



Police Act 1997

1997 CHAPTER 50

PART III

AUTHORISATION OF ACTION IN RESPECT OF PROPERTY

Authorisations

93 Authorisations to interfere with property etc.

- (1) Where subsection (2) applies, an authorising officer may authorise—
- (a) the taking of such action, in respect of such property in the relevant area, as he may specify,
 - ^[F1](ab) the taking of such action falling within subsection (1A), in respect of property outside the relevant area, as he may specify, or]
 - (b) the taking of such action in the relevant area as he may specify, in respect of wireless telegraphy.
- ^[F2](1A) The action falling within this subsection is action for maintaining or retrieving any equipment, apparatus or device the placing or use of which in the relevant area has been authorised under this Part or Part II of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 or under any enactment contained in or made under an Act of the Scottish Parliament which makes provision equivalent to that made by Part II of that Act of 2000.
- (1B) Subsection (1) applies where the authorising officer is a ^[F3]member of the staff of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, ^[F4]an officer of Revenue and Customs ^[F5]or an officer of the Office of Fair Trading] with the omission of—
- (a) the words “in the relevant area”, in each place where they occur; and
 - (b) paragraph (ab).]
- (2) This subsection applies where the authorising officer believes—
- (a) that it is necessary for the action specified to be taken ^[F6]for the purpose of preventing or detecting] serious crime, and

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[^{F7}(b) that the taking of the action is proportionate to what the action seeks to achieve.]

[^{F8}(2A) Subsection (2) applies where the authorising officer is the Chief Constable or the Deputy Chief Constable of the [^{F9}Police Service of Northern Ireland] as if the reference in subsection (2)(a) to preventing or detecting serious crime included a reference to the interests of national security.

[Where the authorising officer is the chairman of the Office of Fair Trading, the only ^{F10}(2AA) purpose falling within subsection (2)(a) is the purpose of preventing or detecting an offence under section 188 of the Enterprise Act 2002.]

(2B) The matters to be taken into account in considering whether the requirements of subsection (2) are satisfied in the case of any authorisation shall include whether what it is thought necessary to achieve by the authorised action could reasonably be achieved by other means.]

(3) An authorising officer shall not give an authorisation under this section except on an application made—

- [^{F11}(za) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(a) to (c)—
 - (i) by a member of the officer's police force; or
 - (ii) in a case where the chief officer of police of that force (“the authorising force”) has made an agreement under section 23(1) of the Police Act 1996 with the chief officer of police of one or more other police forces, by a member of a collaborative force;]
- [^{F12}(zb) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(d), by a constable of the Police Service of Scotland;]
 - (a) if the authorising officer is within [^{F13}subsection][^{F14}(5)(e)], [^{F15}(ea) or (ee)], by a member of his police force,
- [^{F16}(aa) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(eb) to (ed), by a member, as the case may be, of the [^{F17}Royal Navy Police], the Royal Military Police or the Royal Air Force Police;]
- [^{F18}(b) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(f), by a member of the staff of the Serious Organised Crime Agency,]
 - (d) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(h), by [^{F19}an officer of Revenue and Customs][^{F20}, or
 - (e) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(i), by an officer of the Office of Fair Trading.]
- [^{F21}(ea) if the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(ia), by a staff officer of the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner.]
- ^{F22}(f)

[^{F23}(3A) For the purposes of subsection (3)(za)(ii)—

- (a) a police force is a collaborative force if—
 - (i) its chief officer of police is a party to the agreement mentioned in that provision; and
 - (ii) its members are permitted by the terms of the agreement to make applications for authorisations under this section to the authorising officer of the authorising force; and
- (b) a reference to a police force is to the following—
 - (i) any police force maintained under section 2 of the Police Act 1996 (police forces in England and Wales outside London);

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- (ii) the metropolitan police force; and
- (iii) the City of London police force.]

[^{F24}(3ZA) An authorisation under this section may be given by the authorising officer within subsection (5)(ia) only where it relates to the taking of action in pursuance of paragraph (b)(i) of section 33A of the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006.]

^{F25}(3B)

^{F25}(3C)

^{F25}(3D)

^{F25}(3E)

(4) For the purposes of subsection (2), conduct which constitutes one or more offences shall be regarded as serious crime if, and only if,—

- (a) it involves the use of violence, results in substantial financial gain or is conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose, or
- (b) the offence or one of the offences is an offence for which a person who has attained the age of twenty-one and has no previous convictions could reasonably be expected to be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of three years or more,

and, where the authorising officer is within subsection (5)(h), it relates to an assigned matter within the meaning of section 1(1) of the ^{M1}Customs and Excise Management Act 1979.

(5) In this section “authorising officer” means—

- (a) the chief constable of a police force maintained under section 2 of the ^{M2}Police Act 1996 (maintenance of police forces for areas in England and Wales except London);
- (b) the Commissioner, or an Assistant Commissioner, of Police of the Metropolis;
- (c) the Commissioner of Police for the City of London;
- [^{F26}(d) the chief constable of the Police Service of Scotland, or any deputy chief constable or assistant chief constable of the Police Service of Scotland who is designated for the purposes of this paragraph by the chief constable;]
- (e) the Chief Constable or a Deputy Chief Constable of the [^{F9}Police Service of Northern Ireland];
- [^{F27}(ea) the Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence Police;
- (eb) the Provost Marshal of the [^{F28}Royal Navy Police];
- (ec) the Provost Marshal of the Royal Military Police;
- (ed) the Provost Marshal of the Royal Air Force Police;
- (ee) the Chief Constable of the ^{F29}British Transport Police;]
- [^{F30}(f) the Director General of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, or any member of the staff of that Agency who is designated for the purposes of this paragraph by that Director General;]
- [^{F31}(h) an officer of Revenue and Customs who is a senior official within the meaning of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and who is designated for the purposes of this paragraph by the Commissioners for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs;]
- [^{F32}(i) the chairman of the Office of Fair Trading.]

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[^{F33}(ia) the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner.]
[^{F34}(j)

(6) In this section “relevant area”—

- (a) in relation to a person within paragraph (a), (b) or (c) of subsection (5) [^{F35}to whom an application is made by virtue of subsection (3)(za)(i)], means the area in England and Wales for which his police force is maintained;
- [^{F36}(aa) in relation to a person within any of those paragraphs to whom an application is made by virtue of subsection (3)(za)(ii), means the area in England and Wales—
 - (i) for which any collaborative force (within the meaning of subsection (3A)) is maintained; and
 - (ii) which is specified in relation to members of that force in the agreement mentioned in subsection (3)(za)(ii);]
- (b) in relation to a person within paragraph (d) [^{F37}or (ia) of subsection (5), means Scotland];
- (c) in relation to a person within paragraph (e) of that subsection, means Northern Ireland;
- [^{F38}(ca) in relation to a person within paragraph (ea), means any place where, under section 2 of the ^{M3}Ministry of Defence Police Act 1987, the members of the Ministry of Defence Police have the powers and privileges of a constable;
- (cb) in relation to a person within paragraph (ee), means the United Kingdom;]
- [^{F39}(cc)
- [^{F40}(d)
- [^{F41}(e)
- [^{F42}(f)

and in each case includes the adjacent United Kingdom waters.

[^{F43}(6A) For the purposes of any authorisation by a person within paragraph (eb), (ec) or (ed) of subsection (5) property is in the relevant area or action in respect of wireless telegraphy is taken in the relevant area if, as the case may be—

- (a) the property is owned, occupied, in the possession of or being used by a person [^{F44}who is subject to service law or is a civilian subject to service discipline]; or
- (b) the action is taken in relation to the use of wireless telegraphy by such a person.

[^{F45}(6B) In subsection (6A) “subject to service law” and “civilian subject to service discipline” have the same meanings as in the Armed Forces Act 2006.]

(7) The powers conferred by, or by virtue of, this section are additional to any other powers which a person has as a constable either at common law or under or by virtue of any other enactment and are not to be taken to affect any of those other powers.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 93(1)(ab) substituted for word “or” (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, s. 75(2) (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, art. 2
- F2** S. 93(1A)(1B) inserted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, s. 75(3) (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, art. 2
- F3** Words in s. 93(1B) inserted (1.4.2006) by Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15), s. 178(8), Sch. 4 para. 97(2); S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), Sch. para. 10 (with art. 4(3))
- F4** Words in s. 93(1B) substituted (15.2.2008) by Serious Crime Act 2007 (c. 27), s. 94(1), Sch. 12 para. 1(a); S.I. 2008/219, art. 2(b)

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- F5** Words in s. 93(1B) inserted (20.6.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), **ss. 200(2)(a)**, 279; S.I. 2003/1397, art. 2(1), **Sch.**
- F6** Words in s. 93(2)(a) substituted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, **s. 75(4)(a)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F7** S. 93(2)(b) substituted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, **s. 75(4)(b)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F8** S. 93(2A)(2B) inserted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, **s. 75(5)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F9** Words in s. 93(2A)(5)(e) substituted (4.11.2001) by 2000 c. 32, s. 78(1), **Sch. 6 para. 20(2)(b)**; S.R. 2001/396, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F10** S. 93(2AA) inserted (20.6.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), **ss. 200(2)(b)**, 279; S.I. 2003/1397, art. 2(1), **Sch.**
- F11** S. 93(3)(za) inserted (25.1.2010) by Policing and Crime Act 2009 (c. 26), **ss. 6(2)**, 116(1); S.I. 2009/3096, art. 3(a)
- F12** S. 93(3)(zb) inserted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(a)(i)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(a)(i)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F13** Words in s. 93(3)(a) substituted (25.1.2010) by Policing and Crime Act 2009 (c. 26), **ss. 6(3)**, 116(1); S.I. 2009/3096, art. 3(a)
- F14** Word in s. 93(3)(a) substituted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(a)(ii)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(a)(ii)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F15** Words in s. 93(3)(a) substituted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, s. 82(1), **Sch. 4 para. 8(2)(a)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F16** S. 93(3)(aa) inserted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, s. 82, **Sch. 4 para. 8(2)(b)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F17** Words in s. 93(3)(aa) substituted (4.6.2007) by Armed Forces Act 2006 (c. 52), s. 383(2), **Sch. 16 para. 146(2)**; S.I. 2007/1442, art. 2(1)
- F18** S. 93(3)(b) substituted for s. 93(3)(b)(c) (1.4.2006) by Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15), s. 178(8), **Sch. 4 para. 97(3)**; S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), **Sch. para. 10** (with art. 4(3))
- F19** Words in s. 93(3)(d) substituted (15.2.2008) by Serious Crime Act 2007 (c. 27), s. 94(1), **Sch. 12 para. 1(b)**; S.I. 2008/219, art. 2(b)
- F20** S. 93(3)(e) and word inserted (20.6.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), **ss. 200(2)(c)**, 279; S.I. 2003/1397, art. 2(1), **Sch.**
- F21** S. 93(3)(ea) inserted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(a)(iii)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(a)(iii)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F22** S. 93(3)(f) repealed (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 8 Pt. 1**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F23** S. 93(3A) inserted (25.1.2010) by Policing and Crime Act 2009 (c. 26), **ss. 6(4)**, 116(1); S.I. 2009/3096, art. 3(a)
- F24** S. 93(3ZA) inserted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(b)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(b)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F25** S. 93(3B)-(3E) repealed (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 8 Pt. 1**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F26** S. 93(5)(d) substituted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(c)(i)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(c)(i)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F27** S. 93(5)(ea)-(ee) inserted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, **s. 75(6)(a)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**

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- F28** Words in s. 93(5)(eb) substituted (4.6.2007) by Armed Forces Act 2006 (c. 52), s. 383(2), **Sch. 16 para. 146(3)**; S.I. 2007/1442, art. 2(1)
- F29** S. 93 amended (1.7.2004) by Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 (c. 20), **Sch. 5 para. 4**; S.I. 2004/1572, art. 3(jjj)
- F30** S. 93(5)(f) substituted for s. 93(5)(f)(g) (1.4.2006) by Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15), s. 178(8), **Sch. 4 para. 97(4)**; S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), Sch. para. 10 (with art. 4(3))
- F31** S. 93(5)(h) substituted (15.2.2008) by Serious Crime Act 2007 (c. 27), s. 94(1), **Sch. 12 para. 1(c)**; S.I. 2008/219, art. 2(b)
- F32** S. 93(5)(i) inserted (20.6.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), **ss. 200(2)(d)**, 279; S.I. 2003/1397, art. 2(1), **Sch.**
- F33** S. 93(5)(ia) inserted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(c)(ii)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(c)(ii)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F34** S. 93(5)(j) repealed (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 8 Pt. 1**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F35** Words in s. 93(6)(a) inserted (25.1.2010) by Policing and Crime Act 2009 (c. 26), **ss. 6(5)(a)**, 116(1); S.I. 2009/3096, art. 3(a)
- F36** S. 93(6)(aa) inserted (25.1.2010) by Policing and Crime Act 2009 (c. 26), **ss. 6(5)(b)**, 116(1); S.I. 2009/3096, art. 3(a)
- F37** Words in s. 93(6)(b) substituted (E.W.N.I.) (1.4.2013) by The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/602), art. 1(2), **Sch. 1 para. 6(2)(d)**; and (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 7 para. 14(2)(d)**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F38** S. 93(6)(ca)(cb) inserted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, **s. 75(7)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F39** S. 93(6)(cc) repealed (S.) (1.4.2013) by Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (asp 8), s. 129(2), **sch. 8 Pt. 1**; S.S.I. 2013/51, art. 2 (with transitional provisions and savings in S.S.I. 2013/121)
- F40** S. 93(6)(d) repealed (1.4.2006) by Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15), s. 178(8), Sch. 4 para. 97(5), **Sch. 17 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), Sch. paras. 10, 13(dd) (with art. 4(3))
- F41** S. 93(6)(e) repealed (1.4.2006) by Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15), s. 178(8), Sch. 4 para. 97(5), **Sch. 17 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2006/378, art. 4(1), Sch. paras. 10, 13(dd) (with art. 4(3))
- F42** S. 93(6)(f) and the word “and” immediately preceding it repealed (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, s. 82(2), **Sch. 5** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F43** S. 93(6A)(6B) inserted (25.9.2000) by 2000 c. 23, **s. 75(8)** (with s. 82(3)); S.I. 2000/2543, **art. 2**
- F44** Words in s. 93(6A)(a) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by Armed Forces Act 2006 (c. 52), s. 383(2), **Sch. 16 para. 146(4)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in S.I. 2009/1059); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F45** S. 93(6B) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by Armed Forces Act 2006 (c. 52), s. 383(2), **Sch. 16 para. 146(5)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in S.I. 2009/1059); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 93 amended (S.) (29.9.2000) by 2000 asp 11, **s. 23(5)** (with s. 30); S.S.I. 2000/341, **art. 2**

Marginal Citations

- M1** 1979 c. 2.
M2 1996 c. 16.
M3 1987 c. 4.

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