International Enquiries Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (144/2026)

## Abstract

This policy and supporting procedures detail the way to approach all enquiries of an international nature to ensure that diplomatic difficulties are avoided and there are no breaches of foreign legal codes when enquiries of a legal nature are made.

## Policy

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Following the UK exit from the European Union (EU) new provisions are in place for international policing and information exchange.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has produced a useful short guide on international policing.

The Joint International Crime Centre (JICC) has published extensive operational guidance and practical information on international criminality on the Knowledge Hub (opens an external website in the same tab) (you will need to log in to this).

Redacted text

This policy standardises the acquisition and provision of international information, ensuring enquiries and working practices have evolved and are monitored and completed in the interests of law enforcement agencies internationally.

It adheres to Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on International Investigations.

### 2. Scope

2.1 The procedures associated with this policy detail:

• The processes for making international requests for evidential and intelligence material;

• How death notifications should be managed;

• How to report a crime in the UK that occurred overseas;

• The international exchange of criminal records;

• Cross-Border Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS);

• Overseas Security and Justice Assistance requests.

• Investigation of crime where there are foreign national suspects and/or international criminality

### 3. Policy Statement

3.1 Surrey Police and Sussex Police support the exchange of police information and law enforcement cooperation to access a range of criminal databases with international colleagues. This enables police around the world to work together to prevent and fight crime and make our communities a safer place to live.

## Procedure

### 1. Overview

1.1 Enquiries in foreign countries which are for intelligence purposes (on a police-to-police basis) only, can be arranged through the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) via a (redacted text) request to Europol (Europe) or National Crime Agency (NCA) UK International Crime Bureau (UK ICB) (rest of the world). For further advice, please contact the International Liaison Officer (ILO) in Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB), the JICC or your JICC Regional Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

1.2 Enquiries in foreign countries which are for evidential purposes are made via a UK-EU Mutual Legal Assistance request (Europe) or International Letter of Request (ILOR) (rest of the world). These will be submitted via Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) directly to an EU country, or via the Home Office (HO) for the rest of the world.

### 2. INTERPOL Notices and Diffusions (I-24/7)

2.1 The I-24/7 INTERPOL system is the mechanism available to UK policing to circulate and receive international information about people, property, documents, criminal groups and methods.

INTERPOL Notices are international requests for cooperation or alerts allowing police in member countries to share critical crime related information.

INTERPOL Diffusions are targeted INTERPOL communications that can be sent to specific countries or groups of countries. Diffusions reduce the risk associated with sharing information with all INTERPOL.

INTERPOL Notices are:

• RED – wanted persons

• YELLOW – missing persons

• BLACK – unidentified bodies

• GREEN – warnings and intelligence

• ORANGE – imminent threat

• PURPLE – modus operandi

• BLUE – additional information

Officers must request a check of I-24/7 when dealing with any foreign national or any type of investigation with an overseas aspect (such as missing or wanted people).

All custody centres, missing persons teams, Violent and Sex Offender Register (VISOR) teams and many operational teams have staff trained to access I-24/7, as well as our Force Research Bureau (Sussex), Data Bureau (Surrey) and ILO in FIB. For more information on I-24/7 refer to APP

Officers can conduct an Interpol person search via the Pronto App which will give information on any Diffusions / Circulations.

**3. INTERPOL Enquiries (non I-24/7)**

3.1 Each member country of INTERPOL has a National Central Bureau (NCB) which acts as a focal point for all incoming and outgoing INTERPOL enquiries. The NCA has the UK International Crime Bureau (UKICB) which provides the UK NCB for INTERPOL. There are over 190 member countries and details of these can be obtained from the ILO.

3.2 Requests for enquiries in should be made through the NCA who will provide guidance, often they have embedded officers in these countries that may be able to assist.

3.3 All INTERPOL enquiries must be submitted on an INTERPOL Enquiry Form.

**Surrey:** This form can be located in the forms section of the Information Hub and should be routed via (redacted) for the attention of the ILO in FIB who can be contacted on extension (redacted), should you need any advice regarding international protocol or assistance completing the enquiry form.

**Sussex:** This should be progressed through the ILO based in the FIB. Advice and guidance in respect of international enquiries can be found within Sussex Police Intranet / Departments (redacted text)

3.4 All enquiries must be routed via the above means and not sent directly to INTERPOL. Any form received by INTERPOL without a reference number and ILO approval will be rejected.

3.5 The only exception to this is with regard to ‘urgent’ out-of-hours enquiries, for example, Compassionate Death Messages or Welfare Checks. Enquiries can be conducted via email or phone through the relevant (redacted text).

3.6 All incoming INTERPOL enquires will be routed through the ILO who will review them and task them out as relevant.

## 4. International Letter of Request

4.1 All outgoing HO enquiries (ILOR) need to be made via the CPS Complex Case Unit.

4.2 All incoming HO Enquiries (ILORs) will be routed through the ILO who will review them and task them out as relevant.

## 5. International Letter of Request (ILOR)

5.1 A letter of request is used to obtain evidential material from other areas of jurisdiction and to request enquiries which cannot be made on a **police-to-police** basis. Letters of request are also known as Commissions Rogatoires.

5.2 Letters of request are generally used to **obtain evidence**, which is not in the public domain or enquiries which require coercive means. This includes the search of premises; seizures of evidence; taking statements; obtaining information from closed datasets; banking information and company records; surveillance and undercover operations; internet records and content of e-mails; and the transfer of consenting must be made clear in the body of the letter of request.

5.3 Letters of request can take considerable time to execute: often months, sometimes even years. The earlier an ILOR is submitted the better. It is possible for ILORs to be transmitted abroad through urgent channels, but this will only be carried out in cases where there is a genuine time limit on the requested enquiries being actioned and the reasons are set out clearly in the ILOR.

5.4 Requests for intelligence, location of suspects or fugitives, family liaison visits and anything else that cannot be fairly described as evidence cannot be made in an ILOR. These may, however, be obtained on the basis of police-to-police enquiries via INTERPOL.

## 6. Brief Guide for Compassionate Messages

6.1 Compassionate messages are a means of contacting the next of kin of a person who may have died or suffered serious injury abroad. The passing of a compassionate / death message is dealt with in the Vienna Convention and should be carried out using the most appropriate channel.

6.2 **UK National with a Non-UK resident** - this needs to be completed via Interpol, using the INTERPOL Enquiry Form, as outlined in 3.3 of this document.

6.3 It is not possible to send a general message, such as ‘touring France in a motor vehicle registration ABC 123’. INTERPOL are unable to make such general circulations. Contact your forces ILO for further guidance.

6.4 **Non-UK National with a Non-UK resident** - this needs to be dealt with via the Consulate of the injured / deceased. In this case the Officer in Charge of the Case (OIC) is to liaise with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) / consulate, not the ILO. In

the case of death messages, it is not acceptable to notify both INTERPOL and the Consulate as this may results in the death message being passed twice. However, in the case of compassionate messages where the victim is fatally injured and likely to die soon, then it is acceptable to go through both INTERPOL and the Consulate to ensure the family is told ASAP in case they have to travel abroad to see the victim. Should there be any difficulty in using the appropriate diplomatic channel then INTERPOL will assist where possible.

## 7. Reporting a Crime in the UK which Occurred Overseas

7.1 Many residents of the UK who travel abroad become the victims of a crime whilst overseas. However, for one reason or another they do not report it to the police until they return to the UK.

The NPCC have created guidance to assist with the process.

• International Crime Reporting Operational Guidance

• International Transmission of victim complaint Guidance on completion of form

• International Transmission of victim complaint.

## 8. Association of Chief Police Officers Records Office (ACRO) Foreign National Offenders Request

8.1 ACRO manages the UK Central Authority for the Exchange of Criminal Records (UKCA-ECR), which exchanges conviction information with other countries.

8.2 Upon arrest officers must establish the exact nature of the subject's status in the UK by contacting the Immigration Enforcement Command and Control Unit (IE NCCU) on (redacted) before submitting an ACRO check.

8.3 If a foreign national is arrested and booked into custody an ACRO check should automatically be sent via the custody procedure.

8.4 In order to obtain previous convictions on a suspect who has not been through custody, defendant, victim or witness who is a foreign national or a UK national suspected of involvement in crime and is known / believed to have spent time abroad, the following procedure is to be followed:

(1) OIC collects personal details from the subject; ensuring sufficient details as required by ACRO are obtained. A list of country requirements is available on the ACRO International Conviction Check page of the Knowledge Hub (Knowledge Hub log in required) as well as held by the Force ILO;

(2) On Niche find your occurrence, under the involve tab open the person record for the subject you will be submitting a request for. Click OCC events / reports tab then right click in the large white space below the tab and select 'new';

(3) Open ‘ACRO Foreign National Offenders check’ form. Complete form and then email to: (redacted).

(4) Response is returned to officer.

**9. Cross-Border Surveillance**

9.1 Article 17 of the Second Protocol to the Council of Europe 1959 Convention on Criminal Matters now governs cross-border surveillance. For further information in relation to this subject please contact your ILO.

**10. Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS)**

10.1 In all matters relating to the Use and Conduct of all CHIS within the UK and over-seas, please contact the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Compliance Unit (RIPCOM).

**11. Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJA)**

11.1 Any enquiries or request made by another country for the provision of security or justice related information, training, capabilities or facilities must be subject to an OSJA risk assessment unless these enquiries are made via EUROPOL or the NCA’s UKICB.

11.2 Anyone receiving such a request must contact the OSJA SPOC in FIB.

**12.** (redacted text)

**Mandatory:**

The (redacted text) investigation plan is **mandatory** in the following circumstances:

**Where a crime report indicates:**

There is a **named suspect; and**

• The subject has a stated **foreign nationality / dual nationality; or**

• It is suspected that the subject is a foreign national / dual national, but it has **not been possible to confirm their nationality** (for example, the initial investigation indicates the suspect might not be a British national, or is a British national with overseas links); **or**

• The **suspect has known links to countries outside the UK**, whether the suspect is a foreign national or not; or

• The **crime itself links with overseas activity**, whether the suspect is a foreign national or not

Where the above criteria are met, the ‘Mandatory International Investigation Plan – (redacted text) must be introduced into the investigative strategy prior to (if possible) or at the point of allocation of the crime to an investigating officer. These actions must be considered by the investigating officer as a minimum and their discharge considered in

the context of ‘reasonable lines of enquiry’ and The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA) 1996

Please note – the International Investigation Plan on the crime report must contain the heading ‘Mandatory International Investigation Police – (redacted text), as this will be used to monitor via Police National Database (PND).

**Non-Mandatory:**

Use of the ‘Non-Mandatory International Investigation Plan’ and tactics may be considered where circumstances dictate it would be useful to. These can be introduced at any point during the investigation and are likely to be considered when the investigation is more advanced.

12.3 (redacted text)

**Team:** Specialist Crime Command.