

# Police dogs - Guidance overview

This page is from APP, the official source of professional practice for policing.

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This authorised professional practice (APP) provides guidance for the minimum standards for the use and care of police dogs. It is aimed at:

- chief constables
- chief constables of non-Home Office police forces
- dog handlers
- dog instructors
- dog supervisors
- individuals responsible for the welfare, care, management and deployment of police dog teams

This APP sets out the legislation relevant to caring for and deploying police dogs, as well as the training and accreditation required. It should be read in conjunction with:

- the [National Police Chiefs' Council \(NPCC\) Police Dog Standard](#)
- each force's own police dogs strategic threat and risk assessment (STRA)
- local standard operating procedures (SOPs), policies and procedures

It is recognised that situations involving the deployment of dogs often involve a set of circumstances that are constantly evolving. The APP does not intend to restrict police officers from using their professional judgement to take innovative action to resolve incidents effectively in ways that are not included in this guidance.

## Definitions

Definitions used in this APP are intended for the purpose of this guidance and any associated documents.

## Police dog

Any dog in the force's dog unit that is trained, undergoing structured training or being cared for – by or on behalf of the chief constable – for policing purposes. This includes bitches and puppies belonging to the force that are subject to any separate contractual conditions and arrangements.

## Dog handler

Includes designated police dog handlers, police officers who are allocated police dogs prior to initial training and any member of police staff who handles or cares for police dogs in any temporary capacity.

## Dog team

Any dog handler and their respective police dog as a combined team, whether they are accredited or in training.

## Dog unit

An individual force's unit that covers the training, deployment, care and kennelling of police dogs.

## Tags

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