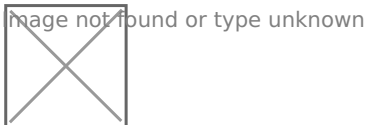# 7. Back Office Volunteer (BOV)

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/1eI0Q_wUnShce0SppgSOoCYBgmI0tDWtQBp ypz_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
- 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.

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.