



Code of Practice

On the Operation and Use of the Police National Database

**(Made by the Secretary of State for the Home
Department in March 2010)**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Police National Database (PND) is a national information management system that improves the ability of the Police Service to manage and share intelligence and other operational information, to prevent and detect crime and make communities safer. The PND offers a capability for the Police Service to share, access and search local information electronically, overcoming artificial geographical and jurisdictional boundaries.

As a national system, it is crucial that both the PND and the information obtained from it are used consistently across the Police Service and in compliance with legal and policy requirements. This will provide chief officers with confidence that the information they provide to the PND is being used appropriately by other forces. The PND is one of a number of force, regional and national systems available to the Police Service. Before making use of the PND, consideration should be given as to whether it is the most appropriate system to use.

1.2 Purpose of the code

The purpose of this code and associated guidance is:

- a) to promote the lawful and consistent use of the PND and the information obtained from it;
- b) to ensure that chief officers adopt practices for the use of the PND and the information obtained from it in order that such information is used effectively for policing purposes;
- c) to ensure that the operation of the PND complies with data protection and human rights legislation; and
- d) to ensure that the PND is not used in a way which is discriminatory or otherwise unfair to anyone based on their age, race, ethnicity, any faith or belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any disability;

1.2.1 This code sets out the principles governing the use of the PND and any information obtained from it (including personal data). It covers:

- a) the purpose and strategic priorities of the PND;
- b) general principles applying to the operation of the PND, including accountability, security, vetting and training of users;
- c) that the use of information is fair, necessary and proportionate;
- d) that information is accurate and up to date;
- e) that information obtained from the system is managed appropriately;
- f) disclosure of the information; and
- g) using the PND – including access to information, and administering and auditing the use of the PND.

1.8 Guidance under this code of practice

Guidance under this code of practice will:

- a) include Standard Operating Procedures, a Code of Connection, Business and System Rules; and
- b) act as reference tools for users and trainers.

Guidance documents and user guides will be produced by the NPIA.

For the purpose of achieving, throughout the Police Service, the standards described above, guidance issued under this code, unless superseded by regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 53A of the Police Act 1996, may specify procedures to be adopted within police forces for the use of the PND.

1.9 Consultation

Consultation has been carried out by the NPIA in accordance with the statutory provisions.

2 THE PURPOSE OF THE POLICE NATIONAL DATABASE

2.1 Policing purposes

The PND is to be used solely for policing purposes. For the purposes of this code, policing purposes are:

- a) protecting life and property;
- b) preserving order;
- c) preventing the commission of offences;
- d) bringing offenders to justice; and
- e) any duty or responsibility of the police arising from common or statute law.

2.2 Strategic priorities

The PND enables chief officers to make more informed decisions and better risk assessments, supporting the following areas of policing:

- a) Protecting children and vulnerable people, by being better able to understand the risk they are facing, and by more thorough vetting of people in positions of responsibility and trust.
- b) Understanding the threat posed by terrorism of whatever nature, and helping to reduce the risk of terrorist activity.
- c) Disrupting and preventing major, serious and organised crime, helping to reduce the harm caused by the most dangerous offenders.

Chief officers should prioritise the use of the PND accordingly but are free to use the PND for other policing purposes.