

Cafcass police checks handbook

This handbook sets out how safeguarding information should be obtained in private law applications from: the PNC Unit at the National Business Centre, local police forces, international police forces, military police, and SSAFA.

It incorporates previous guidance documents and also confirms the rules around the retention of information disclosed by these agencies. Information from the police is collected as part of our responsibility under the Child Arrangements Programme to report to the court in issues of risk.

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Contents

When to undertake police checks?.....	4
Police request mailboxes at a glance	4
Level 1/Police National Computer (PNC) checks	5
Requesting a Level 1 check	5
What is the process for requesting Level 1 requests?.....	5
Can requests be prioritised?	5
Repeat and relevant other checks	6
When should repeat checks be commissioned?.....	6
Can checks on third parties be requested?	6
Attaching consent forms.....	6
Do consent forms need to be included on request emails?	6
How often should consent be obtained?.....	6
What constitutes a valid consent form?	6
Attaching court orders	6
When does a court order replace the need for consent?.....	6
What constitutes a valid direction?	6
Does an email from court count as a direction?.....	7
How specific does an order need to be?	7
Additional information for commissioning Level 1 requests.....	7
Additional service user information has been obtained, do I need to commission updated police checks?.....	7
Is consent required for updated checks in relation to a re-opened case?	7
What does 'foreign leg' mean on a PNC print?.....	7
Does PNC show convictions for all of the UK?	7
Level 1 returns	8
How will I know when results are available?	8
What do the tick boxes on a trace return mean?	8
What does it mean if, in the 'additional information' section, a return states 'Please use information with caution', or similar?	8
Why has a request been rejected on ECMS?.....	8
The offence description provided on the results doesn't specify who the victim is and/ or is badly spelled/ cut off mid-sentence; why is this?	9

Who should I talk to if there's a problem with Level 1 check?	9
Level 2/International/Military police checks	10
Requesting Level 2 /International/Military police checks	10
When should Level 2 police checks be commissioned?	10
When should military police checks be commissioned?	10
When should International checks be commissioned?	10
What is the process for commissioning Level 2/ International/ Military police checks?	11
How long does it take for a request to be dealt with?	12
Level 2/International/Military police request validation.....	12
What are the prerequisites for commissioning a Level 2 check?	12
Additional information for commissioning Level 2/International/Military police requests.....	14
Who should send the email commissioning requests?	14
How is the destination police force identified?	14
What constitutes a valid reason for a Level 2 request?.....	14
What constitutes a valid reason for an International request?.....	14
Where should requests be sent for 'out of jurisdiction' checks?	14
Level 2/International/Military police returns	15
How will results be returned?.....	15
How long will results take to be returned?.....	15
Who should be contacted if there are any issues with Level 2 returns?.....	15
What is the process if checks further to those already returned by the Police are required?	15
Further notes on International checks.....	16
How are International checks managed once they have been commissioned?	16
Additional information for commissioning International checks – EU requests only	16
Additional information for commissioning International checks – non-EU requests only.....	16
International checks- hints, tips and other information.....	16
SSAFA requests	18
Onward disclosure of police information	19
Retention of police information	19
Particularly Sensitive Information.....	19
Appendix 1: Home Office serious offence list.....	20
Appendix 2: Example process flowchart for Level 2 requests (Metropolitan Police Service)	22

When to undertake police checks?

The table below sets out when checks should always be taken, and when they should be taken where professional judgment determines such checks are necessary. The table also shows which checks require the consent of the individual, and which do not.

Police checks are undertaken by Cafcass in **private law applications only**.

<p><u>Always check, no consent needed</u></p> <p>PNC checks on all parties in child arrangements order c100 applications</p>	<p><u>Professional judgement, no consent needed</u></p> <p>PNC checks on all parties in other types of C100 applications</p> <p>Repeat PNC checks on parties in C100 applications</p> <p>Enhanced; international; military police; and SSAFA checks on parties in C100 applications</p>
<p><u>Always check, with consent</u></p> <p>PNC checks on people joined as parties after the FHDRA</p>	<p><u>Professional judgement, with consent</u></p> <p>PNC checks on all parties in non-c100 applications</p> <p>PNC checks on parties in any other private law application</p> <p>PNC checks on any 'relevant individuals'</p> <p>Enhanced; international; military police; and SSAFA checks on non-parties, or parties joined after the FHDRA</p>

N.B. Non-C100 requests, regardless of the original case they relate to (for example, in the case of an Enforcement Order or C2 application where additional parties are being joined) will always require consent or a court order.

Police request mailboxes at a glance

Level 1 requests

[PNCNBC](#)

Level 1 advice and request chases

[PNCQueries](#)

Level 2 -English, Welsh, Scottish, UK military police and international- requests

[Level2Requests](#)

Level 2 advice and police communications

[PoliceInfoManagement](#)

Level 1/Police National Computer (PNC) checks

Level 1 checks are carried out by the PNC Team, our specialist unit within the National Business Centre.

The team endeavour to carry out all Level 1 checks within two working days following receipt of a valid request.

When a disclosure has been made results are uploaded to ECMS, which triggers an automatic notification to the assigned practitioner, indicating that new safeguarding information is available for review in the Police Information folder.

Any further queries, requests for advice or chase emails should be sent to PNCQueries@cafass.gsi.gov.uk.

Results not received within the expected timeframe should be chased as early as possible.

Requesting a Level 1 check

What is the process for requesting Level 1 requests? All Level 1 requests, including repeat requests and checks on other relevant individuals must be generated on ECMS from the Reporting menu (Safeguarding letters> Police (PNC) Disclosure) and then sent to PNCNBC@Cafass.gsi.gov.uk.

Subject lines must contain the case name, ECMS number, application and request type, e.g. SMITH-712345-C100-Level-1-request

A new request form must be generated on ECMS each time a check is sent to the PNCNBC mailbox; this will register the check on ECMS as being 'in progress'.

Can requests be prioritised? Requests can be fast-tracked, to be processed within two hours, where there are significant safeguarding concerns (i.e. it is believed the child is at immediate risk) and service manager authorisation has been provided (please add *urgent* into the subject line and notify the PNCQueries mailbox that an urgent request has been submitted).

Requests will not be fast-tracked for any reason other than significant safeguarding concerns.

Repeat and relevant other checks

When should repeat checks be commissioned? Once initial checks have been carried out, there is no protocol for automatic or regular re-commissioning of checks. Any repeat checks must be commissioned based on FCA professional judgement.

The reason for the new Level 1 request must be entered on the request form, e.g. updated checks required due to allegations of recent police involvement.

Can checks on third parties be requested? A check of relevant individuals (who are not parties) can be undertaken where the FCA forms the professional judgement, recorded in the case file, that it is relevant to the safety of the child and the matters before the court. The question of whether an individual is “relevant” is again a matter for professional judgement.

Consent from individuals, or a court order specifically directing safeguarding checks to be undertaken, must be obtained before any non-party checks are carried out. The relevant individual’s details must also be added to ECMS, as a non-party.

Where consent from an individual is required, the individual must be aware that a check is being undertaken each time this is done.

Attaching consent forms

Do consent forms need to be included on request emails? Where consent is required, signed consent forms or relevant court orders must be attached to the request e-mail.

How often should consent be obtained? Renewed consent must be obtained for repeat checks where the previous completed consent form is more than three months old.

What constitutes a valid consent form? Consent forms must be generated using the ECMS template, and the section stating with which agencies checks will be carried out must be clear and accurate.

All consent forms must be completed as fully as possible, and physically signed and dated by the individual.

Attaching court orders

When does a court order replace the need for consent? Court orders that state “Cafcass to prepare a safeguarding letter” or similar wording, provide the PNC Team authority to obtain police information in respect of parties in non-C100 cases.

All other wording (for example “Cafcass to prepare a Section 7 report/Wishes and Feelings Report”) does not automatically include this authority and therefore requests will need to be accompanied by signed consent, or an order that specifically directs police checks to be carried out.

What constitutes a valid direction? Directions for Cafcass to carry out safeguarding checks must be in the appropriate section of the order (i.e. after the heading “the court orders”). Anything prior to the court directions section of the order will be part of the recital and may state “results of safeguarding checks by Cafcass awaited”, or similar. These are not court directions and do not negate the need for consent.

An order appointing a guardian to a case does not replace the need for consent.

Does an email from court count as a direction? An email request from a court stating that safeguarding checks need to be carried out will not be acceptable without a valid court order, unless the email originates directly from a judge.

How specific does an order need to be? All court orders directing checks on relevant others/non-party adults should specify individuals. For example, a direction for checks on “other occupants of shared accommodation” would not be valid.

Additional information for commissioning Level 1 requests

Additional service user information has been obtained, do I need to commission updated police checks? If the new information pertains to a corrected date of birth or an additional previous surname, a new Level 1 request should be commissioned to ensure that PNC has been thoroughly checked.

A place of birth or further address history will not usually affect results already provided, unless the PNC Team have specifically requested these details to be obtained.

Particular attention should be paid to obtaining any previous surnames when contact is made with service users.

All personal information obtained via a consent form or through contact with parties must be added onto ECMS and included on subsequently generated request forms.

If a new current surname is identified and added to ECMS, the previous surname must be added as an alias and not simply overwritten. Overwriting previous names held on file can lead to inaccurate police checks being performed.

Where the comprehensive personal details of service users are not requested and added to ECMS, this can lead to incorrect Level 1 results being returned. It is very important that service user information is updated in an accurate and timely manner.

Is consent required for updated checks in relation to a re-opened case? In continuations of C100 cases that have been re-created on ECMS with the application type “court ordered”, a copy of the original C100 must be provided along with the request to show that a court order or consent is not required.

For parties in non-C100 applications or non-parties/relevant others, standard consent requirements will apply.

What does ‘foreign leg’ mean on a PNC print? This refers to foreign legislation. Foreign convictions may show on the PNC return where there has been a previous request to a foreign authority, or a notification to the UK authorities concerning a UK national who has been convicted overseas.

Does PNC show convictions for all of the UK? Serious offences from Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland are transferred to the PNC, and as such will show on a PNC return. However, these disclosures may not include non-conviction information (such as cases that have been ‘No further actioned’ or found not guilty) as can be found in records updated by English police forces.

Level 1 returns

How will I know when results are available? Level 1 information is returned to local teams via ECMS. The allocated FCA receives automatic notifications via email when the results are uploaded to the 'Police Information' folder. The results will either show a trace, no trace, indicate that more information is required or that the request does not meet consent criteria.

What do the tick boxes on a trace return mean? 'Accompanying disclosure print uploaded' indicates whether a PNC disclosure print has been returned, or whether only non-conviction information has been provided.

If ticked, 'PNC indicates further intelligence held with local force' indicates that the PNC Operator believes that further information/ intelligence is held by local police, in order to assist the allocated practitioner in determining whether a Level 2 check is necessary.

'Immediate safeguarding concerns' will be ticked where the PNC Operator believes that the police information identified requires immediate attention due to safeguarding concerns. The operator will notify practitioners directly, rather than waiting for ECMS notifications to be received, if they believe information needs urgent review.

What does it mean if, in the 'additional information' section, a return states 'Please use information with caution', or similar? This indicates that any information regarding criminal history should be confirmed with the individual before disclosing to the court. This is good practice in any case, however it is particularly relevant when an exact name/DOB/address match has not been made. Where possible, verifying that the information relates to the service user will help to identify if there are any discrepancies with the information provided. For example, the service user's details have been recorded on PNC as an alias only, and the PNC record relates to someone who has been using the service user's details.

In some instances, the PNC Team may be able to provide basic descriptive information that may help to resolve any claims of incorrect information being provided. The allocated FCA should ask for this information via the PNCQueries mailbox if they believe it would be of assistance.

Why has a request been rejected on ECMS? A request will be rejected if:

- More information needs to be obtained to verify a match on PNC

In these circumstances, the service user must be contacted so that the information can be obtained and added to ECMS. An updated request must then be generated and sent to the PNC Team. This information will help to ensure that safeguarding checks are thorough and accurate.

- Consent or court order requirements have not been met

A signed consent or specifically worded court order must be obtained, if not provided originally. A new request form must then be generated and re-sent, with the attached document(s), to the PNCNBC mailbox.

- A request has been generated on ECMS but not received by the PNC Team

If a rejected request has been marked as 'not received by relevant authority', this means that it has been identified through reporting that a request form has been generated on ECMS but not received by the PNC Team. Local teams will be notified of these instances and requests should be re-sent as necessary.

- A request reason has not been included

For all repeat requests, the issues of concern that have led to the need for further checks must be provided, e.g. allegations of recent police involvement.

For each rejected request, a returns document will be uploaded to the Police Information folder that will provide an explanation for the rejection.

The offence description provided on the results doesn't specify who the victim is and/or is badly spelled/ cut off mid-sentence; why is this? Offence descriptions provided within Level 1 return documents are copied directly from the PNC; operators are not responsible for in the contents of the text. For further elaboration in relation to incidents identified, Level 2 checks should be considered.

Who should I talk to if there's a problem with Level 1 check? Please email the [PNCQueries](#) mailbox if problems are found with Level 1 returns. For example:

- A returns form has been returned incomplete or a PNC print appears to be missing
- A service user is disputing information provided
- There is a query regarding the information provided or the terminology used

Any problems will be investigated as quickly as possible by the team.

An email sent to the PNCQueries mailbox in the first instance may prevent delays caused by the commissioning of avoidable Level 2 checks.

Level 2/International/Military police checks

A Level 2 police check is a request by Cafcass for the disclosure, and provision by Police, of any relevant information held on the databases of a local police force(s) including local intelligence, call out logs and domestic abuse records.

All requests for enhanced police information, including Level 2, Military and International police checks, are managed centrally by the Level 2 Team via a single process.

Requesting Level 2 /International/Military police checks

When should Level 2 police checks be commissioned? The decision to request police information further to that provided in a Level 1 disclosure is an exercise of professional judgment, but the following are examples of circumstances in which further police evidence may be necessary:

- When the information from the initial checks suggests there is further relevant information which on its own is not enough to suggest that immediate safeguarding action should be taken, but from which it is inferred that further relevant information may be held by local forces
- When different accounts are provided by the parties. Particularly allegations of violent incidents or other abusive behaviour, whether involving children and/or vulnerable adults, or criminal acts, which are relevant to the application before the court

When should military police checks be commissioned? The decision to request military police information is a matter of professional judgment based on issues of concern, for example, allegations of domestic assault whilst residing in barracks.

The service police bureau do not expect requests to be send solely on the basis that that a person has served in the military.

When should International checks be commissioned? On checking the PNC return, you may find that the subject already has foreign convictions on their record either resulting from a previous request to a foreign authority or a notification to the UK authorities concerning a UK national who has been convicted overseas (in the EU, member states are required to send details to the UK of all UK nationals who have been convicted in that country).

If information is not shown on the PNC return, and you assess that it is necessary to determine whether conviction information, relevant to proceedings, is held by EU or overseas authorities and/or the court has directed that Cafcass seek such checks, an international request should be commissioned.

What is the process for commissioning Level 2/ International/ Military police checks?

All decisions to commission enhanced checks must be sent on the 'FCA Level 2 request' template found under 'Safeguarding Letters' in the Reports menu on ECMS.

Note- do not select the 'Police Level 2 Check' form, this is for use by the Level 2 Team only.



When generating the request, the Police Force that the checks need to be undertaken with MUST be selected from the organisation drop-down, PNC Team MUST NOT be selected.

The FCA Level 2 Request form captures:

- The Case name and number
- The parties to be checked
- Whether Level 1 checks have been returned/reviewed (L2 checks only)
- Whether appropriate consent has been gained
- The specific reason for requesting Level 2/International/Military checks, which MUST include a date/timeframe for the information required.
- The destination police force or country for the checks

The form must then be sent to Level2Requests@Cafcass.gsi.gov.uk with a subject line containing the case name, ECMS number, request type and destination police force, e.g. SMITH712345-FCA Level-2 Request -Warwickshire Police.

The next scheduled court hearing and report filing dates should also be included on request emails if ECMS has not yet been updated with these details.

The FCA Level 2 Request enables the Level 2 Team to ensure that the request for information meets the police/country criteria for sending, preventing any delays further down the line.

Once validated, the Level 2 Team will generate and send a formal request letter to the relevant police organisation.

How long does it take for a request to be dealt with? The request will be picked up by the Level 2 Team within one working day, for validation that the request meets police criteria. This avoids unnecessary delays whilst the request is being processed by the police and ensures that all requests to access sensitive information on service users are adequate, relevant and not excessive.

Practitioners must not generate their own formal request letters to the Police on ECMS; these will be generated by the PNC Team once an FCA request form has been validated.

Level 2/International/Military police request validation

What are the prerequisites for commissioning a Level 2 check?

All parties/non-party adults must be on ECMS. Any service users that are involved in a Cafcass case must be recorded on Cafcass systems.

Consent must be obtained, where applicable. Please see the ['When to undertake police checks'](#) section for guidance on when consent or a court order directing checks to be carried out are necessary.

Level 1 police checks must be completed. This is a requirement for Level 2 checks only. Aside from being a police requirement, Level 1 checks are a valuable early indicator of concerns that may need to be investigated further. If updates regarding recent police involvement with parties are required, up-to-date Level 1 information may provide the required information, or may raise concerns to be included on the Level 2 request.

A specific reason for commissioning the checks must be provided. Any concerns indicating that enhanced checks are required will be raised from interviews with service users, Level 1 disclosures or local authority safeguarding returns. This must be explained in the reason for the request. It is important to include dates, times and any other relevant information (e.g. police reference numbers) regarding alleged incidents.

Some forces have individual criteria, such as:

- The Metropolitan Police Service requires a Service Manager's scanned physical signature to be attached to all Level 2 requests (to be included in the body of the request email if not already on file).
- West Midlands Police require the commissioning Family Court Adviser's scanned physical signature to be attached to all Level 2 requests (to be included in the body of the request email if not already on file).
- Requests to the Greater Manchester Police require address history dates to be provided before a request can be processed.
- Military requests require authorisation by a PNC Team member to be added to the completed request form before a request is sent to the Military Police Service Bureau.

- International police requests require additional information be obtained. The basic mandatory details for International checks to include are:
 - *The reason for the request*
 - *Destination country/ countries*
 - *Name(s), DOB, gender, country of nationality, country of birth, town/village of birth of the individual*

Other useful information to include if possible:

- *Parents' names*
- *Passport number*
- *National ID card number*

Different countries have different data requirements. Country specific mandatory requirements can be found [here](#). This list is updated regularly.

The team will not generate requests that do not meet criteria defined by the Police.

Any questions about the process can be sent to the [PoliceInfoManagement mailbox](#).

Additional information for commissioning Level 2/International/Military police requests

Who should send the email commissioning requests? Request emails must be sent to the [Level2Requests](#) mailbox directly by the commissioning FCA. This will help to make sure the professional judgement behind a request is explained clearly, and if a request requires further work, the Level 2 Team can liaise with the FCA as early on as possible to make sure the request can be validated and sent.

Following this procedure will ensure that the police can process the request successfully, without any unnecessary delays. It will also ensure that safeguarding request progress is recorded accurately on ECMS and that invoices for International requests can be paid promptly.

How is the destination police force identified? Destination forces for requests should be given as the force area or country where police contact is alleged to have occurred. The Level 2 Team can help to identify the relevant destination police force, if this information is unknown to the FCA. Locations of incidents should be confirmed before requests are sent, to ensure that requests are sent only to the appropriate police force areas.

What constitutes a valid reason for a Level 2 request?

For a request to be commissioned, a concern that police contact has occurred must exist.

If police contact is alleged to have occurred then other details (such as dates/ approximate dates) should be obtained from parties, Level 1 disclosures and LA check results to support the Level 2 request. Requests will not be validated if they do not include a request reason. Where checks have been court ordered, basic supporting information should still be provided.

What constitutes a valid reason for an International request?

Requests for international police information are made if Cafcass learns – through the application, WTFH interview, or by other means (such as a direction from the court) – that one or more parties has spent a significant amount of time residing overseas, or is an EU national, or any other non-UK national. International requests can also be made in respect of ‘relevant individuals’, using Cafcass’ criteria for wider police checks.

As much information as possible must be given with regards to any known or alleged involvement with the police in the relevant country.

Where should requests be sent for ‘out of jurisdiction’ checks? Checks for enhanced police information from Wales and Scotland, the Military Service Police Bureau and International police organisations can be obtained using the standard ‘FCA Level 2/Int./Military request’ form via the [Level2Requests](#) mailbox.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has confirmed that no enhanced information will be provided to Cafcass. Where it is determined by the FCA that relevant information may be held by local forces in Northern Ireland (not available on the PNC), the court should be advised that it may consider ordering disclosure from PSNI, or ordering the parties to obtain this information themselves.

Level 2/International/Military police returns

How will results be returned? Returns are sent by the police to inboundpost@cafcass.gsi.gov.uk, where they are uploaded to the case file, in the Police Information folder.

Upon return, an automated notification is sent to the FCA. Local processes are followed for the appropriate safeguarding statuses on ECMS to be marked as 'completed' (this is not done by the PNC Team).

How long will results take to be returned? There is an expectation that Level 2 results from regional police forces in England will be returned within 15 working days, however police forces often experience high demand and have limited resources which unfortunately means turnaround is longer. Weekly updates are provided to senior service area management with details of known delays and any other barriers to processing.

Military checks are usually returned within five working days.

There are no standard turnaround times for International checks.

Requests that have been outstanding longer than the expected timeframe will be reported back to the police by the Level 2 Team so that they can be followed up.

With International requests, ACRO will routinely chase requests on behalf of Cafcass.

Who should be contacted if there are any issues with Level 2 returns? Any queries or requests for advice should be sent to the [PoliceInfoManagement](#) mailbox. Any queries that cannot be resolved by the Level 2 Team will be forwarded to the relevant police contact.

What is the process if checks further to those already returned by the Police are required? If, upon receipt of disclosure, Cafcass requires additional information, a second request should be sent to the Level2Request mailbox, specifying exactly what further information is required.

However, if information is disputed or is believed to be incorrect this should be highlighted by way of a query to the PoliceInfoManagement mailbox as this will usually be addressed more quickly by the force's disclosure unit.

Further notes on International checks

How are International checks managed once they have been commissioned? The International Criminal Conviction Exchange portfolio at the ACPO Criminal Records Office (ACRO) hosts both the United Kingdom Central Authority for the Exchange of Criminal Records (UKCA-ECR) and the Non-EU Exchange of Criminal Records (NEU-ECR). The teams provide an efficient and effective service aimed at supporting non-police agencies in the UK by obtaining criminal conviction information from foreign authorities.

ACRO has the ability to make requests to check for foreign previous convictions for purposes other than criminal proceedings, such as child protection. However, countries respond to these requests in accordance with their national laws and consequently they may not be able to disclose the full record when requested, or may deny the request. The consent of the individual may be required.

Additional information for commissioning International checks – EU requests only

EU member states are only obliged to respond to requests made for purposes other than criminal proceedings in accordance with their national law.

If their national law permits a response to a request of the same nature in their own country, the EU member state must respond to the UK's request within ten working days. There may be a few extra days for processing and translation before a reply is sent to Cafcass.

However, if the EU member state's national law would not permit a response to a request of the same nature in their own country; there is no obligation for them to respond to the UK. The requesting party will be notified if this is the case.

Additional information for commissioning International checks – non-EU requests only

There is no prescribed response timeframe for non-EU countries although urgent cases can be prioritised and the NEU-ECR will chase cases when necessary (i.e. if the request is of an urgent and serious nature). The NEU-ECR can provide guidance on average response rates for individual countries.

International checks- hints, tips and other information

- ACRO should be contacted when there is a dispute as to information held on the PNC regarding offences abroad (e.g. case of mistaken identity).
- ACRO will translate returns if required.
- ACRO has asked countries to indicate whether they will respond to requests relating to child arrangements order applications; Portugal, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Hungary, Australia and Ireland have indicated that they will not respond to requests outside of criminal proceedings. Individuals should apply for a copy of their own record through the relevant national authorities, and not ACRO. The Home Office has produced guidance on this, which can be [found here](#).
- France, The Netherlands and Spain will not process requests for UK nationals or other EU nationals as they have carried out a full historic exchange with all EU Member States and information should be available on the PNC.

If anticipated information is not present on PNC, Cafcass is able to submit a request via ACRO, but only if the FCA holds intelligence to suggest that the subject may have convictions which have not been exchanged.

For example, if a UK subject does not give their true nationality whilst before police or court in France, the Netherlands or Spain, the conviction information will not be transferred to the UK and appear on PNC.

If a situation such as this is believed to have occurred, it is beneficial to have details of any potential convictions (i.e. type of offence, approximate dates, where they occurred, convicting court etc.) so that these can be looked into by the respective country's police force.

- Each request is considered at the time, and the current situation of the country is considered before ACRO decide whether to make the request. However, the NEU-ECR does not make requests to the following countries: Afghanistan; Armenia; Aruba; Iran; Iraq; North Korea; Libya; Palestine; Somalia; Western Sahara.
- Requests to China, including Macao and Hong Kong, Israel and Tibet will only be made in exceptional cases, where it is likely the UK case will collapse if the information is not provided. The necessity for making the request is balanced against the human rights of the individuals concerned.

This information is regularly updated by ACRO so please contact the [PoliceInfoManagement](#) mailbox if you have any questions.

SSAFA requests

SSAFA checks are generated and requested by local teams, these should not be sent via the Level 2 Team as they are akin to LA rather than Police checks.

SSAFA provides a social work service to children, young people and families living in military communities.¹ SSAFA holds information that would otherwise be held by local authorities in the UK. A form for requesting information from SSAFA is available on ECMS.

Cafcass should request information regarding any social work involvement with the parties, when one or more of the parties has resided on a military base within the past five years.

The request should be sent by email with the following information to vetting@ssafa.org.uk:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Service number (for the serving member)
- Children in the household at the time of posting

If this information has not been returned by the date of the hearing then the court should be made aware of this.²

¹ In Great Britain and in five overseas bases: Germany, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Brunei and the Falkland Islands.

² SSAFA should be able to return this information in time for FHDRA if the request is made within 48 hours of Cafcass receiving the C100. However, it is likely that Cafcass is only made aware of one or both parties' military background(s), and service number, through the course of WTFH interviews, which may mean the request is made too close to FHDRA for SSAFA to provide the information for this hearing.

Onward disclosure of police information

The rules around onward disclosure of police information are set out in the ACPO Disclosure Protocol, available on the Safeguarding page of the intranet. Questions regarding specific cases should be discussed with [Cafcass Legal](#).

- Cafcass will not give a direct copy of Police documentation to any parties or their legal representatives. Cafcass will set out relevant information disclosed by police to the court via the Safeguarding Letter or the s7 report.
- Cafcass will disclose information provided by the police to the local authority if there are urgent child protection issues. Cafcass will also share information provided by the police should the court determine that the local authority complete a s7 report. This prevents unnecessary repeat checks being carried out with the police, by the local authority, on the same parties in the same case.

Retention of police information

Police information is always retained for three months from the date of receipt, even if a case concludes earlier than that. This is because repeat checks may not be undertaken if a new application is received within three months of the date when a case closed, unless there is reason to believe that there has been police involvement in the meantime.

Original information, including copied documents, provided by the Police, including international forces, military police and SSAFA, must be deleted 18 months after receipt, or when the case is closed to Cafcass, whichever is the earlier. Where disclosures have been summarised on the contact log or in reports to court, these summaries will remain in the case file.

In accordance with the Case Recording and Retention Policy, the printing of information provided by the police, about service users, is prohibited in all circumstances.

Particularly Sensitive Information

On infrequent occasions, where information is of a particularly sensitive nature, such as intelligence obtained from a Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS), or where disclosure may prejudice a criminal investigation or prosecution or in other circumstances cause substantial harm, but is nevertheless assessed as relevant to a particular case, the local force will write to Cafcass providing the reasoning behind non-disclosure.

This letter can be passed to the Court to make any necessary directions.

If the police want to withhold any information from the parties the court will give them the opportunity to intervene and make their own representations.

Appendix 1: Home Office serious offence list



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS

Home Office Serious Offence List (HOSOL)

OFFENCES TO BE RECORDED ON THE POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER

If the International Criminal Conviction Exchange Teams in ACRO make an enquiry to another country in relation to a foreign national and receive back details of foreign criminal convictions that are the equivalent to one of the UK offences indicated in Annex A below, it should be added to the PNC.

As of the 5th November 2014 if any of the below offences in Annex A are added to the PNC it will act as trigger and the rest of the conviction history can be updated to the PNC record.

ANNEX A

Genocide

Murder

Poisoning/Administering noxious substances

Kidnapping

Rape

Sexual offences against children and mentally disordered persons (including indecent photos)

Terrorism/Membership of a proscribed organisation

Causing explosions/making/possessing explosives

Armed robbery

Child stealing

People trafficking

Possession of firearms to resist arrest

Possession/supply/manufacture/selling/purchasing of prohibited weapons/firearms/chemical weapons/nuclear weapons

Endangering/destroying aircraft/ships with a sentence of 15 years or more

Arson/criminal damage etc endangering life with a sentence of 10 years or more

GBH/wounding with a sentence of 10 years or more

Supply/manufacture/import/export of drugs with a sentence of 8 years or more

OTHER QUALIFYING OFFENCES TO BE ADDED TO THE PNC

As of 5th November 2014, where ACRO receive any foreign convictions, following a request, which meet the below criteria, those foreign convictions will be updated to the PNC.

All sexual offences which fulfil the criteria for sex offender registration under the Sexual Offences Act 2003

A series of offences of GBH and serious ABH which individually do not meet the threshold of the current HOSOL requirements but collectively would (N.B. The series of offences can be considered for update to PNC where the combined sentence for all of the offences adds up to 10 years imprisonment or more. The application of this rule applies to all assault cases.)

Three offences of class 'A' drugs trafficking or domestic burglary committed after 15th August 2010 in accordance with the Sch 17 para 10. Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and allowing for required custodial sentence.

Five offences of other crimes (which have been committed in the past 3 years) not specified in the Annex A list which demonstrates a significant risk from a recidivist offender

Offences of robbery which have resulted in a term of imprisonment of three years or more (N.B. This will cover offences of violence linked to theft)

Any other offences which have been committed where the victim is a vulnerable adult or where a police officer considers the offender has committed what might be identified as a 'precursor offence' (leading to a future serious offence)

Any other offence where the seriousness is viewed in isolation

Any offences which will result in automatic barring from working with children in accordance with the DBS barred list of offences

Appendix 2: Example process flowchart for Level 2 requests (Metropolitan Police Service)

