



Home Office

POLICING AND CRIME ACT 2017 MARITIME ENFORCEMENT POWERS (England and Wales)

CODE OF PRACTICE

CODE OF PRACTICE TO BE FOLLOWED BY
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHEN
ARRESTING A PERSON UNDER THE POWER
CONFERRED BY SECTION 90 OF THE POLICING
AND CRIME ACT 2017

February 2023

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Commencement – Transitional Arrangements

This Code applies to any arrest made after 00:00 on 15 March 2023

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Code deals with the practice to be followed by law enforcement officers (*see Note 1*) when arresting a person under the power conferred by section 90 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The power applies in relation to certain ships when a law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to suspect that an offence under the law of England and Wales has been, or is being, committed on that ship. Where the power to arrest applies, the law enforcement officer may arrest without warrant anyone whom he has reasonable grounds for suspecting to be guilty of the offence. *See Notes 2 and 3.*
- 1.2 The powers in Chapter 5 of Part 4 of the Act (which includes the power of arrest in section 90) may be only exercised for the purpose of preventing, detecting, investigating or prosecuting an offence under the law of England and Wales. The powers may only be exercised on:
- a UK ship in England and Wales waters, foreign waters or international waters;
 - a ship without nationality in England and Wales waters or international waters;
 - a foreign ship in England and Wales waters or international waters; or
 - a ship, registered under the law of a relevant territory (being the Isle of Man, any of the Channel Islands or a British overseas territory), in England and Wales waters or international waters. *See Notes 3 and 4.*
- 1.3 The authority of the Secretary of State is required before a law enforcement officer may exercise these powers in relation to (i) a UK ship in foreign waters or (ii) a foreign ship, or a ship registered under the law of a relevant territory (defined as above), within the territorial sea adjacent to England and Wales or in international waters.
- 1.4 This Code of Practice must be readily available for arresting law enforcement officers, and at all designated police stations and authorised places of detention for consultation by police and law enforcement officers, members of the public, police staff, police force control rooms, Police Force Single Points of Contact and detained persons.
- 1.5 The provisions of this Code do not replicate the Codes of Practice issued under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) nor detract in any way from their provisions as they apply in England and Wales and its territorial waters. This Code concerns the information to be provided to a person who is arrested on a ship under section 90 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, and will be particularly important where the arrest takes place some distance from England and Wales where it is likely to take a longer time to arrive at a police station or authorised place of detention situated in England and Wales than if they were arrested on land. *See Notes 9 and 10.*
- 1.6 *The Notes for Guidance are not provisions of this code.*

2 Information to be given on Arrest

- 2.1 A person who is arrested, or further arrested for an offence under the law of England and Wales under section 90 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 must be informed as soon as it is practicable that they are under arrest and

the grounds and reasons for their arrest. *See Note 7.*

Caution

2.2 A person who is arrested, or further arrested, for an offence under the law of England and Wales under the power described in paragraph 1.1 must be cautioned unless it is impracticable to do so because of their condition or behaviour at the time of arrest or, they have already been cautioned immediately prior to arrest.

Terms of the caution

2.3 The caution should be in the following terms:

“You do not have to say anything. But it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in Court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.”

Where the use of the Welsh Language is appropriate, a constable may provide the caution directly in Welsh in the following terms:

“Does dim rhaid i chi ddweud dim byd. Ond gall niweidio eich amddiffyniad os na fyddwch chi’n sôn, wrth gael eich holi, am rywbeth y byddwch chi’n dibynnu arno nes ymlaen yn y Llys. Gall unrhyw beth yr ydych yn ei ddweud gael ei roi fel tystiolaeth.”

2.4 Minor deviations from the words of any caution given in accordance with this Code do not constitute a breach of this Code, provided the sense of the caution is preserved. *See Note 8.*

Other information to be provided

2.5 The arresting law enforcement officer should ensure that, as soon as is reasonably practicable after their arrest, the arrested person is informed that if they feel they need medical help, they should tell the law enforcement officer.

2.6 The arresting law enforcement officer should ensure that, as soon as is reasonably practicable after their arrest on board the ship, the arrested person is informed that when they arrive at a police station or authorised place of detention in England and Wales, they will be told in full about the rights available to them and how they will be able to exercise those rights. The arrested person must also be given a summary of the procedural rights that they will have access to in full at the police station or authorised place of detention in the following manner:

(a) You will be asked if you want a lawyer to help you and if you want a lawyer, you should tell the officer in charge. They will arrange for you to obtain legal advice and this legal advice is free.

(b) You will be asked if you want someone to be told where you are and if you want someone informed, you should tell the officer in charge. They will arrange this for you. This is free. In certain circumstances, the officer in charge will ensure that an appropriate adult who is independent of the police attends the police station/authorised place of detention to assist you.

(c) If you want to look at the police rules – they are called the Codes of Practice - you should tell the officer in charge who will provide them to you.

(d) You will be asked if you need medical help. You should tell the officer

in charge if you feel ill or have been injured. They will arrange medical help for you, and this help is free.

(e) If you are asked questions about a suspected offence, you do not have to say anything. However, it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.

(f) You must be told about the offence you are suspected of committing and why you have been arrested and are being detained.

(g) You or your solicitor must be allowed to see records and documents about why you have been arrested and detained and about your time at the police station or authorised place of detention.

(h) If you need an interpreter, one must be provided. You can also have certain documents translated. This is free.

(i) If you are not British and you want to contact your embassy or consulate or want them to be told you are detained, tell the officer in charge. This is free.

(j) You must be told how long you can be detained for.

(k) If you are charged and your case goes to court, you or your solicitor will have a right to see the prosecution evidence before the court hearing.

2.7 The information in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 may be provided orally and/or in a written notice if available.

2.8 Where the arresting law enforcement officer believes that the period starting from the time of the person's arrest and ending on their arrival at the designated police station or authorised place of detention in England and Wales is likely to exceed 24 hours they must ensure that the arrested person is informed of this.

2.9 In the case of transit that is likely to exceed 24 hours, the arrested person must be informed that they will be brought to a police station or authorised place of detention in England and Wales as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so and informed of the maximum length of time that is anticipated to elapse before they arrive. The arrested person must be reminded that the caution in paragraph 2.3 continues to apply whilst they are under arrest and when they arrive at the police station or authorised place of detention. *See Note 9.*

2.10 The arresting law enforcement officer should ensure effective communication with the arrested person, including the interpretation and translation of any information provided by way of a written notice as soon as reasonably practicable. Any information provided orally or in writing must be in simple and accessible language, and take into account any particular needs of vulnerable suspects.

3 Urgent interviews

3.1 Following a decision to arrest a suspect, they must not be interviewed about the relevant offence except at a police station or other authorised place of detention, unless the consequent delay would be likely to:

(a) lead to:

- interference with, or harm to, evidence connected with an offence;
- interference with, or physical harm to, other people; or
- serious loss of, or damage to, property;

(b) lead to alerting other people suspected of committing an offence but not yet arrested for it; or

(c) hinder the recovery of property obtained in consequence of the commission of an offence.

Interviewing in any of these circumstances shall cease once the relevant risk has been averted or the necessary questions have been put in order to attempt to avert that risk.

3.2 If in accordance with paragraph 3.1 an urgent interview is carried out, the interviewer is responsible for ensuring that the interview is conducted and recorded in accordance with the relevant PACE Code of Practice. *See Note 10.*

4 Power to obtain information

4.1 Section 89 of the Act includes a power to require a person on the ship to provide information about themselves and about anything on the ship. The purpose of this is to enable law enforcement officers to take control of the ship and to determine the need to search the ship and persons on the ship.

4.2 Paragraph 3.1 above does not apply to, or in anyway restrict, the exercise of this power by law enforcement officers.

5 Detention conditions - general

5.1 As far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, the law enforcement officer should ensure that appropriate arrangements to safeguard the health and welfare of arrested persons, including provisions for refreshments, food and adequate rest, and medical attention whilst they are under arrest and detained on board the ship are in place. In so doing, the law enforcement officer must also have regard to the health and safety procedures in operation on the ship.

5.2 A record of these arrangements should be made in accordance with this paragraph. This record shall be presented to the custody officer when the arrested person arrives at the police station or authorised place of detention.

6 Records of Arrest

6.1 The arresting law enforcement officer is required to record in his or her pocket book or by other methods used for recording information:

- the nature and circumstances of the offence leading to the arrest;
- the reason or reasons why arrest was necessary;
- the giving of the caution;
- anything said by the person at the time of arrest; and
- the officer making the arrest at sea should make a note of the time, the latitude / longitude (where the enforcement officer has the equipment to determine this) at the point of interdiction or boarding of the ship, and if possible, note where the ship was heading prior to it being ordered to stop and boarded. Also, a record of the ship's name (where applicable), number and country of registration (if known) and the flag flown at point of boarding should be made.

6.2 Such a record should be made at the time of the arrest unless it is impracticable to do so. If not made at that time, the record should be completed as soon as possible thereafter.

6.3 On arrival at the police station or authorised place of detention the arrested person must be brought before the custody officer as soon as practicable. At this point the relevant PACE provisions apply, including the requirement that a custody record must be opened in accordance with paragraph 2 of PACE Code C. The information given by the arresting officer regarding the

circumstances and reason or reasons for arrest shall be recorded as part of the custody record. *See PACE Code C paragraph 3.4.*

Notes for guidance

1. In this Code, “law enforcement officer” means:
 - a constable who is a member of a police force in England and Wales;
 - a special constable appointed under section 27 of the Police Act 1996;
 - a constable who is a member of the British Transport Police Force;
 - a port constable, within the meaning of section 7 of the Marine Navigation Act 2013, or a person appointed to act as a constable under provision made by virtue of section 16 of the Harbours Act 1964;
 - a designated customs official within the meaning of Part 1 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 (see section 14(6) of that Act);
 - a designated NCA officer who is authorised by the Director General of the National Crime Agency (whether generally or specifically) to exercise the powers of a law enforcement officer under this Chapter 2;
 - a member of the Ministry of Defence Police;
 - a member of the Royal Navy Police; or
 - a member of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary.
2. For the purposes of this Code, ‘offence’ means an offence under the law of England and Wales.
3. A “ship” is defined in section 95 of the 2017 Act as including ‘every description of vessel (including a hovercraft) used in navigation’. The use of the powers is therefore not confined to large boats carrying people or goods by sea. Also see section 95 for the definition of ‘United Kingdom ship’ and a ‘ship without nationality’.
4. The territorial sea of the United Kingdom is as defined in the Territorial Sea Act 1987 and is, for the most part, those coastal waters that extend for 12 nautical miles from the baselines determined by Her Majesty in Council. “England and Wales waters” refers to all waters within the seaward limits of the territorial sea adjacent to England and Wales. The maritime powers of England and Wales law enforcement are confined to England and Wales waters, international waters and foreign waters (in certain circumstances), with the exception of ‘hot pursuits’ under section 86, which enables the pursuit of a ship into Scottish Waters where an offence is suspected to have taken place in England and Wales. There is no power of hot pursuit into Northern Ireland waters.
5. “International waters” means waters beyond the territorial sea of the United Kingdom or of any other State or relevant territory. These are also known as the “high seas”.
6. A UK national may commit an offence on UK ships regardless of where that offence takes place. For example, a UK national who violently attacks a person on a UK registered ferry travelling from Spain to France could be prosecuted in England and Wales for this offence.
7. An arrested person must be given sufficient information to enable them to understand that they have been deprived of their liberty and the reason why they have been arrested e.g. when a person is arrested on suspicion of committing an offence they must be informed of the suspected offence’s nature, and when and where it was committed. The suspect must also be informed of the reasons or reasons why arrest is considered necessary. Vague or technical language should be avoided.
8. If it appears a person does not understand the caution, the person giving it should explain it in their own words.

9. *The period of time during which a person arrested on board the ship is in transit to the police station or authorised place of detention is different from the “detention clock” which is determined in accordance with Part IV of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). Generally, the PACE “detention clock” starts from the time a person arrested for an offence arrives at the police station or authorised place of detention.*
10. *Provisions of PACE Code C relevant to the conduct of an urgent interview carried out before the arrested person arrives at a police station or other authorised place of detention include: 11.5, 11.7 to 11.11, 11.13 to 11.15 and 13.2. In summary, these paragraphs state that no interviewer may try to obtain answers or elicit a statement by the use of oppression and that the interviewer shall ensure that an accurate record must be made of each interview regardless of the location. For a non-English speaking person an urgent interview can be conducted by using the appropriate means to do so.*

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