

General Police Duties
Glynn Hutton & Gavin McKinnon
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Book Review by Sally Ramage

This hefty book has 531 A4 pages, 13 chapters, 3 appendices and a good index. Unusually for the 'series', 'General Police Duties' carries a foreword by Peter Neyroud QPM, Chief Constable and Chief Executive of the National Policing Improvement Agency. As the size of this volume indicates and as Peter Neyroud's foreword states: "The role of a police officer has become more technical and more demanding over the last decades."

The topics covered range from police powers, performance, human rights, community safety and general policing duties. Of particular significance in this volume is chapter 3 on human rights and it can safely be said that no other book describes the Human Rights Act (HRA) in relation to policing as this chapter does. This chapter brought to mind the June 2007 ACPO-APO Annual Conference and the speech made by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer.

He said: "...*Firstly, take the infamous Kentucky Fried Chicken episode. It is widely believed and widely reported that a man in Gloucestershire, while evading capture by the police holed up on the roof of a house whereupon he demanded drink, cigarettes, and food, Kentucky Fried Chicken, apparently - from the police who were pursuing him. A spokeswoman on behalf of the police is reported as saying, and I quote "although he's a nuisance, we still have to look after his well-being and human rights". Two points here. Firstly, it is utter nonsense that his human rights entitled him to KFC on the roof. This was a purely operational matter for the police to decide, whether or not providing him with food would bring about a peaceful and swift resolution to the stand-off. Secondly, and significantly, the incident was reported as the man receiving food because of his human rights...*"

Chapter 3 gives full explanations of the derogations and reservation of the Human Rights Act 1998. The Human Rights Convention is explained, clearly showing how the HRA fits into this. The keynotes include an explanation of the protocols to the Convention and how a violation is proved.

Chapter 11, 'Licensing and offences relating to alcohol' is particularly well-written and the keynotes are crisp and pointed. It is a joy to read. As an example, paragraph 4.11.9.15 is headed 'Failure to surrender items believed to be alcohol'. The offence referred to is 'Failing to surrender alcohol- Confiscation of Alcohol (Young Person's Act 1997, s 1(3)'. We are all 'wise' to the tricks of some teenagers loitering on the streets with cans of soft drinks into which they have previously added Vodka, at least those of us who watch "Nightwatch with Steve Scott" every night on ITV1!

Each and every chapter is comprehensive and the keynotes are excellent. It is of superb quality and content. Intellectual Property law allows me to say that the content in this volume is superior to the well-known weekly police magazine's exam notes. This volume is essential reading for all officers and is a huge credit to this volume's authors Glenn Hutton and Gavin McKinnon.

