WEST MIDLANDS POLICE
Force Policy Document

POLICY TITLE:	**The use and updating of the Police National Computer (PNC)**
POLICY REFERENCE NO:	**Int/09**

Executive Summary.

West Midlands Police performs over ten million PNC checks each year, and PNC use has become an integral part of operational policing.

Over the years, there have been many policies, Part One Orders, handouts etc, concerning West Midlands Police use of PNC, and it was identified that there was a need for all these pieces of information to be brought together in one document.

The guide to PNC Policy and Procedure has been put together for the information of West Midlands Police Employees. It does not supersede the PNC Manual, which should always be referred to for national policy.

Guidance on all PNC matters can be obtained from the PNC Bureau, based at Edgbaston Police Station.

***Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be made directly with the policy contact / department shown below.*

Intended Policy Audience.

This policy applies to every police officer, member of police staff, police community support officer, special constable, volunteer, contractor, and approved persons working for or on behalf of West Midlands Police

Current Version And Effective Date.	**1.1**	**15/06/2015**
Business Area Owner	**Intelligence**	
Department Responsible	**Information Management**	
Policy Contact	**Martin Acott PNC Liaison Manager**	
Policy Author	**Martin Acott PNC Liaison Manager**	
Approved By	**ACC Foulkes**	
Policy Initial Implementation Date	**22/07/2015**	
Review Date	**22/07/2017**	
Protective Marking	**Not Protectively Marked**	
Suitable For Publication – Freedom Of Information	**Yes**	

Supporting Documents

- PNC Policies & Procedures Guidance (West Midlands)
- PNC Manual (National)
- PNC Code of practice 2005
- PNC codes of connection
- College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice Website
- Code of Ethics (http://www.college.police.uk/docs/Code_of_Ethics.pdf)

Evidence Based Research

Full supporting documentation and evidence of consultation in relation to this policy including that of any version changes for implementation and review, are held with the Force Policy Co-ordinator including that of the authorised original Command Team papers.

Please Note.
PRINTED VERSIONS SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON. THE MOST UPTO DATE VERSION OF ANY POLICY OR DIRECTIVE CAN BE FOUND ON THE EQUIP DATABASE ON THE INTRANET.

Force Diversity Vision Statement and Values

"Maximise the potential of people from all backgrounds through a culture of fairness and inclusion to deliver the best service for our communities"

"All members of the public and communities we serve, all police officers, special constables and police staff members shall receive equal and fair treatment regardless of, age, disability, sex, race, gender reassignment, religion/belief, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity. If you consider this policy could be improved for any of these groups please raise with the author of the policy without delay."

Code of Ethics

West Midlands Police is committed to ensuring that the Code of Ethics is not simply another piece of paper, poster or laminate, but is at the heart of every policy, procedure, decision and action in policing.

The Code of Ethics is about self-awareness, ensuring that everyone in policing feels able to always do the right thing and is confident to challenge colleagues irrespective of their rank, role or position

Every single person working in West Midlands Police is expected to adopt and adhere to the principles and standards set out in the Code.

The main purpose of the Code of Ethics is to be a guide to "good" policing, not something to punish "poor" policing.

The Code describes nine principles and ten standards of behaviour that sets and defines the exemplary standards expected of everyone who works in policing.

Please see http://www.college.police.uk/docs/Code_of_Ethics.pdf for further details.

The policy contained in this document seeks to build upon the overarching principles within the Code to further support people in the organization to do the right thing.

CONTENTS

Abbreviations:

PNC	Police National Computer
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service (Formally CRB Criminal records Bureau)
IDENT1	Identification database comprising fingerprint and palm print records
MO	Modus operandi
VODS	Vehicle on line descriptive search
QUEST	Queries using extended search techniques
SIS II	Schengen Information System
COP	College of Policing
APP	Authorised Professional Practice

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. The PNC is the premier national information system available to the Police and Criminal Justice Agencies. Knowledge of what the PNC can do will assist in both preventing and detecting crime.

1.2. Since the arrival of the enhanced Names Application, the PNC has been an increasingly powerful investigative tool. PNC is useful in day-to-day front line policing and the detection of crime and traffic offences. Not only does the PNC give information about people who are wanted or missing, or those with conviction histories, but all arrestees for a recordable offence are now retained on the data base. This gives enhanced behavior indicators for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and has also linked positively to murders, rapes and burglaries as a result of the retention of DNA and fingerprints.

1.3. However, the PNC goes far beyond information simply about people on the PNC - though this in itself can be vital. The PNC can be searched for lost and found property, including firearms, plant, engines, trailers and animals. This policy will explain how the PNC can help in the identification of a wide and diverse range of stolen property, trace vehicles from purely a description - a V.O.D.S. search - and identify a suspect using descriptive M.O. and offence details - Q.U.E.S.T. - to name but a few.

1.4. PNC is a national system and its search capabilities offer additional opportunities to detect offences.

2. OWNERSHIP OF INFORMATION.

2.1. Each piece of information on PNC is identified by a four character force station code (West Midlands' identifiers start with 20). This identifies the owning force for that piece of information and each Chief Officer is responsible for the accuracy, timeliness and relevance of information recorded against their force codes.

3. ACCESS TO POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER (PNC).

3.1. The majority of staff are entitled to request information from PNC. All requests must be for proper policing purposes and sufficient information as to the purpose of the check must be recorded to enable audits to be carried out. Operators must employ prescribed security checks before completing a PNC check request particularly where the requestor is not known to them.

3.2. Staff must only be granted access to those data files for which they have been trained to nationally approved standards

4. UPDATING OF PNC.

4.1. The vast majority of West Midlands PNC records will be updated centrally by the force PNC Bureau based at Edgbaston Police Station. Certain specialist functions (Firearms licensing &, sex offender registration) are dealt with by specialist departments.

4.2. The detailed procedures for PNC use within West Midlands Police are set out on the force intranet at:
http://intranet2/hq_departments/information_services/information_management/police_national_computer/pnc_information/pnc_policy.aspx

4.3. The PNC Manual describes the functionality of the Police National Computer and sets the national standards by which the system must be used. The principles of using the PNC effectively and legally are enshrined in the statutory document 'The Police National Computer Code of Practice', which became mandatory in January 2005. Every attempt has been made to distinguish operating practices and data items that are optional from those which are not and, where appropriate, to include references to legislation and policy.

4.4. The importance of the Police National Computer as the cornerstone of the UK Criminal Justice System, as the primary source of information for operational policing and as an invaluable intelligence tool, cannot be overstated. In view of its current and future links to other police systems, such as the Police National Database for Images, E-Borders, IDENT1, and the Schengen Information System (SIS II), it is essential that the data itself and the processes by which it is managed conform to the rules and guidelines contained in this Manual.

5. SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM.

5.1. SISII is a pan-European database that passes real-time information from one participating country to another, in the form of alerts relating to people and property. Most EU countries (and some non-EU) have access to SIS data. SISII data is available in the UK to all police officers, police staff and law enforcement agents.

5.2. Each member country communicates with the Central Schengen Information System (C.SIS) in Strasbourg in real time. C.SIS is the central hub for circulating alerts to SISII countries. It is from here that all alerts are broadcast to member states. Each SISII country has its own National Schengen Information System (N.SIS) that is a synchronised copy of C.SIS. In the UK officers create, circulate and respond to SISII alerts via the Police National Computer (PNC). SISII data is also delivered to the Warnings Index to protect the UK border. Once created, most alerts are immediately visible across all SISII countries.

5.3. Within West Midlands Police The PNC Bureau are the authorised point of contact between the force and the NCA Sirene Bureau who liaise directly with Europe. Our procedures in relation to Schengen follow those directed by the COP APP available through the below link:

http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/investigations/european-investigations/schengen-information-system/

6. SECURITY OF INFORMATION.

6.1. The security of the Police National Computer is nationally mandated and controlled by the codes of connection and PNC code of practice (available from PNC intranet pages)

6.2. Any suspected breach of security protocol in relation to use of PNC should be reported to information_security@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk or phone 7630 6157. And local supervision

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA).

7.1. The policy has been reviewed and drafted against all protected characteristics in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty embodied in the Equality Act 2010. The policy has therefore been Equality Impact Assessed to show how WMP has evidenced 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Supporting documentation in the form of an EQIA has been completed and is available for viewing in conjunction with this policy.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS.

8.1. This policy has been implemented and reviewed in accordance with the European Convention and principles provided by the Human Rights Act 1998. The application of this policy has no differential impact on any of the articles within the Act. However, failure as to its implementation would impact on the core duties and values of WMP (and its partners), to uphold the law and serve/protect all members of its community (and beyond) from harm.

9. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI).

9.1. Public disclosure of this policy document is determined by the Force Policy Co-ordinator on agreement with its owner. Version 1.1 of this policy has been GPMS marked as Not Protectively Marked.

9.2. Public disclosure <u>does not</u> automatically apply to supporting Force policies, directives and associated guidance documents, and in all cases the necessary advice should be sought prior to disclosure to any one of these associated documents.

Which exemptions apply and to which section of the document?	Whole document	Section number

10. TRAINING.

10.1. All training for use of PNC is nationally mandated and delivered through the force Learning and development department. Staff will only access those areas of the system for which they have been properly trained

11. PROMOTION / DISTRIBUTION & MARKETING.

11.1. The following methods will be adopted to ensure full knowledge of the Policy:

- Force Noticeboard
- Departmental Website
- Input during initial training
- Policy Portal

12. REVIEW.

12.1. The policy business owner Intelligence, maintain outright ownership of the policy and any other associated documents and in-turn delegate responsibility to the department/unit responsible for its continued monitoring.

12.2. The policy should be considered a 'living document' and subject to regular review to reflect upon any Force, Home Office/ACPO, legislative changes, good practice (learning the lessons) both locally and nationally, etc.

12.3. A formal review of the policy document, including that of any other potential impacts i.e. EQIA, will be conducted by the date shown as indicated on the first page.

12.4. Any amendments to the policy will be conducted and evidenced through the Force Policy Co-ordinator and set out within the version control template.

12.5. Feedback is always welcomed by the author/owner and/or Force Policy Co-ordinator as to the content and layout of the policy document and any potential improvements.

CHIEF CONSTABLE

13. VERSION HISTORY.

Version	Date	Reason for Change	Amended/Agreed by.
1.0	14/5/2015	Initial submission for consultation	Martin Acott
1.1	15/6/2015	On advice of HR location of PNC Bureau removed to provide future proofing	Martin Acott
1.1	28/07/2015	Policy approved by CC. Now live & implemented	56408 Couchman