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British Transport Police Authority

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

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1. Policy statement

The British Transport Police Authority (“the Authority”) is committed to the principles of independent custody visiting as it provides transparency and promotes public confidence in the police. This policy sets out how the Authority will structure and carry out this function.

1.1 Who the policy applies to

This document provides guidance on how the Authority will operate its independent custody visiting scheme. Therefore the guidance contained in this policy is intended to be used by the Authority Member lead, relevant Executive Staff, partner organisations, independent custody visitors and the general public.

2. Purpose of the policy

The policy is intended to provide a framework for the Authority to develop and implement an independent custody visiting scheme as part of good practice. There is a statutory duty for all local policing bodies to have an independent custody visiting scheme, but this does not extend to the Authority, however in the interests of transparency and public confidence the Authority has decided to develop its own scheme.

3. Responsibilities under the Policy

3.1 General Responsibilities

Day to day responsibility for the creation, monitoring, and revision of the policy will rest with the Executive’s Business Manager. The Office Support Manager will be the contact for partner organisations and the initiation of new agreements.

There will be regular reports to the Authority’s People and Standards Committee from ICV partners.

4. Legal framework

In developing this policy the Authority referred to the Police Reform Act 2002, which places a statutory duty on all local policing bodies to make arrangements for and maintain panels of independent custody visitors.

The Authority does not have the same statutory duties under the Police Reform Act 2002 that local policing bodies have to:

- Make arrangements for detainees to be visited by persons appointed under the ICV arrangements.
- Keep their ICV arrangements under review from time to time and revise as appropriate
- Appoint ICVs independent of the authority and force.
- Confer the powers they consider necessary on ICVs.
- Abide by the code of practice as issued by the Secretary of State with regard to the carrying out of their functions.

The Authority is implementing ICV arrangements in the interests of good practice and transparency.

5. How ICV will work for BTPA

Owing to the geographical nature of the British Transport Police (BTP) the Authority has decided that establishing its own panels would be too costly and complex a task requiring considerable management. Therefore, the Authority proposes to approach the local policing bodies those areas where there are BTP custody facilities and negotiate to have BTP facilities serviced by their existing panels.

At the time of writing BTP only has its own custody facilities in London. As such an agreement with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) is in place setting out minimum standards for visiting frequency for each facility, reporting procedures, a provision for an annual review of the service received and any charge to BTPA for the provision of this service. Charges will cover administration costs incurred by the partner organisation such as recruitment, training, resources, insurance, report production, staffing time and volunteer expenses.

The Office Support Manager will be the point for the referral of any issues arising from the ICV reports, having sight of all the reports before they go to the Committee and attending ICV conferences to keep up to date with any legislative changes and best practice.

6. Links to other policies

This policy links with Force Custody Policy, partner organisation ICV policies and the 2002 Police Reform Act.

7. Monitoring arrangements

ICV panels will report to the People and Standards Committee on a quarterly basis. The report to the Committee will include:

- **General Review** - This will be a summary of all visits that have occurred and the main issues arising from these visits. Statistical information from each facility to be collaborated to create an overview of visits and to identify trends.
- **Visits** - A breakdown of each visit and its outcome. Statistical information to be presented, to show if the ICV's have hit their targets and to try to identify if a facility has particular problems.
- **Meetings** - To inform of any planned meetings or events which Members could attend.
- **Important Notices** - To update on any legislative changes or updates to rules and regulations that would affect the ICV scheme.
- **Contact details** - For Members to ask any questions.

The service from our partner organisations will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis. The review will look at the frequency and format for visits, quality of reports and any outstanding issues.

9. Contact Details

For further information on the Authority's independent custody visiting policy please contact us at:

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Appendix A: Custody Facilities

Location	Designated Y/N	Permanent Custody Officers	Number of Cells/Detention rooms	Average Detainees per week	ICV Arrangements
London North 11-17 Brewery Road LONDON N7 9ED	Yes	Yes	20 cells		Yes - BTPA and MOPAC have an SLA
Central London Police Station 16-24 Whitfield Street, London, W1T 2RA	Yes	Yes	8 cells 2 detention rooms	96	Yes - BTPA and MOPAC have an SLA
West Ham Alan Hocken Way West Ham LONDON, E15 3AT	Yes	Yes	3 cells 1 detention room	15	Yes - BTPA and MOPAC have an SLA Closed fro refurbishment
Hammersmith 31 Fulham Palace Road LONDON W6 8A	Yes	Yes	3 cells 1 detention room	8	Yes - BTPA and MOPAC have an SLA
Wembley Park Bridge Road WEMBLEY Middlesex HA9 9AA	Yes	No	8 cells	N/A	Yes - BTPA and MOPAC have an SLA Only open for events at Wembley
Ebury Bridge Police Station 3 Ebury Bridge London SW1W 8RP	Yes	Yes	12 cells	50	Yes - BTPA and MOPAC have an SLA