

# Guide to Arrestee & Legal Support [A&LS] Back Office

Note: This document supersedes the document known as the Step-by-Step Guide [sometimes referred to as The Back Office Bible].

It has been written on behalf of the Back Office operated by A&LS, formerly known as 'Central Back Office'. Regional Back Offices may operate in slightly different ways: please refer to their specific documentation.

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# 1. Functions of A&LS Back Office



The main functions are to:

- Compile and maintain a record of arrestees during an action
- Arrange for supporters at police stations to which arrestees have been taken
- Respond to phone calls to Back Office, mainly from: people reporting arrests; arrestees (custody calls); friends and family members of arrestees; people reporting on incidents such as police misbehaviour; rebels with legal questions

As well as the specific training links elsewhere in this document there is a Module on the Rebellion Academy that will enhance your knowledge of Back Office and its training:

<https://uk.rebellion.academy/course/view.php?id=50>

# 2. Structure of Back Office

## During an Action

A&LS Back Office (**A&LS BO**) is staffed by volunteers under the supervision of members of the Arrestee & Legal Support (A&LS) Back Office (BO) team. These are the main volunteer roles:

- Back Office Coordinator (**BOC**)
- Back Office Volunteer (**BOV**)
- Police Station Support Coordinator (**PSSC**)
- Police Station Support (**PSS**)

**BOC** The BOC tries to ensure that there are enough volunteers covering the phones during planned actions. They will help trouble-shoot any technical issues with systems and answer volunteer enquiries.

**BOV** The BOV takes arrestee calls either from their phones or from the police station. They work with a structured script and note down details to questions asked of either the arrestee or a police officer into 'ArrestWatch' software. Ideally, there will be two BOV's available for any shift. The shifts are managed via a spreadsheet made available.

**PSSC** The PSSC will help coordinate cover for when a police station 'goes live', i.e. when a rebel is arrested and the police station they are taken to becomes known. They work out the shifts with volunteers.

**PSS** A PSS volunteer will attend the police station for up to 6 hours at a time to wait for when an arrestee is released. They will offer moral support, snacks, a warm drink and a lift to where the arrestee needs to be taken. Ideally, two people will be on shift at any time.

Normally volunteers take only one of these roles per shift. However, we welcome volunteers willing to be trained for both **BOV and PSSC** roles; this enables flexibility, including the possibility of taking both roles simultaneously during quiet shifts.

The **supervisor** is known as the **Back Office Coordinator (BOC)**, and is volunteer's point of contact for enquiries during a shift. The BOC will also oversee workflow, ensure an even distribution of responsibilities during the shift and answer queries via relevant chat channels arising.

**LSL** There may also be access to a Legal Support Line (**LSL**), staffed by a member of XR Legal Support, to whom enquiries of a legal nature can be referred.

## Communication

**Email.** Enquiries from volunteers can be made to the Back Office inbox (address in s.9 below), staffed by a member of the A&LS BO team.

**Signal** Short-term Signal groups are set up in association with specific actions. These channels can also be used for some kinds of enquiry. There are additional ways of communicating while on shift.

**Whatsapp** When a police station becomes 'live', i.e. an arrestee is detained there, a Whatsapp channel will be opened to share information.

**Zoom** Zoom may or may not be used for BO volunteers to hang out and get questions answered, get to know each other and have a laugh too.

## **Between Mass Actions**

We currently aim to run a 24/7 Back Office service, staffed by members of the A&LS BO team, augmented on a short-term basis by volunteers if necessary for a particular action. The BO inbox is also staffed throughout the year.

## **Relationships With Regional AS Systems**

Systems may vary from region to region. Systems are evolving and there is no general model. Currently, negotiations happen with regions from time to time, albeit this is likely to become more of the norm throughout 2023, with the localised focus for many actions, according to the latest Action Strategy.

# 3. Recruitment

Recruitment is usually carried out intermittently, but particularly is associated with mass actions.

- Roles will be advertised widely, using XR's communication channels.
- No experience is necessary, though some familiarity with XR's arrestee support systems is helpful. (Especially, as we want our arrestees to feel confident and reassured they are being supported and valued!)
- Volunteers are invited to offer 3 or 6-hour shifts, which will be coordinated in a rota.
- The majority of volunteers prefer to work from home, though there is sometimes a possibility of working from a physical Back Office.
- Volunteers will need access to a computer, tablet or smartphone with a reliable internet connection. They will need to be able to access Zoom.
- The Back Office Volunteer [BOV] role involves using a software-based phone system (3CX). Volunteers who rely on hearing aids are asked to ensure their compatibility with this system.
- A device being used to access 3CX will need to have a microphone.
- BOVs will also need to access Signal.
- The Police Station Support Coordinator [PSSC] role relies on the use of WhatsApp and Signal groups. Volunteers are asked to familiarise themselves with both platforms.

# 4. Training

**Training mainly comprises videos and documentation, supplemented by live sessions via Zoom.**

## Written and other online resources

- This guide for Back Office Volunteers [BOVs] and Police Station Support Coordinators [PSSCs]
- [Custody Call guidelines \(for BOVs\)](#)
- [Custody call summary/script \(for BOVs\)](#)
- [3CX guidelines](#)
- **ArrestWatch playground (page 6 ArrestWatch refers to):**
  - [Arrest report](#)
  - [Release report](#)
  - [Back Office](#) (BO)

## Training videos

- [BO overview](#)
- [Back Office Volunteer](#) (covers use of ArrestWatch, custody calls, typical calls) This video was made in 2020, see [these notes](#) for changes.
- [Custody calls](#)
- [3CX](#)
- [PSSC](#)
- [Police Station Supporter \(PSS\)](#) - Short version
- [PSS Long version](#)
- [Witnessing an arrest \(short version\)](#): although made some time ago, this video remains up to date, the upgraded BO phone system [3CX] can deal with multiple calls and we prefer custody calls to be made to BO.
- [Witnessing an arrest \(long version\)](#) Password: ProsecutePolluters: although made some time ago, this video remains up to date, the upgraded BO phone system [3CX] can deal with multiple calls and we prefer custody calls to be made to BO.

## **Live Training**

Live training sessions, via Zoom, are provided in advance of mass actions. These will be publicised widely within XR's communication channels.

Live sessions may include:

- Supplementary to the documents and videos, including a focus on the two main roles and with an opportunity to ask questions.
- Custody Call training: optional session, to ensure competence in handling a call.
- 3CX training

# 5. Security and Data Protection

Volunteers are handling sensitive personal information and are required to confirm that they understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This is done by reading and signing XR's online [Volunteer Agreement](#).

Please sign with the e-mail address you provide to Back Office, to facilitate checks.

**Remember that you've agreed to protect the privacy of arrestees, and don't share any of the information you receive with anyone outside Back Office.**

# 6. ArrestWatch

This is the database used during and after an action to record information about arrestees, legal observers, and calls associated with the action. Information can be entered manually or, in the case of an arrest or release, via an online form.

Trainees can practise using the forms and database via the [ArrestWatch playground](#).

Username and passwords for BOVs and PSSCs respectively are: **bov**, **bovbov**; and **pssc**, **pssc**.

**Please don't change these!**

The **Arrest Report Form** is at <https://playground.arrestwatch.info>. The **release form** is at <https://playground.arrestwatch.info/pss>.

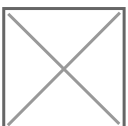
Below is what the real entry window looks like. Obviously, the call handler will choose whether the report is from a third party, ("Somebody else's arretst") or the arrestee ("My own").



## Manual Record Entries

Read the available [Guidance for recording Custody Suite Call information](#).

- **Legal Observers** (LO's) may call BO to report that they've come on shift, or are going off shift, (albeit reporting for duty generally happens via Signal messaging). LO's may also share reports of arrests they have witnessed. Record entries are inputted to 'ArrestWatch' software by BOV's
- **Arrestees** may call in from the police station custody suite. They will share information such as time of arrest, physical or mental distress issues, officer ID and so on. (There is a prompt script, listing issues for BOV's to work through on a call).
- All entries in the Call Log are made manually by a BOV
- Information entered via the online forms can be edited manually, as further information becomes available about an Arrestee.



- **Data Collated.** A BOV will work through each of the data fields in each column, filling in detail. This is important potentially for future legal cases, so accuracy is vital (e.g. spelling of place names, arrestee name spelling, officer ID number).
- **Police Station Data.** Note that the 'Search' facility in the Report dropdown list allows filtering by police station, but is dependent on the use of exact spelling.

## Online Entries

- **Reports of arrests** (even if called in) are entered via the form at <https://arrestwatch.info/> This link is widely available
- **Reports of releases** are also submitted via an online form: <https://arrestwatch.info/pss>

## Access

There are three levels of access to the information currently held in ArrestWatch, all accessed here: <https://backoffice.arrestwatch.info/login>

Volunteers will be allocated a login, with the appropriate level of access, after completing the training required by A&LS policy.

- PSSCs: Level 1 (Arrest reports, the call log and the LO log)
- BOVs and some BOCs: Level 2 (Level 1 + Release reports)
- Some BOCs and the ArrestWatch Admins: Level 3 (Level 2 + record of ArrestWatch users)
- Tech team: Level 4 (Level 3 + access to archived data)

# 7. Back Office Volunteer (BOV)

**The BOV role:** involves taking phone calls via **3CX**, an online software-based private branch exchange phone system.

Below is a screenshot where one person was searched for from a list of potential volunteers. For security purposes we could not show the full screen of volunteers. However, what is worth noting is that Sammy has a 3-figure extension number, as do all volunteers, so we can look each other up by name or extension number.

Notice, top left, next to the word 'Team' the BOV volunteer status is green, meaning they are **on duty** and **available for calls** coming in. Sammy is also available for calls. The system also allows both users to call or message each other, via the menu of icons to the right of Sammy's name.

At the end of a BOV's shift they **MUST always reset their status** to '**Do Not Disturb**'.



Calls to BO may come from:

- **Legal Observers** (LOs) - logging on or off shifts, or reporting arrests or incidents involving adverse police behaviour
- **Rebels at an action**, reporting arrests or police behaviour
- **Rebels in custody** (custody calls)
- **Rebels, family or friends with legal-related questions**
- **Rebels, family or friends requesting information about rebels involved in an action**
- **Police Station Supporters** (PSS) asking for advice (occasionally)

BOVs usually work in shifts of 3 or 6 hours, and at busy times several BOVs will be on shift together so the workload will be shared. On-shift support will be available from the Back Office Coordinator (BOC), via either a Signal chat, Zoom calls, or phone calls.

## **Training** involves

- Reading this guide and related documents linked within it

- Initial training, via video: <https://youtu.be/eckKCBdrdE4> with accompanying notes: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PR7uqV8kEhAUL1CDrNOpRONZXAbsgNQ8PBAqrAikRNg/edit?usp=sharing>.
- Custody call training via video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xoGjSJZV-g>
- 3CX training via video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZNqnrKfkYg>.
- Optional supplementary live training sessions via zoom
- Practice and advice from the BOC and other volunteers, during shifts

## The phone system - 3CX

The 3CX phone system is a software-based private branch exchange. 3CX can be accessed via either a smartphone or a PC equipped with speakers and a microphone. Please ensure your equipment will remain charged throughout your shift. Training in the use of 3CX will be provided.

- Written guidelines are at <https://cloud.extinctionrebellion.uk/s/jSMA7mkjJGLrww8>.
- Training video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZNqnrKfkYg>.
- Volunteers are issued with a login to the BO 3CX account by e-mail: keep the e-mail, which includes your password.
- Calls to the BO number (07749 335574) can be answered by any volunteer currently logged in and marked in the 3CX system as 'Available'. Lags within the system may result in some volunteers always hearing calls sooner than others. Arrangements may be made to facilitate sharing the workload, for example by taking calls in turn.
- Remember to mark yourself as 'Do not disturb' at the end of your shift.
- There can be unavoidable glitches within 3CX. The BOC will try to address these, by liaising with others if necessary.
- Calls can be transferred to another 3CX extension (see written guidelines), but it's not possible to make external calls. Occasionally BOVs may need to do so, in which case please either use your own phone or ask the BOC to make the call.

## Before your shift

Please ensure you have ready access to relevant documents, Signal groups, and the zoom call (if operating), and have logged in to 3CX and ArrestWatch. It's helpful to have kept an eye on the day's BO Signal group, which will help familiarize you with what's happening.

## During your shift

- At the beginning of your shift there's likely to be a handover by staff going off-shift. Please arrive for your shift punctually, to enable a smooth handover. The BOC may make test calls, or volunteers may test-call each other, to ensure that everyone's equipment, and 3CX, is working properly.
- Intra-shift communication may take place via a shift Signal group, a continuous zoom call, or a phone call with the BOC. The Signal group, and sometimes the zoom session, may

also be populated by the BOC and the Police Station Support Coordinators (PSSCs) on shift.

- Please ensure your zoom microphone is turned off when you take a phone call.
- Some of the information you receive during a call will probably need to be recorded in ArrestWatch:
  - reports of arrests are entered using the [Report form](#)
  - reports of releases using the [Release form](#)
  - other information is recorded in the LO log or the Call log
  - Demonstrations are included in the [BOV training video](#) accompanying notes are [here](#).
- You can decide on the basis of experience whether you prefer to type information directly into ArrestWatch, or to make notes on paper and transfer them into ArrestWatch as soon as possible afterwards. Bear in mind the limited time available during a custody call, and choose the quickest option for you.
- Most or all of the information elicited during a custody call should be recorded in the arrest report, but it's useful to have a record of the custody call having been received - so please record this in the Call Log. However, not every incoming call needs to be recorded in the Call Log in ArrestWatch. Please use your judgement on the need to record the information you received, by thinking about the likelihood of it being useful later.
- Monitor which police stations currently hold arrestees (described as 'active'). If a station becomes newly active, **inform the BOC**.
- ArrestWatch may contain duplicate reports of the same arrest, sometimes with slightly different details about obviously the same arrestee. Please don't delete any reports: the BOC will monitor ArrestWatch and will make adjustments as necessary.
- Between calls, BOVs may not be busy and can take a break. Please coordinate with the others on shift to ensure 3CX is covered adequately. Please remember that other people in the zoom call (including the BOC) may have a more constant flow of work than you: they may not be immediately available for queries, and may be disturbed by chat, so please be considerate.

## Calls from LOs

Record the beginning and end of LO shifts, and their location, in the 'Legal Observers' tab in ArrestWatch. Create separate entries for coming on and off shift.

## Reports of Arrests

- Reports of arrests are usually made by phone, by LOs or other direct witnesses, or sometimes by a friend or family member after their receipt of a custody call from the arrestee. Record these in the Report form, collecting from the caller the information required: <https://arrestwatch.info/> This url is widely available, and reports are sometimes made by witnesses who submit the online form.
- **If you believe a new station has become active, please share this with the BOC as promptly as possible.**

- You can edit an arrest report from within the ArrestWatch software, via the Edit button to the right-hand side of each report. Arrest reports are filed under the 'Home' tab. You can search manually or use the filter to search by Name of Arrestee, Police Station, or any of the arrest fields shown. Spelling has to be exact.
- Arrest reports submitted >24h ago are archived currently, though we hope this window will be extended before April 2022.

## Custody Calls

- Rebels are encouraged to use their custody call to contact BO, but sometimes they prefer to call friends or family, who subsequently call BO to pass on relevant information.
- Custody calls give us the opportunity to share key advice with rebels and to check the information we hold on their arrest.
- Custody Call guidelines [are here](#).
- These guidelines contain the basis of a script in paragraph 4: we prefer not to issue a tightly-worded script, but this summary includes the elements of a script if you want to develop your own you can do so

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1el0Q\\_wUnShce0SppgSOoCYBgmI0tDWtQBpypz\\_4tAtU/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1el0Q_wUnShce0SppgSOoCYBgmI0tDWtQBpypz_4tAtU/edit?usp=sharing).

- Please make a note in the Call log when a custody call has taken place. If there's no corresponding Arrest report in ArrestWatch, create one. If there's already a report, edit it by entering any additional information received from the arrestee, correcting any errors in spelling or other information.
- Approved solicitors are shown on the current bustcards, which may vary by region: <https://informeddissent.info/bustcard> The relevant bustcard is for the location of the action, not where the rebel lives.
- Custody calls also enable us to get detailed information from the arrestee about their treatment by the Police.

## Responding to enquiries from friends and families:

Sometimes we receive calls from rebels asking where their friend or family member has been taken. If they know the name of the rebel, we accept these requests at face value and will try to help them: otherwise, we don't give out information.

A balance needs to be struck between helping rebels find their friends, and protecting data. If in doubt, discuss any particular request with your BOC before sharing any information. Special care must be taken if 'famous' rebels are involved, as press teams may try to take advantage of BO to gain information about the arrest.

ArrestWatch can be searched by arrestee name, though spellings need to match, so you may need to search manually.

Enquiries from friends and family are an opportunity to recruit police station supporters. If they can help, give them the link to the police station map, from which they can join the relevant police station WhatsApp or Signal group: <https://tinyurl.com/pssmap>.

## Calls from rebels after release:

Occasionally we are unable to arrange support at a police station, and rebels contact BO after release:

- In the Call log, note their name, and the time and location of arrest and release
- Ask how they are - allow them time to talk if they wish
- Check travel options for them through googlemaps or similar
- If released late at night or early in the morning, advise them of any accommodation options available - check with the BOC
- Give them the url of the release form, to fill in later: <https://arrestwatch.info/pss>.

## Calls asking for legal advice

***\*Do not give out legal advice.***

- Depending on the shift, legal information may be available from the BOC or by phone to a member of XR Legal Support via a Legal Support Line.
- Non-urgent advice can be sought by writing to [xr-legal@riseup.net](mailto:xr-legal@riseup.net)
- Information may also be found from the XR Legal Support website, Informed Dissent: <https://www.informeddissent.info> or the Green and Black Cross website: <https://greenandblackcross.org/>.

## Raids:

Occasionally BO gets a phone call for advice from rebels during a Police raid on their premises, and needs a fast response. If the BOC isn't available immediately, please refer to XR's Raids [handout click here](#).

## Calls involving other information:

Miscellaneous information might include reports of Police misconduct that you are unable to match with a pre-existing report. Record anything you think may be of relevance in the Call Log in Arrestwatch: reports are created via the 'Add log' button and can also be edited.

If information regarding police misconduct or similar is shared, please ask the caller if they would be willing to share their contact details so that they can be contacted later to corroborate the information. In addition, encourage them to write down their own account of the events (to include date and time) as soon as possible, with video evidence if available, and send it to XR Legal at [xr-legal@riseup.net](mailto:xr-legal@riseup.net).

Each entry or edit in the Call Log should be annotated with the name of the author, and the time of the call. Where possible, entries should also include contact details of the caller.

It may also be appropriate occasionally to use the Log to record actions taken by BOVs/PSSCs, but it should not be necessary to use it routinely for this purpose.

If specific action is needed as a result of an incoming call, such as contacting someone, the person making the entry should take responsibility for that action, by either carrying it out or passing responsibility to someone else (and recording this).

### **At the end of each shift:**

- Ensure that any handwritten notes are transferred to the on-line record system
- Ensure that you switch 3CX to 'unavailable' and that you log out of ArrestWatch
- Ensure that the BOC is aware of any follow-up action still needed
- If you've encountered any difficulties during your shift, or can suggest improvements to any procedures or processes, please let the BOC know.

# 8. Police Station Support Coordinator (PSSC)

PSSCs ensure arrested rebels are met on release by Police Station Supporters (PSSs), by creating a rota for supporters and offering them advice and information.

Liaison with PSSs takes place via WhatsApp or Signal groups, and occasionally by phone. Arrestees can be held in custody for 24 hours *after being checked in* at a police station, so we need to try to ensure supporters are available throughout this period.

PSSs

- Provide practical and emotional support to rebels on release, and
- Ensure that rebels' release data is collected (with their consent): this enables ongoing support to be offered following the action and helps BO to monitor whether any rebels are still held at each station.

## Training

- Initial training, via zoom or video: BO overview: [click here](#)
- PSSC video: [click here](#)
- Practice and advice from the BOC and other volunteers, during shifts
- For liaison with PSSs, you'll find it helpful to read through the guidelines provided for them, which includes links to videos: [click here](#)

There is also a module on Police Station Support on the Rebellion Academy to access this [click here](#).

## Overview of PSSC Tasks

- PSSCs use two categories of WhatsApp/Signal groups: Arrestee Support (AS) groups, all on WhatsApp, and Police Station (PS) groups, on WhatsApp or Signal. Currently (ie for April/May 2022), all PS groups in London will be on WhatsApp. All BO volunteers will, however, need to access their shift group via Signal.
- There's a WhatsApp or Signal group corresponding to every police station in England and Wales that has a custody suite. Ideally, each group will already contain people willing to offer to provide PSS. In practice, new members, some without PSS training, tend to join the groups during a mass action.

- A map - [tinyurl.com/pssmap](https://tinyurl.com/pssmap) - shows the location of custody suites, marked by yellow smileys. Clicking on these reveals information about the station and the joining link to the associated PS group.
- When PSSs are needed, the PSSC calls out for volunteers to support at the necessary stations, in relevant PS groups and in the three AS groups, populated by PSSs able to support at several stations.
- The PSSC then creates a rota to ensure continuous coverage, and liaises with the supporters.
- The headers of some PS groups contain useful information about the particular station, such as position of exits, accessibility of waiting rooms, etc which may be helpful for PSSs. If you discover new information during your shift, please add it to the 'Station Information' tab in the PSS rota spreadsheet (Para 8.6 refers).
- Monitor arrestees being taken to PSs for which you're responsible, using ArrestWatch (para 6 above refers)

## Before your shift

- Ensure you have ready access to relevant documents, WhatsApp/Signal groups, including the shift Signal group, the PSS rota, and the shift zoom call, and have logged in to ArrestWatch. It's helpful to have kept an eye on the day's BO Signal group and the PSS rota, which will help familiarize you with what's happening.
- Ensure you've joined the three AS chats on WhatsApp, using these joining links:
  - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HX07vNTURqLEyVgDo012NI>
  - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/KFZpuvZtVMY2wN0w5AHIOr>
  - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/FMi8rrD9C7ZBzIKm3OUtuZ>
- Check (from the PSS rota) which stations are active, and join all the corresponding WhatsApp/Signal groups - though you'll probably be responsible for a subset during your shift, you won't know its composition in advance. Joining all beforehand will enable you to check back through messages when you come on shift, and avoids you having to say you can't see previous messages (which appears unprofessional).

## At the beginning of each shift

- The BOC will let you know which stations you'll be responsible for, or this may be negotiated between PSSCs.
- There may be an opportunity for a handover from the PSSC going off shift
- The PSS rotas for all stations (linked in para 8.6 below) should be up to date, and the information in them should be clear: this should avoid the need for a handover in person
- Ensure you've joined the relevant PS WhatsApp/Signal groups, using the links from the PS map: [tinyurl.com/pssmap](https://tinyurl.com/pssmap). This should include the groups associated with any nearby stations, so you can call out in those.
- Identify gaps in the rota
- Check when the last rebel taken to each station was arrested, from ArrestWatch. Cover needs to be arranged for 24h, after the last rebel was likely to be checked in to the PS -

this can be some time after arrival at the PS, especially at a busy time, and you'll need to estimate.

- Send a message out in your allocated station WhatsApp groups, to inform supporters you are starting your shift.

## Creating and maintaining a PSS rota

- PSS rotas are created using online spreadsheets, [found here](#)
- There'll probably already be a rota covering the PSs for which you're responsible. If not, create a new one: instructions are on the first spreadsheet tab.
- Message in the relevant AS and PS groups, requesting volunteers to cover any gaps in the rota. Standard message templates (see the next section 'Communication') can be used, though personalized messages are preferred, being less robotic.
- Call-outs in the three AS groups should include an invitation to join the relevant PS group, with a link.
- As people volunteer for shifts, add their names to the rota, with the times they've offered and any notes.
- Please try to keep the spreadsheet up to date during your shift
- Aim to have at least two supporters on each shift, particularly after dark and if female. Some stations have more than one exit, not all visible from the same location, so more supporters may be needed to cover all exits, including fire exits if possible: PS group headers or the rota spreadsheet may contain useful information, or you may be able to get information from the PSSs already on shift.
- Supporters are unable to see the PSS rota. Post summarized rota details (ie names and times) in the WhatsApp/Signal group from time to time, to enable supporters to check their shifts.
- Sometimes all arrestees at a station have been released before some supporters are due to come on shift. Remind supporters to check in the group before leaving home, to ensure they're still required.
- If you're struggling to find PSSs, inform the BOC. They may have access to XR communication platforms, and may be able to get a message out asking for additional support.

## Communication with PSSs

- A guide to messaging in the PS WhatsApp/Signal groups is [here](#), and includes optional standard message templates.
- Sometimes supporters haven't done PSS before - check. If they haven't, send them the link to the PSS guidelines, which incorporate links to videos: [here](#)
- Remember that supporters who've just joined the group are unable to see earlier messages, so you may need to repeat information.
- Make sure all supporters are safe - if it appears that they may not be safe, advise them to leave.

- Check in on supporters from time to time, to make sure they've arrived for their shifts and have everything they need, and thank individual supporters going off shift.
- Ensure that PSSs remember to ask every released rebel to complete the on-line release form: <https://arrestwatch.info/pss>, ideally as soon as released but otherwise as soon as possible. **Rebels should complete the form in person** to comply with GDPR. If they prefer not to complete the form straight away, PSSs should give them the link to the form.
- **PSSs should also note the name of each released rebel, and let the PSSC know**, by Direct Message. Not all arrestees complete the release form promptly, so knowing their names will enable us to monitor the number of rebels left in each PS. **Please let the BOC know the names of released rebels asap**, via DM in Signal or via zoom, depending on their preference.
- PSSs may also give a link to the post-arrest handout to each released rebel:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VDIO2zjdiGKJLirnckcoD6Dh4tVIWfaQGZVEIwT4SW8/edit>
- Information useful for PSSs includes:
  - On-line release form: [arrestwatch.info/pss](https://arrestwatch.info/pss)
  - A&LS Back Office: 07749 335574
  - PSS video:
    - Short (20 mins): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ldBymn\\_hA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ldBymn_hA)
    - Long (54 mins): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t8TnjLJ-08>
    - These videos are slightly out-of-date; updates are summarized in this document  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_Sazu3J7HjZ40F2f\\_mirKQDV0jf13CxREYWI0nfsvB0/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_Sazu3J7HjZ40F2f_mirKQDV0jf13CxREYWI0nfsvB0/edit#)
  - PSS guide:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IAwwK055aosb17SvGhZpoCGmFo34-Moh/edit>
  - Post-release handout:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VDIO2zjdiGKJLirnckcoD6Dh4tVIWfaQGZVEIwT4SW8/edit>
  - PS map: <https://tinyurl.com/pssmap>
  - PSS Expenses form: <https://form.jotform.com/220687954564368> (to be circulated when the PSSC thinks it appropriate).

## During your shift

- The BOC will be monitoring activity. When a new police station becomes active, s/he will allocate it to one of the PSSCs

- It can be difficult to know exactly how many rebels are inside a particular PS. The PSS rota you inherit may state a number, but this will be approximate. For the purpose of arranging PSS, however, you don't need to know the exact number. You should try to arrange PSS to be available from approximately 4h after the first arrest until 24h after the last rebel was likely to have been checked in. Arrestees are only rarely released in less than 4h after arrest, although during mass actions, the turn-around can be quite fast. Your BOC should let you know if the Police are adopting an expedited processing procedure.
- It can be difficult to be sure when a station is empty, because the information we receive about arrests is often duplicated, and we aren't notified about all arrests - para 8.9 refers. If necessary, ask the PSSs on shift to check with the Police whether the station still contains any XR rebels - but be aware that the Police may not always tell the truth. If in doubt, consult your BOC.
- If you're sure that a station has become inactive, confirm with the BOC and then post a message in the WhatsApp/Signal group. Send direct messages to supporters who've signed up for shifts and are not now needed.

## Eliciting information about arrestees via PSSs

- We are often notified about an arrest but not the PS to which the arrestee was taken, or the station information may be incorrect
- PSSs can be helpful in investigating the number of arrestees being held in a station. Invite them to ring the custody bell, use the external phone, or go into the station, and ask the custody sergeant if they have XR rebels in the station and how many. Police often say they can't give information unless the supporter identifies the possible arrestee, eg name and DOB. **They should not under any circumstance give such information to the police.**
- Any information given by the Police may be unreliable.
- PSSs are sometimes able to talk to rebels or their lawyers as they leave the station, and can then get useful information about the number of remaining XR arrestees.
- Sometimes the Police will spontaneously tell PSSs that the station is now empty. This has sometimes been reliable, but we have been misled - so should not accept any information at face value
- If the station is thought to be empty, the PSSs should inform you and you should ask them to stay in place until you check with the BOC the likelihood of this information being true.
- Remember that arrestees may be being held for court (para 8.11 refers). Accurate information can be difficult to obtain. If we find out where a rebel's hearing will be held (eg via PSSs), **let the BOC know**, and we can try to arrange court support. Alternatively, if a hearing is being held at the PS (probably less likely now than during the Covid pandemic), we should try to maintain PSS cover outside the station.

## Appropriate Adults

- The Police must ensure that a vulnerable person or a minor (under 18) is supported in custody by an Appropriate Adult. We encourage people who intend to get arrested and who need an Appropriate Adult to organize this for themselves in advance, but sometimes this doesn't happen. In such a situation, the Police may ask the PSS to help with this role,

and in turn the PSS may consult the PSSC. The PSS could fulfill this role if invited to do so, but should not feel under pressure to do so.

- If you need advice about a request for an Appropriate Adult, consult your BOC.

## **When an arrestee can be held for more than 24h**

In certain circumstances, an arrestee can legitimately be held by the Police for more than 24h. Sometimes the BOC may have had, or be able to get, information via the solicitor network, and should tell any PSSCs looking after the stations involved. Circumstances in which arrestees can be held longer than 24h include:

- Non-cooperation - If an arrestee declines to share their name and/or address they will be held in custody to appear in court on the next available court date (if arrested on a Friday this could be Saturday morning or Monday). If you hear this has happened, please try to find out the court and the court date and time (possibly from the PSSs) and inform the BOC
- Remanded to appear in Court - sometimes charged rebels are remanded in custody to appear in court. Based on past experience this is more likely in the case of foreign nationals, if police bail conditions are refused, if the arrestee has broken court bail conditions, or if they have a previous criminal record.

If you think there's a possibility that a rebel may be going to be held for court (eg if it appears from the arrest report that they may have broken bail conditions), let the BOC know and they may be able to investigate.

## **PSS Expenses**

- We have a limited pot of money to refund things like costs of snacks for arrestees (not for PSSs); costs of arrestees' travel (only if they don't have the money and have to ask the PSS to help out); cost of a taxi for a vulnerable arrestee if felt needed (should be discussed by PSSC with BOC); and cost of PSS travel if travelling beyond local area to a Police station we have found difficult to cover (should be discussed by PSSC with BOC in advance).
- For full guidance on what's covered, please consult your BOC.
- PSSs should be encouraged to keep receipts where possible and to make a claim within 24h so that we can keep a track of claims and give fair warning if the money is all spent and no longer refunds are possible.
- Only provide the link to the claim form in situations in which you think a claim's justified:

<https://form.jotform.com/220687954564368>

## **At the end of each shift**

- Ensure that the PSS rotas for 'your' stations are up-to-date, accurate and clear
- You may be asked by the BOC to hand them over orally to the incoming PSSC, via zoom.
- If you've encountered any difficulties during your shift, or can suggest improvements to any procedures or processes, please let the BOC know.



# Summary of Key Links

## Software

- ArrestWatch
  - Arrest report: <https://arrestwatch.info>
  - Release report: <https://arrestwatch.info/pss>
  - Back Office: <https://backoffice.arrestwatch.info>
- ArrestWatch playground
  - Arrest report: <https://playground.arrestwatch.info>
  - Release report: <https://playground.arrestwatch.info/pss>
  - Back office: <https://backoffice.playground.arrestwatch.info>
    - Log ins for the playground are:
      - **User Name:** bov | **Password:** bovbov (access to release forms)
      - **User Name:** pssc | **Password:** psscpsc (just the main tables)
- 3CX: <https://as-backoffice.3cx.co.uk/webclient>
- PSS rota: <https://xrb.link/m2T3CQ8w3>

## Documents

- Custody Call guidelines: <https://xrb.link/s2b7cT3zO>
- Custody Call summary/script: <https://xrb.link/p7mxg0Ka9>
- 3CX guidelines: <https://cloud.extinctionrebellion.uk/s/jSMA7mkjjGLrww8>
- Raids handout: <https://cloud.extinctionrebellion.uk/s/ETmMskH3aZzLfNr>
- Notes on BOV video: <https://xrb.link/zE6C5b4o8Iz>
- PSS guidelines: <https://xrb.link/X06hPa41cGU>
- Updates to PSS videos: <https://xrb.link/s45KBG9G>
- Post-release handout: <https://xrb.link/J5p21T>
- PSS Expenses form: <https://xrb.link/ok3E0jLd>
- PSSC messaging, incorporating message templates: <https://xrb.link/U7Gb1tn6Ybt>

## Videos

- BO overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PE0xk8zAFNc>
- Back Office Volunteer (covers use of ArrestWatch, custody calls, typical calls): <https://youtu.be/eckKCBdrdE4> (This was made in 2020, see accompanying notes for changes: <https://xrb.link/E1p4g3l> )
- Custody calls <https://youtu.be/6xoGjSJZV-g>
- 3CX: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZNqnrKfkYg>
- PSSC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBcLc-xB71w>
- PSS: These videos are slightly out-of-date; updates are summarized in this document: <https://xrb.link/s45KBG9G>
  - Short (20 mins): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_2ldBymn\\_hA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2ldBymn_hA)
  - Long (54 mins): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t8TnjLJ-08>
- Witnessing an arrest: although made some time ago, these videos remain up to date - though the upgraded BO phone system can deal with multiple calls and we prefer custody calls to be made to BO.
  - short version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKqLWUsL81s>
  - long version <https://vimeo.com/361394459> - **Password:** ProsecutePolluters

## Useful links

- Bustcards: <https://informeddissent.info/bustcard>
- Police station map: <https://tinyurl.com/pssmap>
- Informed Dissent: <https://www.informeddissent.info>
- Green & Black Cross: <https://greenandblackcross.org/>
- WhatsApp AS group joining links:
  - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HX07vNTURqLEyVgDo012NI>
  - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/KFZpuvZtVMY2wN0w5AHIOr>
  - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/FMi8rrD9C7ZBzIKm3OUtuZ>
- XR Volunteer Agreement: <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/xr-data-protection-agreement-2>
- Back Office e-mail: [backoffice@riseup.net](mailto:backoffice@riseup.net)
- Legal Support e-mail: [xr-legal@riseup.net](mailto:xr-legal@riseup.net)
- A&LS Back Office: 07749 335574
- JSO Back Office (Apr 22): 07783 176 100
- GBC Back Office: 07946 541 511