

POLICE (NORTHERN IRELAND) ACT 2000

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY

Part IX: Miscellaneous and Supplementary

84. Part IX deals with technical provisions and definitions. It also covers a number of miscellaneous provisions. Noteworthy provisions are described below.

Sections 67 and 68: The Commissioner

85. **Section 67** provides for the appointment of a Commissioner to oversee the implementation of changes in the policing of Northern Ireland, including those resulting from the Act, described in his terms of reference. Section 68 requires the Commissioner to make reports. The Secretary of State must lay any report made by the Commissioner before Parliament and publish it.

Section 69: General Duty of the Secretary of State

86. This section requires the Secretary of State to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the police, police support staff and traffic wardens. In doing so the Secretary of State must have regard to the principle that policing is to be conducted in an impartial manner.

Section 70: The Royal Ulster Constabulary GC Foundation

87. This section enables the Secretary of State to establish by regulations, and make payments to, a foundation to mark the sacrifices and honour the achievements of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The regulations may enable the foundation to undertake joint initiatives with the Widows' Association, the Disabled Police Officers' Association or any other organisation within the police family.

Section 72: Video Recording of Interviews

88. This section amends the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 to require the Secretary of State to issue a code on the video recording with sound of police interviews with people being questioned other than under anti-terrorism legislation. The Terrorism Act 2000 provides for the Secretary of State to issue a code of practice on the silent video recording of those being questioned about terrorist crimes.

Section 74: Application to Police of Anti-discrimination Legislation

89. This section, together with Schedule 5 to the Act, replaces existing provisions which apply anti-discrimination legislation to police bodies in Northern Ireland. The main change is to provide for the vicarious liability of chief officers of police for acts of their officers in the provision of goods, facilities or services. The changes, in part, reflect those made in England and Wales in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and arise from Sir William Macpherson's report, *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry* (Cm 4262-1) published in February 1999.