



Public Order Act 1986

1986 CHAPTER 64

PART III **E+W+S**

RACIAL HATRED

Acts intended or likely to stir up racial hatred

[^{F1}19 Publishing or distributing written material. **E+W+S**

- (1) A person who publishes or distributes written material which is threatening, abusive or insulting is guilty of an offence if—
 - (a) he intends thereby to stir up racial hatred, or
 - (b) having regard to all the circumstances racial hatred is likely to be stirred up thereby.
- (2) In proceedings for an offence under this section it is a defence for an accused who is not shown to have intended to stir up racial hatred to prove that he was not aware of the content of the material and did not suspect, and had no reason to suspect, that it was threatening, abusive or insulting.
- (3) References in this Part to the publication or distribution of written material are to its publication or distribution to the public or a section of the public.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** Ss. 18-21 repealed (S.) (1.4.2024) by [Hate Crime and Public Order \(Scotland\) Act 2021 \(asp 14\)](#), s. 21(2), [sch. 2 para. 1\(2\)](#); S.S.I. 2024/82, reg. 2 (with reg. 3)

Changes to legislation:

Public Order Act 1986, Section 19 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 15 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 4B inserted by [2023 c. 47 s. 1](#)