 West Mercia POLICE	POLICY
Security Classification	OFFICIAL
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes

POLICY TITLE	Flying of the Force and the Union Flag on Force Buildings
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP009
Version	1.1

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	BUSINESS SERVICES
BUSINESS AREA	BUSINESS OPERATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	February 2015
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	January 2025
RISK RATING	LOW
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW

West Mercia Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy. Please e-mail contactus@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

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1.00 POLICY

1.01 Policy Statement

The main objective of this Policy is to achieve a consistent approach in the use of the Force and Union Flag detailing the day to day arrangements for flying the Force flag on its buildings and stipulates the occasions when the Union Flag will be flown, identifies the occasions when flags will be flown at “half-mast” and related considerations.

West Mercia Police reserves the right to exercise discretion by their Chief Constable in the application of these procedures.

1.02 Compliance

It is the aim of this policy to ensure that West Mercia Police has a consistent approach on flying both the Force and Union Flag.

1.03 The policies of West Mercia Police are intended to promote equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination and actively promote good relationships regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race,
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity

1.04 The policy has been assessed as having a LOW potential impact using the equalities impact assessment template, by incorporating equality considerations into the policy process, has allowed the force to identify any actual or potential equalities and reduce them as much as possible, by applying the policy differently or looking for alternatives.

1.05 Freedom of Information

On behalf of the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner, the Business Services Department maintains a list of owned and leased property. Inappropriate disclosure of such information has the potential to undermine the effectiveness of the service in its provision of law enforcement and to jeopardise the Health & Safety of staff and the public. Disclosure of this detail will only be made to authorised personnel.
(Freedom of Information Act 2000, sections 31 and 38)

2.00 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

2.01 When the Force will fly the Flags:

The Force Flag will fly daily at Hindlip, Defford and all Divisional buildings with a flagpole.

The flag will fly at half-mast on:

- Funeral of any serving officer of the force, a member of the Special Constabulary or an employee
- Day after the death of a police officer in England and Wales killed on duty.
- The request of the Chief Constable or their nominated senior officer.

2.02 Union Flag

The Force will fly the Union Flag on:

- **9 January:** Birthday of the Duchess of Cambridge
- **20 January:** Birthday of the Countess of Wessex
- **6 February:** Her Majesty's Accession
- **19 February:** Birthday of the Duke of York
- **8 March:** Commonwealth Day (second Monday in March)
- **10 March:** Birthday of the Earl of Wessex
- **21 April:** Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen
- **23 April:** St George's Day (in England)
- **2 June:** Coronation Day
- **10 June:** Birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh
- **12 June:** Official celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday
- **21 June:** Birthday of the Duke of Cambridge
- **17 July:** Birthday of the Duchess of Cornwall
- **15 August:** Birthday of the Princess Royal
- **14 November:** Remembrance Day (second Sunday in November)
- **14 November:** Birthday of the Prince of Wales
- **20 November:** Her Majesty's Wedding Day

Dates as provided by the Department for Culture Media & Sport for Public and Government Buildings.

2.03 The Force will fly the Union Flag at half-mast on:

The death and lying in state of a member of the Royal Family in accordance with the directions issued by St James's Palace at the time.

2.04 Half-mast

To get any flag to the half-mast position it should be raised to the top of the flagpole for a brief period, then slowly lowered until the top of the flag is the height of one flag below the top of the flagpole.

2.05 Cleanliness & Condition

The cleanliness and condition of the flags should be constantly monitored and appropriate steps taken to arrange for the cleaning or repair as required.

2.06 Other Flags

No other flags will be flown on West Mercia Police premises other than the Force Flag and Union Flag unless agreed by the Chief Constable or their nominated senior officer.

2.07 Health & Safety Implications

Weight – The transportation of flags between their respective storage area and the flag pole should be subject of care relating to the lifting and carrying of the flag. Staff are advised to comply with approved lifting techniques to minimise the risk of injury.

There is occasionally the need to lower the flagpole to attend to a flag or the hoisting mechanism. These poles are heavy and accordingly this procedure should only be undertaken if a sufficient number of persons are present to safely lower the pole.

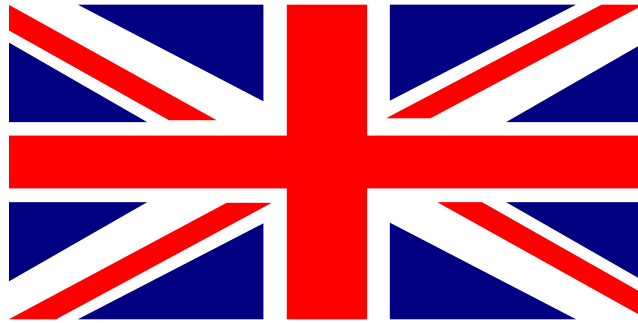
Weather – Prevailing weather conditions should be considered. The risks of attempting to hoist a flag during inclement weather, especially where lightning is possible cannot be underestimated. High winds also present a danger.

3.00 GUIDANCE PROCEDURE & TACTICS

3.01 When notification is received from the Chief Constable's Staff Officer relating to a "death in service" of a serving Police Officer or staff, the Service Delivery Manager will ensure that on those Police Buildings where a Force Flag is normally flown, the Flag be lowered immediately to half-mast in accordance with the following guidelines.

- For a 24 hour period following notification from the Staff Office.
- On the day of the funeral.

3.02 Union Flag – If the Union Flag is to be flown on one of the official occasions it is important that the flag is correctly positioned. On the side next to the flagpole (the hoist side), the thick white band should be above the red band on both diagonals, the white band being part of the cross of St. Andrew, and the red band being part of the cross of St Patrick.



The image of the Union Flag displayed is how it should be viewed in its correct position with the flagpole to the left-hand side.

- 3.03 Special Circumstances – Where special circumstances apply, such as the death of a former Chief Constable or a Police & Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable’s Staff officer will issue the appropriate instructions.

4.00 IMPLICATIONS OF THE POLICY

- 4.01 Legal - There are no legal basis for this policy.
- 4.02 Equalities Act -The Force is committed to ensuring that service users and employees are not discriminated against because of any of the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010.
- 4.03 Financial - There are no additional financial implications for the Police & Crime Commissioners of West Mercia Police in applying this policy.
- 4.04 Health & Safety – Assessments as to the safety of flag poles and the safety of staff in adverse weather conditions are a matter of local responsibility through the Building Maintenance Business Partner.

5.00 CONSULTATION

- 5.01 The draft policy was amended and will be presented to the governance board for approval.

6.00 DOCUMENT HISTORY

The history of the policy will be recorded using the chart below:

Date	Author / Reviewer	Amendment(s) & Rationale	Approval / Adoption
		Previously Approved at Alliance JNCC	29/01/2015
30/11/2019	C. Bailey	Reviewed – No changes reverted back to WMP policy	Nov 2019

07/01/2022	C. Bailey	Amended – Change in half mast policy	Jan 2022
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7.00 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

7.01 The primary duty holder is the Office of the Chief Constable.

The Chief Constable for West Mercia Police – will delegate to the Director of Business Services the overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented and that appropriate funding is made available.

The Chief Constable reserves the right to exercise their discretion by in the application of this policy.

7.02 Director of Business Services

The Chief Officer with functional responsibilities for estates, building matters and staff training.

The Director of Business Services has delegated the task of ensuring that this policy is implemented within West Mercia Police buildings to the Head of Business Operations.

7.03 Head of Service (Business Operations)

Implementation of Force policy and procedures.

Provision of adequate resources for training.

Provide advice and guidance to Senior Officers, Head of Service and Service Delivery Managers as appropriate and as requested.

The Head of Service has delegated the task of ensuring that this policy is managed and implemented to the Service Delivery Managers.

7.04 Business Services – Service Delivery Managers

- Organisation of annual inspections of Flagpoles through the Facilities Managers (OPCC)
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to manage the policy and procedure.
- Identification of any staff training requirements.

Appendix A: Glossary

1.00 The Force

West Mercia Police

West Mercia Police covers the 2,868 square miles of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire. It serves a population of 1.3 million and employs 2067 police officers 162 specials and 1738 police staff (which includes 238 community support officers) and Volunteers 205.

2.00 The Equalities Act 2010 – The nine defined protected characteristics:

