

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE			
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PORTFOLIO	DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE		
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THIS POLICY REPLACES:	Guidance on the Giving and Acceptance of Gratuities- SOP ref D55133		
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1.3	19 July 2010	N/A	Sammia Ahmad Portfolio Support Policy Team
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GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This procedure provides guidance for and applies to all British Transport Police (BTP) employees, except the Strategic Command Team (SCT), on the giving and acceptance of gratuities.
- 1.2 All gifts and hospitality accepted or declined by the SCT will continue to be recorded and managed by the Chief Constable's Executive Assistant (EA).
- 1.3 This procedure applies to England, Wales and Scotland commencing from August 2010.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During the course of their work, it is likely that BTP employees will receive offers of gifts and hospitality. This SOP is designed to protect the integrity of the BTP and ensure that employees are not compromised by the offering, acceptance or rejection of gratuities. It will enable individuals to work without the fear of accusations of corruption and dishonesty and will protect the reputation of the organisation.
- 2.2 The policy will also provide reassurance and confidence to the public and external stakeholders that high standards and expectations are in place for BTP employees when dealing with offers of gratuities and hospitality.

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Gratuities – can be defined as gifts, loans, hospitality or any other benefit. Throughout this SOP Gratuities will be referred to as Gifts and/or Hospitalities.
- 3.2 BTP employees – can be defined as Police Officers and Police Staff including the extended policing family and those working voluntarily or under contract to BTP.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Individual's responsibilities** - when a gift or hospitality (not falling under section 7.3) is offered any acceptance should be authorised by a line manager (wherever possible). Whether a gift or hospitality is accepted, declined or not authorised, the details in all cases must be passed to the individual's line manager (see [Appendix A](#) which is a process map for this and also Section 6.3 as to what details are required)
- 4.2 Line Manager's responsibilities** - are to assess whether it is appropriate to authorise the acceptance of a gift or hospitality (where it falls outside of section 7.3) offered to their member of staff. Whether it is accepted or declined the details must be noted on the Gifts and Hospitality Log (Template at [Appendix B](#)). This should then be submitted to the Area or Portfolio SPOC (please see [Appendix C](#) for each Area's or Portfolio's SPOC) as soon as practicable and within 28 days from receipt.
- 4.3 Area and Force Headquarters Department Single Point of Contact (SPOC)** – will collate and record information on the acceptance or declining of gifts by any member of their Department or Portfolio. The SPOC will also maintain a log of all Gifts and Hospitality received (see [Appendix B](#)) and ensure timely quarterly submissions to the Professional Standards Department (PSD) Intelligence Unit (IU) at Force Headquarters (FHQ), who will maintain the force register (See [Appendix D](#)). It is not necessary for each Department in each Area to have a SPOC.
- 4.4 PSD Intelligence Unit** – will hold responsibility for collating all the Area Gifts and Hospitality Logs received from FHQ Departments and Areas. These will be placed in the Gifts and Hospitality Register (See [Appendix D](#)) and submitted to the Command Support Group on a quarterly basis. They will also be responsible for taking reports of inappropriate receipts of gifts and hospitalities and dealing with them under unsatisfactory performance or the [misconduct policy](#). Employees can notify PSD of any concerns they have over the receipt of gifts and hospitalities directly in writing to the Head of PSD or by email to the [PSD Intel unit inbox](#) or, through the confidential reporting network [CARS](#), or the [Crimestoppers Integrity Line](#).

4.5 Chief Constable's EA – will be responsible for the recording of accepted and declined gifts and hospitality of any member of SCT.

5 PROCEDURES

5.1 The Prevention of Corruption Act 1906 and the Prevention of Corruption Act 1916 outline situations where a criminal offence can be committed as a result of the acceptance of a gift. Subsequently, offers of gifts should normally be declined, except where there is a valid reason to believe that refusing the offer may damage community and working relationships.

5.2 BTP employees must ensure that:

- Any gifts and hospitalities accepted are justifiable and reasonable;
- The acceptance of gifts and hospitality do not amount to implications that BTP Officers or Staff have gained an unfair advantage or favour as a result of acceptance of gifts;
- BTP Staff do not accept gifts or hospitalities that will compromise their integrity or cause unprofessional behaviour and a neglect of duty, both in fact or insinuation;
- Any gifts or hospitalities (which are not included in section 7.3) accepted or declined are appropriately recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Log.

5.3 It is not necessary to record gifts that are offered on a generic basis, which are always declined. An example of this could be promotional offers sent to BTP employees via email.

5.4 All BTP employees should abide by the seven principles of public life in accordance with the [Nolan Committee report](#). The seven principles are Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

5.5 BTP employees are responsible for ensuring that any inappropriate acceptances of gifts by their colleagues are reported to PSD.

5.6 PSD will investigate any reported or suspected breach of this SOP and related policy statement.

6 GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY REGISTER

6.1 In line with HMIC recommendations and the Freedom of Information Act, BTP maintains a Gifts and Hospitality Register, in which all offers of gifts and hospitality will be recorded. Authorisation by line management should ideally be sought prior to the acceptance of gifts, however it is accepted that this is not always possible.

6.2 The process map outlines the process for the recording of all accepted or declined gifts and hospitality and can be found at [Appendix A](#).

6.3 Where any BTP employee accepts or declines a gratuity over the value of £15 which is justifiable or reasonable and is in line with the Gift and Hospitality Policy it is necessary that details regarding the offered gratuity are sent to the employee's Line Manager via e-mail. The email will need to include the following details:

- The recipient name
- Date
- Description and value of the Gift or Hospitality
- The company/organisation offering the gift or hospitality

6.4 The Line Manager will need to complete the Gift and Hospitality Log with the necessary information and send this to the Area/Portfolio SPOC who will hold a central log of all gifts and hospitality received in their Portfolio or Area. [Appendix C](#) contains the current SPOC list. The Area/Portfolio SPOC will submit the completed Area or Portfolio Gift and Hospitality Log to the PSD IU based at Force Headquarters on a quarterly basis. All Area/Portfolio logs can be sent to the PSD IU using the following email address: GiftsRegister@btp.pnn.police.uk.

6.5 All gifts accepted or declined, worth over £15 must be registered and declared within 28 days to the Area/Portfolio SPOC (See [Appendix C](#) for the list of SPOCs)

6.6 PSD IU will collate all the information from Area and Portfolio Gifts and Hospitality Logs into a comprehensive Register for the SCT to review. PSD IU will ensure the appropriate and relevant disclosure through the publication of the register on the BTP internet webpage.

7. OFFERING AND ACCEPTING GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

7.1 In certain circumstances where alcoholic beverages may be offered to BTP employees, these must be declined whilst on operational duty. If BTP employees are attending a function or event representing BTP, alcohol may be accepted in moderation, upon authorisation from his or her line manager or supervisory officer. It is acceptable that staff may be bought meals in furtherance of a meeting but there should be no systematic taking of such meals. If free accommodation or travel is offered, the force employee should be open and honest and declare this information before such items are received, seeking authority from his or her supervisory officer.

7.2 BTP employees may provide hospitality whilst:

- Reciprocating hospitality from formal visitors to the force
- Acknowledging achievements of staff e.g. award ceremonies
- Providing a forum for the exchange of skills and experience relating to police and professional related activities.

7.3 BTP employees may offer or accept moderate gifts under the value of £15 which will be of a small and intrinsic value such as calendars, pens, stationery, key rings or other small gifts offered during a conference or a courtesy visit.

7.4 Where a BTP employee realises that they would have been disqualified from accepting a gift or hospitality, had they been aware of it at the time, every effort must be made to return the gift and decline the hospitality.

8. DISCOUNTS

8.1 Advantage may be taken if discounts are offered by commercial organisations but only

where such discounts are available generally to large groups of individuals without discrimination (e.g. all BTP employees). However, where discounts are available only to particular individuals or groups of individuals within the larger group (e.g. officers at one police station) where similar offers are not made to other businesses/organisations in the locality, then such discounts must not be accepted.

- 8.2 This rule does not apply to the use of travel facilities provided under normal conditions of employment or special travel offers made to the holders of such facilities.
- 8.3 In relation to frequent flyer or guest program benefits please refer to the section 5.7 in the [Business Travel and Expenses SOP](#). In relation to any other reward points/scheme, voucher or benefit not previously mentioned; if these are given in relation to a business related transaction the benefit should be for the business and not the individual. If in any doubt the offer should be declined and/or advice sought from a supervisor.

9. ENTERTAINMENT

- 9.1 Some organisations offer entertainment to customer representatives such as a day at the races, seats at sporting events etc which may or may not be associated with a business meeting or conference. In all cases any offers of this nature must be declined.
- 9.2 However if acceptance of a gratuity is considered to be of crucial benefit to BTP business interests, then this may be accepted provided the specific written authority of an SCT member has been obtained.

10 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- 10.1 BTP employees must ensure that any conflict of interest with an individual or organisation that causes, influences or has the potential to influence their impartiality is declared to line management.

11 MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS IN RELATION TO THIS SOP

11.1 The records and data maintained in respect of this SOP have to be justified. As such, the Gifts and Hospitality entries will be kept for four financial years from the creation date. At the beginning of the fourth financial year, the first year's data will be deleted.

11.3 The Gifts and Hospitality register will be published in accordance with the Freedom of Information 2009 Publication scheme adopted by BTP. PSD IU will be responsible for publishing the register disclosing gifts and hospitality received and declined by SCT members annually.

12. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

12.1 It is the responsibility for all Area Commanders and Portfolio Leads to ensure compliance with this SOP. Compliance in relation to submission of logs will be monitored by PSD IU through dip sampling and review of submissions. Information from the Gifts and Hospitality Register will be assessed by SCT prior to appropriate disclosure and publication.

13. APPENDICES

- 13.1 Appendix A: Process Map Gifts and Hospitality SOP.
Appendix B: Gifts and Hospitality Log.
Appendix C: Area and Portfolio Single Point of Contact.
Appendix D: Gifts and Hospitality Register.