



Absentees and Deserters Procedure

Supporting Documents

- Disclosure of Arrested MOD Personnel to Military Authorities Procedure
- [Detention and custody | College of Policing](#)

Policy

[APP Treatment of Offenders](#)

Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 This procedure provides information on how to deal with absentees and deserters.

2. Statement

2.1 Voluntary Surrender

An absentee or a deserter who comes forward voluntarily and surrenders to police need not be brought before a court. A military escort can simply be arranged with the relevant section of the armed services. This does not apply if police seek out an absentee or deserter with a view to arrest and the person then professes willingness to return to unit. In such a case, the person must be taken before a court.

The distinction between people who are arrested and those who surrender must be carefully noted. Apart from some exceptions, personnel who are arrested must be brought before a court, but those who surrender need not.

2.2 Dealing with an Absentee

It is often possible to deal effectively with an absentee without arresting him and bringing him before a court e.g. when merely overstaying leave.

When the absentee appears to be willing to re-join his unit he must be permitted to do so if it is felt that an escort is not necessary. If the absentee is not in possession of the necessary funds to return to unit a travel warrant can be issued by the police. In these circumstances, police must inform the relevant Military Unit, Guardroom, Commanding Officer (CO), or Royal Military Police, whichever may be applicable and ensure they are in agreement with the arrangements. The member of HM Forces must always be informed that such a notification has been made.

Contact Details

Contact details of the HM Armed Forces Services Police departments are contained in the current edition of the UK Police Directory.