

SI2717

# International Enquiries

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This Service Instruction gives guidance to investigators in relation to conducting enquiries in the Republic of Ireland and elsewhere outside the United Kingdom.

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## 1. International Policing Unit

International Policing Unit (IPU) is the single point of contact for all International Police enquiries emanating from Northern Ireland.

IPU facilitates:

- Liaison via the [National Crime Agency](#) [Joint International Crime Centre](#) (JICC);
- Liaison with International Law Enforcement partners
- [International Letters of Request \(ILOR\)](#);
- [Extradition](#);
- Mutual assistance via the Foreign Law Enforcement Community
- (FLEC) liaison officers based at Embassies and High Commissions in London.

It is imperative that all incoming and outgoing enquiries to foreign law enforcement agencies in furtherance of Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) investigations are routed through IPU to ensure appropriate governance and accountability.

IPU deals with all matters in relation to International Arrest Warrants within Northern Ireland.

Where an Officer becomes aware that any part of their investigation has an international aspect, the appropriate enquiry should be forwarded as soon as possible.

IPU will review the international enquiry and provide advice and assistance as required.

## 2. INTERPOL Enquiries

INTERPOL is an intergovernmental organisation facilitating International Police co-operation.

Requests for assistance with other countries can be conducted through INTERPOL. Available assistance may include background checks and information for intelligence purposes, requests to record voluntary statements, including enquiries to be conducted on a Police to Police basis.

Requests for assistance via INTERPOL should be workflowed to INTERNATIONAL

ENQUIRIES on an International Enquiry Form (IEF) via Niche.

A comprehensive investigative request should be provided, which clearly outlines the nature of the offences under investigation and the subject(s) involved (if known). The facts should be set out and a clear explanation provided as to what assistance is required. There should be a clear correlation between the report and the lawful policing purpose clearly articulated to satisfy data sharing obligations.

An INTERPOL Notice may be considered to circulate or obtain details of a particular subject. IPU can provide guidance on the best use of this mechanism.

It should be noted that the level of assistance which can be provided will depend on each country's national laws.

INTERPOL for the United Kingdom sits within the [National Crime Agency Joint International Crime Centre](#) (JICC).

IPU also has direct access to INTERPOL for the Republic of Ireland, through An Garda Síochána. Enquiries to be

conducted with Irish authorities should be conducted through this route.

### 3. International Criminal Conviction Requests

Where an Officer is dealing with a foreign national offender it is essential that a foreign criminal record check is carried out. Where criminal proceedings are anticipated, a check should be considered for suspects, witnesses and victims, regardless of the level of offending. Such information will be required by the [Public Prosecution Service](#) to inform any potential judicial process and to satisfy disclosure obligations.

Checks should also be conducted if a subject has declared a previous place of residence outside the United Kingdom; for example, a Northern Ireland citizen with a previous address in the European Union (EU).

Click IPU's International Convictions link to submit a request to ACRO Criminal Records Office for any foreign convictions, which must be completed as fully as possible, noting that some countries have specific requirements as to the information

they require before a criminal record will be released. Once submitted, ACRO will process the request electronically to the requested country.

When the conviction certificate is received, the Officer should include it as part of the case file. Foreign convictions can be taken into consideration at court and should always be requested and obtained in advance of a disposal decision, where possible.

## 4. International Letters of Request

Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) is a means of cooperation between countries for obtaining assistance in the investigation or prosecution of criminal offences. An International Letter of Requests (ILOR) is generally used for obtaining material that cannot be obtained on a Police-to-Police basis and is required for evidential purposes.

Where an Officer requires evidential material from another country, the advice on IPU's webpage on ILORs should be followed and the request submitted on Niche to INTERNATIONAL ENQUIRIES.

The [Public Prosecution Service](#) (PPS) will issue the Letter on receipt of the formal submission from IPU.

It is important that draft ILORs are submitted as early as possible into an investigation as it may take some time for the material to be made available through the formal judicial channels.

## 5. Requests for Extradition

Extradition is the mechanism by which a person is returned to a jurisdiction in relation to criminal matters.

If an Officer is dealing with a matter in which the subject is no longer in the United Kingdom jurisdiction, advice can be sought from IPU on the suitability of extradition powers.

As a person can only be extradited to stand trial or serve a sentence, a direction to prosecute by the PPS must be made before extradition can be considered. Additionally, if the subject has been convicted and cannot be located in the United Kingdom jurisdiction, extradition may also be considered.

Click on the Extradition tab on our POINT page for guidance on extradition. If your case is suitable for extradition, submit an International Enquiry Form to IPU on Niche with full details of; the offence, investigation, court proceedings and details of where the suspect is believed to be now residing.

PPS (International) make the ultimate direction on whether extradition should be sought therefore each application will be assessed individually.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Investigating Officer in each case to make the appropriate and necessary requests to IPU as early as possible in the course of their investigation to ensure international enquiries are conducted expeditiously and diligently.

The response times for each enquiry and country will vary, therefore early engagement with IPU is essential in order to progress enquiries promptly and

effectively. There must be a lawful and legitimate policing purposes established for all international enquiries.

## **Appendix A Contact Us**

### **Service Instruction Author**

International Policing Unit

### **Branch Email**

[zInternationalPolicing@psni.police.uk](mailto:zInternationalPolicing@psni.police.uk)

All requests to International Policing must be submitted using the International Enquiry Form on Niche and Workflow to INTERNATIONAL POLICING.

### **International Policing Unit hours:**

Monday to Friday 0800 - 2100 hrs

Saturday 0800 - 1600 hrs

If your enquiry is urgent, please call ahead so it can be assessed and prioritised.

### **Person Vehicle Index (PVI) call out criteria for out of office hours:**

- Life at Risk
- Major Crime
- Time Critical (Immediate Action is Essential)
- Extradition Arrest (Weekend)