

Stop and Search Capture Document

Panel date:	25/09/2025
Number of panel members in attendance:	6
Constabulary attendees:	<i>Caitlin Bones (CB), Colin Norden (CN), Anne-Marie Boden</i>
OPCC attendees:	<i>Charlie Murfitt (CM)</i>
Agenda item 1 - Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All actions from the previous meeting were marked as complete.</li> <li>• The panel agreed the minutes from the previous Stop and Search meeting.</li> </ul>
Agenda item 2 – Stop Search Theme & Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The theme for this panel meeting was - <b>Cross-Sex JOG Stop &amp; Searches</b> - Standard (JOG) Stop and Searches where the searching officer is a different sex/gender to the person being searched.</li> <li>• CB presented data for August 2025. There were a total of 186 stop searches, of these, 13 were cross-gender. Eight were a stop search of a person, five were a stop search of a person and vehicle.</li> <li>• Panel question: Do officers need to ask the person being searched if they are happy to be searched by an officer of the opposite sex? <b>CB:</b> No, they are allowed to search the opposite sex however it is best practice to ask prior to commencing the search. Student officers are required to complete a stop search therefore they may have to perform a stop search on the opposite sex to be able to be signed off.</li> <li>• Panel question: How does the data compare to the previous months data? <b>CB:</b> Specifically for cross-sex searches we are unable to say as this data isn't regularly used, however when looking at the data on gender, age etc for the month, this is quite comparable.</li> <li>• It was observed by the panel that over 50% of searches resulted in 'nothing found', which they thought was high. <b>CB:</b> The Constabulary find rate is between 31-38% on average, about 70%</li> </ul>

	<p>of SnS have ‘nothing found’. However, for context the national find rate is only about 25%, so over 50% of cross-sex searches resulting in ‘nothing found’ is not high or unusual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel question: Is it possible that items are missed if the searches aren’t as in depth as they should be? KP: Student officers can sometimes fall short due to confidence and experience and can therefore miss things sometimes. <b>CN:</b> This is always the risk with any search and is likely higher in cross-sex searching as, for example, male officers do not like to search female breast area and likely don’t search as in-depth as there are always concerns about allegations. Hence, why we try to have same sex searching.</li> </ul>
<p>Agenda item 3 – BWV Reviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BWV reviewed and discussed.</li> </ul>
<p>Agenda Item 4 – AOB &amp; Dates of next meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Force from August for rescheduling - ABD</li> <li>• Use of Force 20<sup>th</sup> November – Theme - TBC</li> <li>• Stop &amp; Search 11<sup>th</sup> December - Theme - TBC</li> <li>• KP – Google ‘pocket toolkit’, this comes up with a police website which gives a whole host of information. This is the link: <a href="#">Pocket Toolkit – A Lightweight Police Utility App</a></li> <li>• A discussion took place regarding an article published in a local newspaper stating that police officers are afraid to use their Stop Search and Use of Force powers due to fear of receiving complaints. Searches have dropped significantly over the last few years however the rules have changed, with an emphasis on having strong sufficient grounds to be able to use these powers. <b>CN:</b> Previously there may have been a confidence issue, especially considering that the workforce is the youngest the force has ever seen. The introduction of BWV has helped towards increasing confidence as the evidence is there to be called upon if needed. The stop and search numbers for Cambridgeshire are consistent and have not deviated noticeably. Another factor that may show a drop in numbers is demand. Proactive policing has lessened as officers are responding to high levels of 999 calls giving officers less opportunity to identify stop search opportunities. The work of the community scrutiny panel was first</li> </ul>

	<p>treated with some trepidation amongst officers however they mostly now see it as business as usual and welcome feedback received. There are teams who are very active and very confident in Stop and Search, especially neighbourhood teams and RCAT who SnS more frequently. <b>ACTION:</b> Provide update to panel members should further information become available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme training will be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> October at St Neots Police Station</li> </ul>
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Incident 1			
Review Date:	25/09/2025	BWV reference:	<b>SS/1695817411/25</b>
Incident Date:	11/08/2025	Incident time:	13:50

Grounds: Written Assessment			
Did the grounds provide sufficient evidence that a reasonable person would have concluded, on an objective basis, that the stop and search should be undertaken?			
<p><b>Overview:</b> Vehicle stopped initially for no insurance following a PNC search. Upon engaging with the driver, a strong smell of cannabis could be smelt coming from the car.</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One panel member said the first sentence is sufficient – no insurance, smells of cannabis, nothing else is required.</li> <li>• Other panel members we asked for more grounds so we can now not say only write one sentence.</li> <li>• <b>CN:</b> Note smell of cannabis on its own is not sufficient and no insurance is a minor factor for searching (strong factor for a vehicle stop) so that is why officers need to discuss behaviour of subject etc.</li> <li>• Adequate written grounds.</li> </ul>			
<b>Grounds RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b> 100%	<b>Amber:</b>	<b>Red:</b>

Comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was no BWV available from either officer for this incident. <b>CB:</b> It should be</li> </ul>

second nature to turn the BWV on before interaction.

- It is difficult to rate with no footage to view.
- We need to feedback that there isn't any footage.
- For two officers not to switch it on is poor.
- This is against policy. **CB**: Confirmed policy is BWV on for SnS
- Are the officers new? **CN**: No, they are experienced officers and one is a Sgt.
- How did the officers know there was no insurance? **CN**: The officers will have run a vehicle check either through ANPR within their car, or by radioing through to control. Officers also have the authority to call insurance companies to check details if a driver is claiming the vehicle is insured but hasn't shown up on the database.
- Panel question: What happens if we rate the incident as red due to the lack of footage? Red rated incidents will be referred or escalated as necessary. **CB**: clarified that as per policy PSD will be notified but an issue such as non-recording will come back to local management to deal with as necessary.
- Panel question: What happens if the details given were false and weren't checked by officers? **CN**: If there is a suspicion of an offence, officers will ensure the details given are correct such as asking to see a bank card or proof of ID. CB added that officers may also ask to see social media accounts to verify the details given.
- Voted red due to major non-compliance of protocols

<b>Overall RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b>	<b>Amber:</b> 17%	<b>Red:</b> 83%
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<b>Chair's comments and OPCC Summary:</b>	
<b>Actions arising:</b>	<b>Feedback:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feedback to officers regarding not switching on of their BWV</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

Incident 2			
Review Date:	25/09/2025	BWV reference:	<b>SS/4251640628/1</b>
Incident Date:	18/08/2025	Incident time:	13:08

Grounds: Written Assessment			
Did the grounds provide sufficient evidence that a reasonable person would have concluded, on an objective basis, that the stop and search should be undertaken?			
<p><b>Overview:</b> A member of the public has shared a photograph of two suspects, a male and a female who have been seen shoplifting in Primark, to the stores Security Officer.</p>			
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The grounds aren't clear or relevant. The grounds should just state that a member of the public saw individuals stealing from the store. The initiation reason states it correctly, but the grounds slide doesn't state that.</li> <li>• The grounds aren't clear, they are more of a description.</li> <li>• Inadequate grounds.</li> <li>• Good attempt but not clear.</li> <li>• Feedback to officers concerned regarding the detail included in the grounds would be appropriate.</li> </ul>			
<b>Grounds RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b> 50%	<b>Amber:</b> 50%	<b>Red:</b>

Comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CB:</b> This is recorded as a cross-sex search however it appears there is a male and female officer in attendance.</li> <li>• It is difficult to comment and rate on this search as we didn't physically see the search due to the footage available. <b>CB:</b> This is only video available.</li> <li>• It was a very quick and brief search, is this normal? <b>CN:</b> From a point of law, the female suspect was seen putting items in her handbag, as the law goes, if you saw something going into the handbag or pocket, the law says search to the intelligence you have been provided. Therefore, in these circumstances, it is more appropriate to search the handbag or pockets rather than the person based on what has been reported. The suspect also possessed an Apple Pay receipt which matched the items found. They</li> </ul>

have not carried out an in-depth search on the suspect as they have found the items they have been informed about.

- It was suspicious that the female suspect requested to visit the toilet bearing in mind they were walking away from the toilet before they got stopped.
- Could the officers have continued searching under Section 32? **CB:** A Section 32 search can only be carried out after arrest.
- The search was carried out in a very public area. There are plenty of areas to make the search discreet as the female was 'skimpily dressed'. **CN:** You can do a SnS in public view as long as you are not removing more than jacket, outer coat/clothing and gloves as the female choose to dress like that then it can occur in public view. However, most shops also have a private back room therefore it may have been more appropriate to take them into a store and use this facility.

<b>Overall RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b> 100%	<b>Amber:</b>	<b>Red:</b>
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<b>Chair's comments and OPCC Summary:</b>	
<b>Actions arising:</b>	<b>Feedback:</b>
<b>Feedback to officers on quality and content in grounds.</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Incident 3</b>			
Review Date:	25/09/2025	BWV reference:	<b>SS/1590799132/34</b>
Incident Date:	12/08/2025	Incident time:	21:00

**Grounds: Written Assessment**

Did the grounds provide sufficient evidence that a reasonable person would have concluded, on an objective basis, that the stop and search should be undertaken?

**Overview:** Vehicle linked to criminal exploitation of young people. Stopped and searched under Section 1 of PACE.

**Comments:**

- The panel were satisfied with the quality of the grounds.

**Grounds RAG rating:**

Green: 100%

Amber:

Red:

**Comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:**

- The knife was classed as small, was it smaller than three inches? **CB:** The knife was large enough to be classed as illegal.
- The suspects are known to the police therefore suspicious behaviour would be noticed.
- What is the criminal exploitation related to? **CB:** Possibly drugs supply. **CN:** In the car there is evidence associated with drug supply and therefore this may indicate there have been drugs in the vehicle. The drugs are wrapped in small rips of plastic bags which can be seen on the seat.
- There are tools in the back of the car that could be used as weapons.
- The officers did a good job.
- It was very good that the male officer straight away asked for a female officer to be sent, but then when informed it would be so long reassessed and discussed with the female.
- If it common for there not to be female officers close by? **CN:** Officers can be anywhere, here it sounds like the officers are coming from a decent distance, there are likely female officers in Huntingdon station which is closer but then they need to kit up and get out. It is a balance to have female officers nearby; it is more likely you will have female officers closer in Cambridge and Peterborough.
- Should there not be a better push for officers in the station to come out even if it's a sergeant or detective for 30mins. **CN:** This would be a change of culture and possibly need guidance from bosses to say this is now the expectation.
- The search on the female was non-existent. Her clothes suggested nothing was concealed and she was very compliant, so this seemed appropriate for the male officer.



Did the grounds provide sufficient evidence that a reasonable person would have concluded, on an objective basis, that the stop and search should be undertaken?

**Overview:** A cash exchange has been witnessed between two individuals in an area known for people selling stolen goods.

**Comments:**

- Adequate written grounds.
- Good written grounds.
- Self-explanatory grounds.
- Is there a reason why the officers are in plain clothes? **CB:** It could be because they are trying to blend in in an area known for suspicious activity. **CN:** The officers were in a marked van however therefore there may have been a different reason.

<b>Grounds RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b> 100%	<b>Amber:</b>	<b>Red:</b>
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**Comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:**

- **CN:** The items that have been listed as stolen are high value items and commonly stolen to sell.
- What is the difference between theft and burglary? **CN:** The difference between is if an item is taken from a shop it is theft, if an item is taken from a restricted area of a shop such as staff room, it is classed as burglary.
- At the beginning of the interaction the suspect asked for an Italian translator however it did not sound like Italian on the recording. It was clarified that they asked for Italian or Romanian.
- There was discussion as to whether GOWISELY was fully completed. Some panel members questioned that the warrant card was not shown and it said they were in plain clothes. **CB:** It is unclear whether the female officer is in plain clothes as BWV can be worn on plain clothes. If the officer wasn't in uniform, they should have showed the suspect their warrant card to confirm their identity which is stipulated in PACE.
- The items which were taken from the suspects pockets were placed in their shopping bag rather than using an evidence bag.
- The female carried out the search despite their being a male officer in attendance.
- An interpreter was used due to the language barrier.
- If the suspects had been arrested and taken in for questioning, they could have got further information from them, such as names of other offenders.

- Lots of questions were asked that surely need a solicitor, this seems like an interview without the caution given.
- Why were the suspects not arrested? **CN:** This is a key question as the officers have suspected an offence immediately, with the stolen goods identified in the bags prior to the stop search. It is unclear why a stop search was carried out on the person. The most appropriate outcome should have been that they arrested the suspects and interviewed them as there were asked questions which may have been more appropriate under PACE. They asked a few questions which would usually be asked in front of a solicitor. A criminal offence has been suspected, they have found the evidence, therefore they should have been arrested.
- Seizing the money seems severe, what if the person needed that money to live or buy food, there was no follow up of how they would get back home, eat etc. **CN:** If the officers were concerned that the money found on the suspect was from the proceeds of crime, the suspect should have been arrested. During the interview, the suspect would be given the opportunity to provide evidence of where the money came from. A receipt should be provided to the suspects for the items seized and cash taken. If the suspect can prove ownership, they can then get the items/cash back. This also gives more time for safeguarding etc. ensure appropriate transport home from custody.
- **CB:** Guidance given to rate on the stop and search rather than whether the officers have followed the correct procedure regarding arrest and interview though we appreciate that may factor in.
- Search was ok, but there were a lot of anomalies.

<b>Overall RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b>	<b>Amber:</b> 100%	<b>Red:</b>
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<b>Chair's comments and OPCC Summary:</b>	
<b>Actions arising:</b>	<b>Feedback:</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Use of evidence bags</b></li> <li>• <b>Clarify if in plain clothes and warrant card</b></li> <li>• <b>Consider if the person should have been arrested?</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<b>Incident 5</b>			
Review Date:	25/09/2025	BWV reference:	<b>SS/382055532/11</b>
Incident Date:	21/08/2025	Incident time:	03:23

<b>Grounds: Written Assessment</b>			
Did the grounds provide sufficient evidence that a reasonable person would have concluded, on an objective basis, that the stop and search should be undertaken?			
<p><b>Overview:</b> A female has been seen driving at excessive speed. When stopped, drugs paraphernalia can be seen in the car therefore a search has been carried out under Section 23. This is a search of a person and vehicle.</p>			
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would the evidence of drugs prompt a drugs wipe? <b>CN:</b> Not all officers are trained to carry out drugs wipes and they are also costly.</li> <li>• Was the suspect charged for speeding? <b>CB:</b> Not prosecuted for speeding as the officers would not be able to prove this.</li> <li>• The grounds state evidence of drug use therefore that should be sufficient rather than three paragraphs of grounds provided. Other panel members disagreed stating more was asked for and we now cannot criticise. <b>CB:</b> Confirmed that officers cannot search just based on one factor they should have multiple factors to make stronger grounds. Some can write these more concisely but especially newer officers take more writing.</li> <li>• Good written grounds.</li> </ul>			
<b>Grounds RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b> 100%	<b>Amber:</b>	<b>Red:</b>

<b>Comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:</b>
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- GOWISELY completed.
- Friendly when dealing with the driver.
- The interaction was fine.
- The stop/search was adequate.
- Did they know information about the car before? **CN:** Possibly, but officers should not divulge that there is intelligence on their vehicle. This informs offenders that the police are aware of cars they use or areas they frequent therefore this gives the offenders the opportunity to change car or area and continue with their illegal activity. That is why officers will give more general explanation rather than specific intelligence
- **CB:** Panel members are here as a member of the public to scrutinise the footage rather than think along the same lines as the police, we want the opinion and challenge from a different viewpoint such as how they would feel if that was a family member in that stop search.
- Do many people ask for their stop search record? **CN:** Not very often at all. Officers will give details on how to obtain a copy of the search which can either be by email, text message or in person at a station. The officers have nothing to hide with the stop search reports therefore they encourage receiving them.

<b>Overall RAG rating:</b>	<b>Green:</b> 100%	<b>Amber:</b>	<b>Red:</b>
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**Chair's comments and OPCC Summary:**

<b>Actions arising:</b>	<b>Feedback:</b>
<i>None</i>	<i>N/A</i>

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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