

1978 S.C. Op. Atty. Gen. 42 (S.C.A.G.), 1978 S.C. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 78-26, 1978 WL 22510

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

Opinion No. 78-26

February 13, 1978

*1 Chief J. O. Freeman

Airport Police Department

Columbia Metropolitan Airport

West Columbia, SC 29169

Dear Chief Freeman:

As to your question concerning the authority and jurisdiction of airport police officers employed by the Richland-Lexington Airport Commission pursuant to [Section 55-11-350, Code of Laws of South Carolina](#), 1976, please be advised of the following. [Section 55-11-350](#), *supra*, states in part:

The Richland-Lexington Airport Commission is authorized to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations governing the use of roads, streets and parking facilities upon the lands of the Richland-Lexington Airport Commission. Such rules and regulations shall not be in conflict with any State law and all State laws are hereby declared to be applicable to the roads, streets and parking facilities under the control of the Commission. The rules and regulations authorized herein shall be effective when filed with the Director of the Columbia Metropolitan Airport and in accordance with Section 1-1-210.

The Richland-Lexington Airport Commission is authorized to employ police officers to be commissioned by the Governor who shall enforce all laws, rules and regulations authorized herein and shall, in addition, have authority to issue summonses for violations thereof in the manner provided for South Carolina State Highway Patrolmen. (Emphasis added).

Therefore, in accordance with the above, these particular police officers have the authority to enforce all laws, rules, and regulations applicable to the roads, streets, and parking facilities under the control of the Airport Commission.

You indicated in your letter of January 23, 1978, to this Office that all police officers of the Airport Police Department are commissioned by the Governor as State Constables but are limited in their commissions to having jurisdiction only in Lexington County and the properties of the Richland-Lexington Airport District, except where a felony was committed in their presence outside of Lexington County or the Airport District or where they were asked to assist other police agencies. Assuming that such statement accurately details their commissions as State Constables, these police officers would be able ‘ . . . to assist in the detection of crime and . . . (enforce) . . . any criminal laws of this State.’ ([Section 23-1-60, Code of Laws of South Carolina](#), 1976). As State Constables, they are vested with all the powers of a peace officer of this State. See *State v. Luster*, 178 S.C. 199, 182 S.E. 247 (1935). This enforcement power should however be strictly confined to the limitations of their commissions as Airport police officers and State Constables as expressed above.

Hopefully, the above discussion will be of assistance to you. If there is anything further, do not hesitate to contact me. Sincerely,

Charles H. Richardson

Assistant Attorney General

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