

WEARING OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND BODY ARMOUR PROCEDURE

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NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY



SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY

WEARING OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND BODY ARMOUR

Owning Department: Training, Learning and Development

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1. Procedure Aim

- 1.1 This procedure sets out the Constabularies' position on the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE), body armour and airwave radios.

2. Applicability

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all police officers, including officers of the Special Constabularies and those police staff who are issued with PPE, body armour and/or airwave radios.

3. Personal Protective Equipment

- 3.1 All police officers will be trained and authorised to carry a baton, an incapacitant spray (see PAVA Irritant Spray policy) and a set of hand cuffs.
- 3.2 These items of personal equipment are issued to protect the officer and others and must be carried at all times when engaged in operational duties.
- 3.3 For officers who carry personal protective equipment on their body armour, it is recognised that there will be occasions when the need to access equipment, such as taser, PAVA and/or baton is greater than the need to have an outer garment fully zipped up for Health and Safety purposes and in compliance with expected standards of dress for uniform. Fully zipped up outer garments, such as the hi-visibility blouson can lead to delays in being able to access vital PPE at a time of need. Supervisors and officers should bear in mind the relevant risks, and a dynamic risk assessment should be made to what the appropriate standard of dress is, relevant to the working environment at the time. For example, in a situation of public disorder or expected violence, it may be more appropriate to have an outer garment unzipped to allow the officer easier access to their PPE. Whereas at a Road Traffic Collision on a fast road, where there is extremely low risk of disorder; it would be expected that the outer garment (hi-visibility blouson for example) is fully zipped up to ensure Health and Safety requirements are maintained.
- 3.4 Only items of PPE approved and issued by the Constabularies should be used, however it is accepted that frontline officers and staff may wish to

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carry non-issue personal items (in addition to the Constabulary issued PPE) that they feel enhance their service to the public. Refer to the Uniform and Standards procedure for further guidance on non-issue equipment.

- 3.5 The serial numbers of batons, body armour, ballistic helmets (when issued) and incapacitant sprays will be recorded at the point of issue for audit purposes. Officers should also record their initial issue PPE serial numbers in their PST Permit Booklet.

4. Body Armour

How should it be worn?

- 4.1 Body armour is to be worn as close to the body as possible. Having the hi-vis blouson or hi-vis lightweight jacket between the body armour and the body is not acceptable.

When should it be worn?

- 4.2 Body Armour is a mandatory piece of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and should always be worn unless a suitable risk assessment has been carried out and is in place.
- 4.3 Due to the various roles and operational requirements, covert body armour may be utilised in place of the overt armour in accordance with the risk assessment for the role/event.
- 4.4 In rare circumstances, with a small amount of specific roles, any form of body armour may affect covert tactics and as such it is acceptable for it to not be worn. This must be in accordance with their risk assessment for their role and the activity to be carried out at the point in time.

Care of Body Armour

- 4.5 It is the officer's own responsibility to care for and maintain their body armour. Regular checks should be carried out by the owner to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

Replacing Body Armour

- 4.6 Body armour should be replaced when the warranty expires – currently ten years from the date of manufacture. (although previously, this has been five years).
- 4.7 If it becomes damaged or contaminated with blood/body fluids or similar then it can be replaced sooner.

5. Airwave Radios

- 5.1 All officers and staff issued with an Airwave handset are expected to have it with them and switched on at all times whilst on operational duty (other than when in court).

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5.2 When not on operational duty, officers and staff must ensure their issued Airwave handset is stored securely within their assigned locker.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role Title	Responsibilities
All police officers	All police officers are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring they carry their Constabulary issued PPE with them whilst on operational duty.• Ensuring they wear their body armour correctly when required, as stated in the procedure.• Ensuring that if they are issued with an Airwave radio, that they have it switched on and on them whilst on operational duty. As well as ensuring it is securely stored when not in use.• Ensuring regular checks of body armour are carried out

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