Police officers at ports play a key role in countering the terrorist threat and have powers under Schedule 7 to the Terrorism Act 2000 to examine goods in order to determine whether they have been used in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism.

Schedule 7 is a non-suspicion power and officers do not need to provide reasons for examining any items. The fact that goods have been examined is not an indication that the sender or recipient is necessarily suspected of any wrongdoing.

This leaflet provides more information on the use of the power and further information on how complaints or queries will be handled.

Tackling Terrorism Together

The police acknowledge your support and cooperation. Everyone has a role to play in combating terrorism, not just the police.

The threat of terrorism is real and serious. Recent events have shown that a minority of people seek to commit terrorist offences. The police have a key role in countering the threat and in maintaining national security.

Please remain alert and vigilant at all times. If you are suspicious about someone’s behaviour or activities, or you have information that could relate to terrorist activity, please call the confidential Anti-Terrorist hotline telephone number below.

CALL 0800 789 321
CONFIDENTIAL
ANTI-TERRORIST HOTLINE

Text phone for people with speech or hearing difficulties 0800 032 4539

If you believe there is an immediate risk always dial 999 or 112

Where can I find out more information or make a complaint?

The notice attached to the outside of the goods contains a unique reference number that enables the police to know where the goods were examined and by whom.

You can make a complaint if you think you have:

- experienced inappropriate behaviour from a police officer or member of police staff.
- witnessed in person an incident where a police officer or member of police staff acted inappropriately
- been adversely affected by the conduct of a police officer or member of police staff, even if it did not take place in relation to you

Complaints or queries can be directed to [insert name of Police Force] on [insert Telephone number and website address]

Further information on making a complaint can be found on the website of the Independent Police Complaints Commission at: [www.ipcc.gov.uk/complaints] or on Tel: 0300 020 0096.
There is a Code of Practice that governs how police use Schedule 7. If you wish to see a copy this is available on line at:

http://www.acpo.police.uk/schedule7.aspx

A copy of this leaflet is inserted in small goods items, such as postal packets, examined under Schedule 7. The leaflet seeks to answer some frequently asked questions regarding the use of the power.

What is Schedule 7?

Police powers to examine goods come from Schedule 7 to the Terrorism Act 2000. The use of this legislation is regularly and independently reviewed. The legislation is unique and applies only at a port; at premises operated by a sea or air cargo agent; at a transit shed; or at a location designated by the Secretary of State.

The power allows police officers to examine goods which have arrived in or are about to leave Great Britain or Northern Ireland on a ship or vehicle. The power extends to goods which have arrived at or are about to leave any place in Great Britain or Northern Ireland on a ship or vehicle; or on an aircraft (whether the place they have come from or are going to is within or outside Great Britain or Northern Ireland).

What is meant by ‘goods’?

‘Goods’ includes property of any description (including both non-postal and postal items) and containers.

Why have these goods been selected for examination?

Unlike most other police powers, the examination of goods under Schedule 7 does not require prior authority or any suspicion. The purpose is to determine whether the item is involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism.

Can you retain my property?

Property in transit is normally examined and resealed straight away, which usually results in little or no delay in the delivery process. However, if this is not possible, documents and other belongings found during the examination can be held for up to seven days for further scrutiny. Property can be kept for longer where it may be required for use as part of a criminal investigation or under the Immigration Act 1971.

Will a record be kept of the examination?

The police are obliged to keep a record of all examinations carried out under Schedule 7. This is for statistical and reference purposes in the event of a complaint. It does not constitute any kind of criminal record.

Why has this leaflet been inserted?

Where unaccompanied goods are examined a notice must be attached to the outside stating that the goods have been looked at. Where appropriate, a copy of this leaflet will be inserted into the package to outline the purpose and provisions of Schedule 7, obligations under Schedule 7, key points of the Code of Practice including an individual’s rights and relevant contact details (including those needed to provide feedback or make a complaint).

Is this information available in other languages?

The information in this leaflet is available in thirty other languages. These are:

- Arabic
- Bengali
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Chinese (Cantonese)
- Dari
- Dutch
- Farsi
- Filipino
- French
- German
- Hebrew
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Irish
- Italian
- Korean
- Kurdish Kumanji
- Kurdish Sorani
- Pashto
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Welsh

The translations can be found at:
http://www.acpo.police.uk/schedule7.aspx