

*These notes refer to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c.15) which received Royal Assent on 7th April 2005*

# **SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME AND POLICE ACT 2005**

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Part 5: Miscellaneous**

##### **Royal Parks**

57. Policing of the Royal Parks in London is currently the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under the Parks Regulation Act 1872. Policing has since 1974 been carried out by the Royal Parks Constabulary (RPC), which is part of The Royal Parks, an executive agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Royal Parks encompass St James's Park, The Green Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, The Regent's Park (with Primrose Hill), Greenwich Park, Richmond Park and Bushy Park. In addition, the agency manages and polices other areas in London, notably Brompton Cemetery, Victoria Tower Gardens and Grosvenor Square Gardens. The Secretary of State makes parks regulations under the Parks Regulation (Amendment) Act 1926 which apply to all these areas.
58. A report by Anthony Speed in 2000 identified serious shortcomings with the current arrangements for policing the Royal Parks:
  - The RPC lacks an independent police authority;
  - Its constables do not have the power to discharge their functions beyond the boundaries of the Royal Parks;
  - It has suffered recruitment and retention problems over a long period because it cannot offer the career prospects available in other police forces and constables' pay is pegged to 85.5% of Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) pay.
59. The transfer of policing to the MPS is designed to deal with these issues and so ensure more effective policing of the Royal Parks and more coherent policing across London. In advance of the abolition of the RPC, co-policing of the Royal Parks by the MPS and the RPC has already been introduced from April 2004.