



Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005

2005 CHAPTER 15

PART 2

INVESTIGATIONS, PROSECUTIONS, PROCEEDINGS AND PROCEEDS OF CRIME

CHAPTER 2

OFFENDERS ASSISTING INVESTIGATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS

73 Assistance by defendant: reduction in sentence

- (1) This section applies if a defendant—
 - (a) following a plea of guilty is either convicted of an offence in proceedings in the Crown Court or is committed to the Crown Court for sentence, and
 - (b) has, pursuant to a written agreement made with a specified prosecutor, assisted or offered to assist the investigator or prosecutor in relation to that or any other offence.
- (2) In determining what sentence to pass on the defendant the court may take into account the extent and nature of the assistance given or offered.
- (3) If the court passes a sentence which is less than it would have passed but for the assistance given or offered, it must state in open court—
 - (a) that it has passed a lesser sentence than it would otherwise have passed, and
 - (b) what the greater sentence would have been.
- (4) Subsection (3) does not apply if the court thinks that it would not be in the public interest to disclose that the sentence has been discounted; but in such a case the court must give written notice of the matters specified in paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (3) to both the prosecutor and the defendant.

- (5) Nothing in any enactment which—
- (a) requires that a minimum sentence is passed in respect of any offence or an offence of any description or by reference to the circumstances of any offender (whether or not the enactment also permits the court to pass a lesser sentence in particular circumstances), or
 - (b) in the case of a sentence which is fixed by law, requires the court to take into account certain matters for the purposes of making an order which determines or has the effect of determining the minimum period of imprisonment which the offender must serve (whether or not the enactment also permits the court to fix a lesser period in particular circumstances),
- affects the power of a court to act under subsection (2).
- (6) If, in determining what sentence to pass on the defendant, the court takes into account the extent and nature of the assistance given or offered as mentioned in subsection (2), that does not prevent the court from also taking account of any other matter which it is entitled by virtue of any other enactment to take account of for the purposes of determining—
- (a) the sentence, or
 - (b) in the case of a sentence which is fixed by law, any minimum period of imprisonment which an offender must serve.
- (7) If subsection (3) above does not apply by virtue of subsection (4) above, sections 174(1)(a) and 270 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (c. 44) (requirement to explain reasons for sentence or other order) do not apply to the extent that the explanation will disclose that a sentence has been discounted in pursuance of this section.
- (8) In this section—
- (a) a reference to a sentence includes, in the case of a sentence which is fixed by law, a reference to the minimum period an offender is required to serve, and a reference to a lesser sentence must be construed accordingly;
 - (b) a reference to imprisonment includes a reference to any other custodial sentence within the meaning of section 76 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 (c. 6) or Article 2 of the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (S.I. 1996/ 3160).
- (9) An agreement with a specified prosecutor may provide for assistance to be given to that prosecutor or to any other prosecutor.
- (10) References to a specified prosecutor must be construed in accordance with section 71.