

POLICY IDENTIFICATION PAGE

POLICY TITLE: Policy on Hunting with Dogs.

POLICY REF. NO: 04/08

Policy Ownership: Uniform Operations

Department Responsible: HQ Operations

Person Responsible: Head of Operations

Policy Implementation Date: March, 2008

Date Policy Last Reviewed: New Policy Document

Policy Review Date: March, 2009

REVIEW OF DOCUMENT

Date of Review	Reviewed By	Amendments made

1. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the Human Rights Act and has been reviewed on the basis of its contents and the supporting evidence and it is deemed compliant with that Act and the principles underpinning it.

Name: Bryn Thomas

Department: Legal Services HQ

Signed:*B. Thomas*.....

REVIEW

This policy is due for review on:March, 2009.....

2 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 This policy has been drafted and audited in accordance with the principles of Human Rights Legislation, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

3 LEGAL OBJECTIVES

3.1 Dyfed Powys Police is committed to implementing procedures that protect individual's rights under the European Convention of Human Rights as provided by the Human Rights Act 1998.

3.2 The objectives of this policy are to maintain public safety and minimise crime and disorder in accordance with the Human Rights Act.

3.3 This policy provides the framework by which the hunting legislation and associated issues will be dealt with by Dyfed Powys Police. The Hunting Act 2004 makes hunting wild mammals with dogs illegal unless the hunting is exempt. The Force has a duty to enforce the law in incidents where illegal hunting occurs. The Force will ensure that any action it takes is proportionate and necessary, prescribed by law and intended to achieve a legitimate objective.

4 DATA PROTECTION/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/DISCLOSURE

4.1 Personal data and information gathered in connection with this policy will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. All disclosures made in connection with this policy will be considered and sanctioned by the appropriate department.

5 POLICE OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

5.1 This policy has been written to provide a framework for police officers to police the Hunting Act 2004.

5.2 The principal lawful authority for the exercise of the powers and duties outlined in this policy are: -

- Hunting Act 2004
- Public Order Act 1986
- Common Law

6 INTRODUCTION

6.1 The Hunting Act 2004 became law in February 2005 and makes hunting wild mammals with dogs illegal. Other forms of activity which appear similar to hunting wild mammals such as trail hunting, drag hunting, hound exercising etc remain lawful activities. Dyfed Powys Police will deal with hunting in a manner which is proportionate to all policing matters affecting communities within the Force area. The Force has a duty to enforce

legislation which is enacted by Parliament, however controversial that legislation may be to individuals or groups, and is aware that hunting can evoke strong opinions for and against the subject.

- 6.2** Where prima facie evidence of an alleged breach of the Act is presented then the matter will be investigated. Decisions regarding deployment of police resources to enforce the Hunting Act will be made on objective grounds, taking into account all the policing matters appertaining in the community, the Division concerned, and in the Force area as a whole.
- 6.3** Guidance on the policing of hunting are contained in the ACPO Strategic and Tactical Considerations documents and policing will be in accordance with these documents which are contained within **Section 31 Law Enforcement exemption applied**. Officers should refer to the following when dealing with hunting issues : ACPO Manual of Guidance – Keeping the Peace, Critical Incident Policy, Community Tension Policy and the Public Order Policy.
- 6.4** **Section 31 Law Enforcement exemption applied** will be appointed as Force Hunting Liaison Officer. This person will act as the single point of contact on strategic and policy matters and for liaison with organisations with an interest in hunting matters, such as the Countryside Alliance, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), League Against Cruel Sports (LACS) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Each Division will appoint a **Section 31 Law Enforcement exemption applied** as Divisional Hunting Liaison Officer who will link in at a local level with hunts operating in their areas as well as with the Force Hunting Liaison Officer.
- 6.5** **Section 31 Law Enforcement exemption applied** and any policing associated with hunts will be the responsibility of Divisional Commanders.
- 6.6** Consultation has taken place with parties as described at 6.4. It is likely that IFAW and LACS as well as other organisations will provide police with evidence of alleged illegal hunting and if this does occur and where there is prima facie evidence of an offence then the matter will be investigated. Any allegation of illegal hunting will be forwarded to the Crown Prosecution Service for advice before any proceedings are taken in respect of this legislation.
- 6.7** The continuation of hunt meetings is not in itself illegal, unless the provisions of the Hunting Act 2004 are breached. Many hunts have remodelled themselves as drag hunts, hound exercise packs and trail hunts. It is possible that such events may result in people of opposing views in respect of hunting being present at the same venues with anti hunt people monitoring the activity of a meeting. If this happens, the possibility exists of disorder, and criminal acts being committed. Police officers will not routinely be deployed to hunt meetings unless there is information or intelligence that disorder or breaches of the Act taking place.
- 6.6** It is possible that people may contact the Force to report alleged breaches of the Act, or to elicit comment on the legislation, or the manner of its enforcement. In such cases police officers and police staff must not

comment on the nature of the legislation or upon enforcement issues. Any call indicating disorder will be dealt with in line with normal procedure to deal with reports of disorder or disturbance.

7. Dyfed Powys Police will deal with the Hunting Act in accordance with this Policy and in line with **Operation Pearl** which is the Contingency Plan relating to Hunting.