

RETAIL CRIME OPERATION (BIRMINGHAM)

OPERATING GUIDELINES

This document has been prepared for the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. by Mr Chris James (R.C.O. Scheme Manager) and Mr Richard Mytton BSc Hons (Customer Services Manager at the Pavilions) and we would wish to acknowledge the assistance given by the Community Crime Reduction Partnerships and organisations listed below in compiling the necessary information.

Hertfordshire Constabulary, Derbyshire Constabulary, Metropolitan Police, West Midlands Police (Harborne Crime Prevention Initiative), Greater Manchester Police (Stockport Anti-Theft Group), the Data Protection Commissioner, Rhyl Exclusion Scheme, Blackpool Town Centre Retail Radio Link, Worcester Retail Security Group [WRSBG] and Retailers Against Crime in Scotland (RACS).

OPERATING GUIDELINES

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OPERATING GUIDELINES

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this operating guide is to provide a set of working procedures for the members of the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. scheme. It will be reviewed and updated as and when necessary following consultation.
- 1.2 The Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. will be based at the following postal address:

Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd.
Rackhams, P.O.Box 132,
Corporation Street,
Birmingham,
B2 5JS.

TELEPHONE NUMBER 0121-236-7652

FAX NUMBERS 0121-236-5404

EMAIL rco@shopcrime.org.uk

2.0 Membership Requirements

- 2.1 Membership of the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. will require acceptance and signature of the Code of Practice, Data Integrity Agreement and Operating Guidelines
- 2.2 All members who have access to personal data recorded on the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. scheme require to be made aware of the requirements of the 1998 Data Protection Act.
- 2.3 The data and/or information held within Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. files or documentation is confidential and must only be used for the purpose for which it was generated.
- 2.4 Any such data and/or information must not be disclosed to any third party who has not signed the necessary agreements.
- 2.5 The responsibility and potential liability for inappropriate disclosure, rests with the individual he/she has been made aware of these statutory requirements.

- 2.6 Breaches of confidentiality by members and/or their representatives may also be subject to sanctions by the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. **Steering Group.**
- 2.7 Members who have access to the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. data and/or information must sign an undertaking that they have been made aware of their statutory obligations and responsibilities.
- 2.8 A secure cabinet must be used for the storage of all Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. information.
- 2.9 Agreed procedures and methods of communication will be monitored periodically.
- 2.10 The **Scheme Management** or other representatives authorised on their behalf will periodically audit individual members to ensure security and confidentiality.
- 2.11 Any changes to nominated contacts with individual members should be communicated to the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. **Scheme Management.**

3.0 Repeat Offender / Excluded Person Photo File

3.1 Definition

The definition of a **Repeat Offender** and an **Excluded Person** is agreed locally and must comply with the data protection principles for storing and processing personal sensitive data.

3.2 Incident Information

Information will be submitted for collation for the following incidents.

- a) **Shop Theft**
Persons involved in the theft, attempted theft or theft and dump of merchandise.
- b) **Criminal Deception**
Persons who attempt to obtain a refund on goods that have been stolen.
- c) **Cheque Card/Cheque Fraud**
Persons who attempt to, or pass stolen, fraudulent cheques or credit cards.
- d) **Street Crime**
Persons involved pick pocketing, handbag theft, street robbery, anti social behaviour, disorder, and violence.
- d) **Car Crime**
Persons involved in stealing from/of motor vehicles

- e) **Violence/Abusive**
Persons involved in violent or abusive incidents to members of staff or customers.
- f) **Drugs**
Mis-use of drugs

3.3 **Data Accuracy**

Incident details will be audited to ensure that all information remains current and accurate in order to satisfy the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.4 **Creation of the Repeat Offender / Excluded Person Photo File**

When incidents occur, information will be submitted to the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. The **Scheme Management** will prioritise and determine how many persons will be included in the **Excluded Person / Repeat Offender** file. This file will be updated and circulated accordingly.

3.5 **Delivery of Repeat Offender / Excluded Person Photo File**

The **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** photo file will be hand delivered to or collected by each participating member. A receipt signed by the nominated liaison contact will be necessary when the file is handed over.

3.6 **Updating of Repeat Offender / Excluded Person Photo File**

When existing **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** details are withdrawn for whatever reasons the respective pages from the file must be returned to the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. **Scheme Management**.

3.7 **Use of Repeat Offender / Excluded Person Photo File :**

- (i) The photo file must only be used for the purpose of preventing and detecting crime.
- (ii) The contents of the photo file must be treated as confidential by members and only be viewed by management, CCTV operators, store detectives, guards and other **authorised** staff.
- (iii) The photographs are for reference only and not for public or private display.

3.8 File Security

The **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** photo file is to be stored in a locked / secure office when not being viewed and at all times must remain away from the shop / sales floor. The names of all individuals viewing the files as well as the reason for viewing them should be recorded. (Recording sheets will be circulated with files). The reproduction of photo files is prohibited unless authorised by the **Scheme Management**.

3.9 Destruction of Repeat Offender / Excluded Person Photo File

All **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** photo files will be securely destroyed by the **Scheme Management** or by members on his instruction.

4.0 Incident Details

4.1 Definition of an Incident

This is any crime or attempted crime, against any member, which falls within the scope of the scheme (see Section 3.2).

4.2 Recording of Incidents

The Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. scheme will complement member's current security practices. Therefore, all incidents involving **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** or other incidents will be reported.

4.3 Incident Reporting Documentation

Information will be collated on the following incidents –

- Theft resulting in arrest
- Theft where merchandise is dumped
- Snatch where thief escapes with merchandise. These incidents should be reported as a 'crime' to the police, particularly where video footage is available
- Sightings where target/excluded person is only seen
- Theft and deception, e.g. where a theft takes place and merchandise is refunded.
- Criminal Deception i.e. credit card fraud
- Violence, injury to staff or customer(s)
- Disorderly/Abusive conduct
- Robbery
- Vehicle crime
- Drugs mis-use

Incident reporting documentation is supplied to each member. Incidents will be reported using this documentation and forwarded to the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. **Scheme Management**.

4.4 Communication

The Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. **Scheme Management** must maintain a regularly updated member contact list. It is the responsibility of each member to provide this information.

4.5 Video Evidence

Tapes should be retained in compliance with PACE codes of practice and the disclosure rules.

4.6 Clarification of Incidents to be Reported

The following types of incident should be reported to the **Scheme Management** using the incident report form provided.

1. Arrest

If a person commits an offence and is arrested, he / she should be processed in accordance with the normal company procedures and the police contacted. In the case where the offender is a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person**, this information should be indicated to the attending police officer.

2. Theft & Dump

Where a person steals items but subsequently dumps them in the store.

3. Snatch & Escape

Where a known person commits a theft and is not apprehended.

4. Sighting

This is defined as where a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** is seen anywhere in the defined location.

5. Deterred at Entry

This is defined where a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** is prevented from entering member's premises.

6. Theft & Deception

Where a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** attempts to obtain a refund or exchange on goods, which have been stolen.

7. Credit/Debit Card and Cheque Fraud

Where a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** is involved in a fraudulent transaction.

5.0 Data Input/Analysis Procedures

5.1 Data Definitions

- Data means information in a form that can be processed.
- Data Equipment means equipment for processing.
- Data Material means any document or other material used in connection with, or produced by, data equipment.
- Disclosure, in relation to personal data, includes the disclosure of information extracted from such data and the transfer of such data (but does not include a disclosure made directly or indirectly by a data controller or a data processor to an employee or agent of his for the purpose of enabling the employee or agent to carry out his duties;) and, where the identification of a data subject depends partly on the data and partly on other information in the possession of the data controller, the data shall not be regarded as disclosed unless the other information is also disclosed. (Ref: 1998 Data Protection Act)

5.2 Storage of Data

All data / information received by the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. scheme will be stored on the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. database in a locked office. Access to said data / information would be logged in accordance with procedures.

5.3 Input of Data

The Scheme Manager and anyone authorised by the **Scheme Management** will have sole responsibility for the input all data onto the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. database. All data entries will be quality assured.

5.4 Confirmation of Receipt

A register will be kept to record the receipt of data / information. In cases where data / information has been circulated to a point of contact and no confirmation has been notified within 72 hours then the Scheme Manager will seek confirmation. This time limit will also apply to recall requests for **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** photo files.

6.0 Rationalisation of Files

If a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** has not been active within the agreed period (see Section 5 - Data Integrity Agreement), data in respect of him / her will be removed to a dormant file for a further limited period before deletion / destruction. This will not apply where a person is known to have been in prison or abroad over the relevant period.

7.0 Tracking

Whilst a major part of the scheme is the use of intelligence-driven pro-activity against persons who engage in retail and associated crime on an organised basis. An additional component will be the tracking of persons as they move through the criminal justice system.

8.0 Management Information

It will be necessary to establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the operating success of the scheme and provide management information to members and statistics for the scheme.

- Deterred at Entry Reports
- Sighting Reports
- System Management Information
- Store management information
- Other information which might be necessary to support the KPI's

9.0 Additional Security

9.1 Procedures will be in place to ensure full compliance with data protection and other legal obligations. These include: -

Access. Access to the scheme manager's office will be controlled.

Data and Information Disclosure Declaration. This document is to be held by each member and be signed by each individual within that organisation who will receive information from and disclose information to the scheme.

File Movement Record. This document will control the movement of files between the scheme office and each member.

10 Exclusion Notice – Criteria for Issue

- 10.1 Each member's store is private property and management can exclude any person they do not wish to enter for any bona fide reason (provided the reason for the exclusion is not racist or sexist).
- 10.2 A bona fide reason for example would be theft, attempt theft, violence on staff or customer, unreasonable behaviour, continual nuisance, disorderly conduct, mis-use of drugs etc.
- 10.3 Using this principal, where a person is excluded by store management or other authorized person, the following procedure should be adopted: -
- a) A Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. Exclusion Notice is served on the person concerned together with a current list of member's premises. It is good practice to get the recipient to sign the copy Exclusion Order in order to acknowledge receipt. Before this takes place, the following action should be taken: -
 - i. The name of the person to whom the Exclusion Notice applies should be entered at the top of the Exclusion Notice. If it is believed that the name given is false, still complete the Exclusion Order in the name provided and the **Scheme Management** will try to obtain the correct identity at a later date.
 - ii. The "Date", "Name of Person Issuing" (Work No or Collar Number is acceptable) and name of the "Store" issuing should be completed.
 - iii. Where service of an Exclusion Notice is not possible, indicate this on the Incident Report form and the **Scheme Management** will serve it by way of recorded delivery.
 - b) An Incident Report Form is then completed and immediately forwarded to the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. together with a photograph of the excluded person (where possible)
 - c) Upon receipt of the Incident Report Form, the **Scheme Management** will verify that the criteria for the issuing of a Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. Exclusion Notice have been fulfilled. Every effort will be made by the **Scheme Management** to ensure that the issue of the Exclusion Notice is bona fide.
 - d) If the criteria have NOT been fulfilled, the **Scheme Management** will withdraw the Exclusion Notice immediately by sending a letter to the named person.
 - e) If the criteria has been fulfilled, the Exclusion Notice will be allowed to remain and the following details circulated to all member stores at the earliest opportunity
 - o Name of person

- Photograph
 - Name of store
 - Date of incident
- f) An “**Excluded Person**” means that the person named has been served with an Exclusion Notice by one of the member stores and is now banned from entering ANY of the stores detailed on the Exclusion List or any premises displaying the RCO Logo Window Sticker. The whole object of the exercise is to prevent that person from entering a members store and to remove the opportunity for that person to offend again, thus reducing crime.
- g) All members agree that as a general rule, persons who have been served with a bona fide Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. Exclusion Notice will be excluded from their premises until such time as that exclusion is lifted (i.e. twelve months subject to no infringements).

11 Deterred from Entry Form

- 11.1 A “Deterred from Entry” form should be completed when a **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** has been sighted and either refused admission or been required to leave a members store or shopping centre. This form should be sent (or faxed) to the **Scheme Management** as soon as possible.

12 Repeat Offender Sighting Form

- 12.1 A “Sighting Form” should be completed when a **Repeat Offender** is seen (IN ANY LOCATION in Birmingham City). This form should be sent (or faxed) to the Scheme Management as soon as possible.

13 Excluded Person Sighting Form

- 13.1 A “Sighting Form” should be completed when an **Excluded Person** is seen (IN ANY LOCATION in Birmingham City). This form should be sent (or faxed) to the **Scheme Management** as soon as possible.

14 Information Form

- 14.1 An “Information Form” should be completed when any information or intelligence has been gained. This form should be sent (or faxed) to the **Scheme Management** as soon as possible.

15 Incident Report Form – Guidelines for Completion

- 15.1 Staple a photo of the **Repeat Offender or Excluded Person** to the top right hand corner
- 15.2 “Reported by” – Name of person who completes form and where from
- 15.3 “Store Name” – Name of store where incident took place and which floor incident happened if appropriate
- 15.4 Use 24 hour clock for times
- 15.5 “First Seen By” – Tick in box who first saw incident – also include if there are photos or CCTV footage of the incident available
- 15.6 “Crime Status” – Indicate what type of offence has occurred.
- 15.7 “Where Committed” – Tick appropriate Box
- 15.8 “Offender Details” – Enter full name and check spelling
- 15.9 “Name given at time of arrest” – Enter details of name given. Always obtain the full name of the offender (check spelling) and also check to see if they have second or third names.
- 15.10 “Previously Excluded” – To the best of your knowledge
- 15.11 “Date of Birth” - **Estimate age** if details refused or not known
- 15.12 “Address” – Enter Post Code if known
- 15.13 See rear of Incident Report Form for details re IC1 etc
- 15.14 “Hair Colour” – Tick appropriate Box
- 15.15 “Hairstyle” – Tick appropriate Box
- 15.16 “Build” – Tick appropriate Box
- 15.17 “Accent” – e.g. Birmingham, black country etc.
- 15.18 “Distinguishing Features” – Can include tattoos, amputated limbs, speech, peculiarities, scars, body piercing, gait, skin disorder, posture or anything else that makes this individual stand out from the crowd
- 15.19 “Nationality” – Tick appropriate box
- 15.20 “Clothing” – indicate brief description of clothes worn at the time of arrest

- 15.21 "History" – Tick appropriate Box
- 15.22 "Brief Circumstances" – **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT AND SHOULD CONTAIN DETAILS OF THE ACTUAL INCIDENT**
- 15.23 "Vehicles" – Please include details of any vehicle used by the person
- 15.24 "Loss / Cost" – Brief details of any property stolen and whether recovered
- 15.25 "Police Details" – Indicate both date and time police called and arrived
- 15.26 "Crime Number" – Please enter if known
- 15.27 "Supplementary Information" – This includes anything that may be useful in identifying this offender again, pre-warning any other person having to deal with the offender in future, building a picture of the offender as an individual and their method of operation.
- 15.28 **Complete and sign the declaration re service of Exclusion Notice**
- 15.29 **Don't forget to sign it**

16 Security Meetings

- 16.1 A "Security Meeting" will normally be held on the last Wednesday of each month whenever possible and will provide an opportunity for members to send a security representative who will be encouraged to share information / intelligence etc. Details of the venue etc will be circulated via the Ringmaster System.
- 16.1 New **Repeat Offender / Excluded Person** photographs will be issued at the Security Meetings whenever necessary and photograph albums **MUST** be brought to the meeting in order to be updated.

17 Photograph Release

- 17.1 The compilation of photographs are prepared for the members of the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd and its sole working purpose is one of **PREVENTION or DETECTION** of crime by offenders and suspected offenders who commit crime within Birmingham City (and its outskirts).
- 17.2 All material within this document **MUST** remain **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**.
- 17.3 The receiver of this document **MUST** follow the below listed guidelines:
 - a) Keep the document in a **SAFE** and **SECURE** place;

- b) It must **NOT** be displayed in a place where members of the public have access;
- c) Access to the document will be restricted to members of the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd. or other persons specified;
- d) The document is **NEVER PHOTOCOPIED**;
- e) The document is to be returned directly and promptly on the request of the **Scheme Management**.

If all of the above circumstances are met, the disclosure of these photographs is a purposeful and bona fide means of seeking to PREVENT and DETECT crime.

18 West Midlands Police Ringmaster System

- 18.1 The West Midlands Police “Ringmaster” System is a computerized database kept and controlled at Steelhouse Lane Police Station. It allows information to be circulated around the membership by the central computer dialling a pre-arranged telephone number of the members store and passing a message (either pre-recorded or by fax).
- 18.2 Members can use the Ringmaster to circulate their own messages to other members by contacting the Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd.

19 Professional Indemnity Insurance

- 19.1 The Retail Crime Operation (Birmingham) Ltd has taken out Professional Indemnity Insurance.