Article 6 Right to a fair trial.
- Article 8 Right to Respect for Private and Family Life.
- Article 10 Right to Freedom of Expression.
- Article 11 Right to Freedom of Assembly & Association.

Interference with Articles 8, 10 & 11 will only take place in accordance with the law and as is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

(3) Prohibition of Discrimination

Article 14 provides that the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground. Any police action(s) taken as a result of this policy will be undertaken in an impartial and fair manner, and any interference with Human Rights will be justified, proportionate to the operational need, and the least intrusive.

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7.2 Race Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been screened for relevance under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and is of low relevance.

7.3 Data Protection

Personal Data processed in compliance with this policy will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

7.4 Freedom of Information Act

This policy is suitable for publication and can be published on the Thames Valley Police Freedom of Information internet site.

7.5 Protective Markings

This policy has been assessed against the Government Protective Marking Scheme requirements and is NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED.

7.6 Health and Safety at Work

Operational deployment of officers will be conducted with due regard to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and any other relevant legislation. This policy is also to be read in conjunction with the Force Health and Safety Manual, which sets out the requirement for documented risk assessment by a competent person, when exposure to a particular hazard arising from workplace or pre-planned policing work activity can be said to be reasonably foreseeable.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

Regular liaison will be maintained by HQ and BCU Operations staff with all hunting activity groups (pro-, anti-, monitoring, etc) to consider and if appropriate revise both policy and the tactical response.

8.1 Links to Best Value / PPAF / Priorities / Performance Indicators

Not applicable.

8.2 Review Process

This policy and the associated standard operating procedures will be reviewed after 3 months of the Hunt Act 2004 being introduced and then subsequently at least annually.