



Investigatory Powers Act 2016

2016 CHAPTER 25

PART 6

BULK WARRANTS

CHAPTER 2

BULK ACQUISITION WARRANTS

Bulk acquisition warrants

161 Requirements that must be met by warrants

- (1) A bulk acquisition warrant must contain a provision stating that it is a bulk acquisition warrant.
- (2) A bulk acquisition warrant must be addressed to the head of the intelligence service by whom, or on whose behalf, the application for the warrant was made.
- (3) A bulk acquisition warrant must specify the operational purposes for which any communications data obtained under the warrant may be selected for examination.
- (4) The operational purposes specified in the warrant must be ones specified, in a list maintained by the heads of the intelligence services (“the list of operational purposes”), as purposes which they consider are operational purposes for which communications data obtained under bulk acquisition warrants may be selected for examination.
- (5) The warrant may, in particular, specify all of the operational purposes which, at the time the warrant is issued, are specified in the list of operational purposes.
- (6) An operational purpose may be specified in the list of operational purposes only with the approval of the Secretary of State.

Changes to legislation: *Investigatory Powers Act 2016, Section 161 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 12 August 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

- (7) The Secretary of State may give such approval only if satisfied that the operational purpose is specified in a greater level of detail than the descriptions contained in section 158(1)(a) or (2).
- (8) At the end of each relevant three-month period the Secretary of State must give a copy of the list of operational purposes to the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament.
- (9) In subsection (8) “relevant three-month period” means—
 - (a) the period of three months beginning with the day on which this section comes into force, and
 - (b) each successive period of three months.
- (10) The Prime Minister must review the list of operational purposes at least once a year.
- (11) In this Chapter “the specified operational purposes”, in relation to a bulk acquisition warrant, means the operational purposes specified in the warrant in accordance with this section.

Commencement Information

II [S. 161](#) in force at 25.7.2018 by [S.I. 2018/873](#), [reg. 2\(e\)](#)

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- Sch. 3 para. 8A and cross-heading inserted by [2023 c. 32 Sch. 18 para. 10\(2\)](#)
- Sch. 3 para. 20(2)(ha)(hb) inserted by [2023 c. 32 Sch. 18 para. 10\(3\)\(a\)](#)