



NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE
Force Policy Document

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| POLICY TITLE: | FORCE GRADED RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS |
| POLICY REFERENCE NO: | FC/01 |

Executive Summary

This policy document presents clear guidance for the assessment and allocation of incidents graded responses to all incidents, and will provide call handlers the framework for classification of all emergency and non-emergency calls. Call handlers will be able to suitably assess the needs and expectations of a caller and allow West Midlands Police to provide and appropriate but effective qualified response to any incident within the Force.

West Midlands Police is committed to providing a level of reassurance and confidence to the communities it serves and therefore set out that all graded response decision and its deployments/action taken are made in an ethical and non-discriminatory fashion to ensure and appropriate and proportionate response. All decisions reached and action taken within the grading response process will be recorded on Command and Control (OASIS) incident logs and open to and capable of withstanding independent scrutiny in order to ensure that the Force meets the expected standards set out.

***Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be made directly with the policy contact / department shown below.*

Intended Policy Audience

This policy is primarily aimed at all FCC managers, first line supervisors, force contact call handlers (both emergency and non-emergency), police officers, police community support officers, special constables and senior LPU managers.

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| Current Version And Effective Date. | Version 1.4 | 28-2-2013 |
| Business Area Owner | Force Contact | |
| Department Responsible | Force Contact Service Improvement Team | |
| Policy Contact | Staff 51289 Pete Gutteridge | |
| Policy Author | Staff 51289 Pete Gutteridge | |
| Approved By | ACC Rowe | |
| Policy Initial Implementation Date | 28-2-2013 | |
| Review Date | 2 years from date of implementation | |
| Protective Marking | Not protectively marked | |
| Suitable For Publication – Freedom Of Information | Yes | |

Supporting Documents

- *Learning the Lessons* (www.learningthelessons.org.uk)
-

Evidence Based Research

Full supporting documentation and evidence of consultation in relation to this policy including that of any version changes for implementation and review, are held with the Force Policy Co-ordinator including that of the authorised original Command Team papers.

Please Note.

PRINTED VERSIONS SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON. THE MOST UPTO DATE VERSION OF ANY POLICY OR DIRECTIVE CAN BE FOUND ON THE EQUIP DATABASE ON THE INTRANET.

Force Diversity Vision Statement and Values

“Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations by embedding a culture of equality and respect that puts all of our communities, officers and staff at the heart of everything we do. Working together as one we will strive to make a difference to our service delivery by mainstreaming our organisational values”

“All members of the public and communities we serve, all police officers, special constables and police staff members shall receive equal and fair treatment regardless of, age, disability, sex, race, gender reassignment, religion/belief, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity. If you consider this policy could be improved for any of these groups please raise with the author of the policy without delay.”

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Revision of West Midlands Police graded Response Policy has taken place taking into account the following:
- National Call Handling Standards, Principles and Management;
 - West Midlands Police 'Standards for Managing Anti-Social Behaviour';
 - National Decision Model (NDM)
- 1.2. **Previous Part One Order 5/1998, 33/1998, 75/1999 and Policy LP/02 are hereby withdrawn on activation of Policy FC/01 and any current reference to these should be removed forthwith.**

2. PHILOSOPHY

- 2.1 Contact Handling is a key gateway to service delivery. The West Midlands Police Contact Grades provide an agreed corporate process by which contacts are risk assessed and prioritised to ensure appropriate access to service.
- 2.2 An essential element of service provision is to inform any person making a request for service of the response they should expect to receive, and to keep them informed of any changes to that anticipated response and the reason for it.
- 2.3 This document provides a framework for assessment and allocation of Contact Grades to incidents. Instructions cannot be given to deal with every set of circumstances and some reliance must be placed on the judgement and common sense of personnel in deciding what response is appropriate. Staff must make decisions that are led by the needs of the caller and the National Decision Model.
- 2.4 When assigning a graded response classification, call handlers will carry out an initial risk assessment which assists in assigning the correct classification of police response, and will include the level of 'vulnerability' and 'upset'.
- 2.5 Where there is ambiguity or a lack of clarification, initial call handlers should seek the advice of a supervisor, except where this would unduly delay a response.
- 2.6 A full rationale leading to the initial classification will be provided within the body of the log, using the option facility provided.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 For the purpose of this policy the following definitions will apply to all Command and Control incident logs.

'Vulnerability' will be defined as those instances where:

"A victim is vulnerable if the conduct in question causes an adverse impact on their quality of life. Adverse impact includes the risk of harm; deterioration of their health, physical, mental and or emotional well being; or an inability to carry out normal day to day routine through fear and intimidation."

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'Upset' will be defined as those instances where;

"The victim appears to be in a state of emotional or mental distress to the extent that their welfare gives cause for significant concern."

4. EMERGENCY and IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

4.1 Denominated 'I' on command Control and XC Mapping

A) An emergency / immediate contact encompasses circumstances where an incident is reported to the police, which is taking place and where there is, or is likely to be, a risk of:

1. Danger to life.
2. Use or immediate threat of use, of violence.
3. Serious injury to a person.
4. Serious damage to property.

B) Where the contact relates to an allegation of criminal conduct, it will be dealt with as an emergency if:

1. The crime is, or is likely to be, serious and in progress.
2. An offender has been disturbed at the scene.
3. An offender has been detained and poses, or is likely to pose, a risk to other people.

C) Where the contact relates to a traffic collision, it will be dealt with as an emergency if:

1. It involves or is likely to involve serious personal injury.
2. It involves a cyclist or a pedestrian.
3. The road is blocked or there is a dangerous or excessive build up of traffic.

D) Where the above circumstances do not apply, a contact will be classified as an emergency if:

1. The circumstances are such that a police call handler has strong and objective reasons for believing that the incident should be classified as an emergency.
2. Force deployment priorities require an immediate response.

The force performance standard for attendance at an Emergency incident is 15 minutes as per national guidelines.

5. NON-EMERGENCY CONTACT

A contact will be classified as non-emergency if it does not meet the emergency criteria outlined above.

The consequences of classifying a contact as non-emergency mean only that the police response may not be immediate and may encompass a range of solutions, some of which will not require the attendance of a police officer.

5.1 PRIORITY and EARLY RESPONSE

Denominated 'E' on Command and Control and XC Mapping.

An early / priority response will be required where the police call handler acknowledges that there is a degree of importance or urgency associated with the initial police action, but where an emergency / immediate response is not required.

1. There is a genuine concern for somebody's safety.
2. An offender has been detained but poses no risk to others.
3. A witness or other evidence is likely to be lost.
4. A person involved is vulnerable or upset.
5. Force/neighbourhood priorities require a priority response.

Where a non-emergency contact requires a Priority Response the call handler will inform the caller of the estimated time of arrival.

The Force performance standard for attendance at a Priority incident is 60 minutes.

5.2 Scheduled Response

Denominated 'R' on Command and Control and XC Mapping.

Where a contact does not require an immediate or priority response but still requires police attendance, it will be a routine or scheduled appointment response. These circumstances will typically arise where:

1. The response time is not critical in apprehending offender.
2. The matter is service-orientated and a better quality of initial police action can be provided by:
 - A pre-arranged police response by a suitable police resource.
 - Attendance at a police clinic or surgery at a time and location of the caller's choice.

The Force performance standard for attendance at a scheduled incident is 48 hours.

5.3 Resolution without Deployment and Station Resolution

Denominated 'S' on Command and Control and XC Mapping.

- 5.3.1 Resolution without deployment can occur where the needs of the caller can be adequately met through the provision of advice, information, helpdesk function or signposting to another lead agency/service. This includes signposting to the PNLD database www.askthe.police.uk.
- 5.3.2 A non-emergency contact not requiring police attendance can be dealt with over the phone with the caller having agreed that attendance is not necessary and having been provided with appropriate advice. Callers should be provided with a log number or other reference number where appropriate.

6. DEFERRED RESPONSE

Denominated 'D' on Command and Control and XC Mapping.

- 6.1 Scheduled Response Incidents where police attendance is required at some point can be deferred to ensure a better quality of service. This may be appropriate due to the lateness of the hour; the nature of the call; or the caller is not at the scene of the incident and/or will not return there for some time.
- 6.2 A mutually convenient appointment time, agreed at the time of the call, should be arranged. The relevant Command and Control incident log will not be closed until the appropriate police response has acknowledged receipt of the incident information and confirmed the requirement to attend.
- 6.3 Emergency and Priority incidents can be deferred after a resource has arrived, where it is necessary to make further enquiries after the initial response and in order to properly investigate the incident and update the log.

7. RE-GRADING OF INCIDENTS

7.1 Where an initial grading decision has been made and:

1. Further new information is received that indicates the incident should be treated as a higher grade.
 2. The new information is received before a resource has arrived at the incident
- OR
3. The initial grading decision, based on the initial circumstances entered on the incident log, was incorrect.

The incident log MUST be immediately and appropriately re-graded and updated with any new information; whether or not any graded response time will be exceeded by doing so.

7.2 Where an initial grading decision has been made and:

1. Further information is received before a resource has arrived at the incident.
2. The new information indicates that it should be treated as a lower grade.

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3. The response time for the initial classification has not already been exceeded,

OR

4. The initial grading decision, based on the initial circumstances entered on the incident log, was incorrect.

The incident log may be appropriately re-graded.

The incident log will be referred to a Contact Centre Supervisor at the earliest opportunity, who will confirm or cancel the re-grade.

7.3 Where a lower grade is confirmed the Contact Centre Supervisor will

1. Ensure the incident log is updated with a dynamic risk assessment detailing the reasons for the re-grade.
2. Ensure the incident log is updated with an assessment of the victim's vulnerability and upset, including any details of repeat victimisation.
3. Where practicable, ensure the caller and/or victim is updated.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA)

The Policy has been reviewed and drafted against all protected characteristics in accordance with the statutory duties as set out in The Equality Act 2010 and that of the WMP combined Equality and Humans Rights Scheme (and Humans Rights Act 1988 – see *below*). Supporting documentation in the form of an EQIA has been completed and is available for viewing in conjunction with this Policy.

9. HUMAN RIGHTS

This policy has been implemented and reviewed in accordance with the European Convention and principles provided by the Human Rights Acts 1998. The application of this policy has the potential to impact upon the following articles:

- The right to life (article 2)
 - In defence of any person from unlawful violence
 - In order to effect an arrest or prevent escape
 - For the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection
- Prohibition of torture/degrading treatment (article 3)
- Prohibition of slavery and forced labour (article 4)
- Right to respect for private and family life (article 8)

10. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI)

- 10.1 Public disclosure of this policy document is determined by the Force Policy Co-ordinator on agreement with its owner. Version 1.4 of this policy has been GPMS marked as 'Not protectively marked'.
- 10.2 Public disclosure does not automatically apply to supporting Force policies, directives and associated guidance documents, and in all cases the necessary advice should be sought prior to disclosure to any one of these associated documents.

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| Which exemptions apply and to which section of the document? | Whole document | Section number |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| No exemptions | | |

11. TRAINING

- 11.1 All senior FCC managers, first line supervisors, force contact call handlers will receive training at local level delivered by their own LPUs / Contact Centres. This will be co-ordinated and reviewed by the Contact Service Improvement Team.
- 11.2 In addition, ICT changes/configuration to OASIS will be required to reflect those changes to grading responses and terminology.

12. PROMOTIONS/DISTRIBUTION & MARKETING

The following methods will be adopted to ensure full knowledge of the Policy:

- Policy document and associated documents on the Force intranet (policy portal) for the attention of all WMP officers and staff;
- Recording and audit entry on the Force policy library;

- 12. Distribution: (group email) to all Contact Centres i.e. Chief Inspector, inspector, first line supervisor, call handlers etc.

13. REVIEW

- 13.1 The policy business owner, Force Contact will maintain outright ownership of the policy and any other associated documents and in-turn delegate responsibility to the department/unit responsible for its continued monitoring.
- 13.2 The policy should be considered a 'living document' and subject to regular review to reflect upon and Force, Home Office / ACPO, and legislative changes.
- 13.3 A formal review of the policy document, including that of any other potential impact i.e. EQIA, will be conducted by the date shown as indicated on the first page.
- 13.4 Any amendments to the policy will be conducted and evidenced through the Force Policy Coordinator and set out with the version control template.
- 13.5 Feedback is always welcomed by that of the author/owner and/or Force Policy Co-ordinator as to the content and layout of the policy document and any potential improvements.



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14. VERSION HISTORY

| Version | Date | Reason for Change | Amended/Agreed by. |
|---------|------------|--|---|
| 1.0 | 28/07/11 | New policy (Part One Orders 5/1998, 33/1998 & 75/1999 – all subsequently withdrawn). | New Force policy approved by CC Sims |
| 1.1 | 23/04/2012 | Policy amended as follows with included: > policy reference, > signature of CC Sims. | Martin Keating – Force Policy Coordinator |
| 1.2 | 28/01/2013 | Change to RTC section to include cyclists and pedestrian | 51289 Gutteridge |
| 1.3 | 04/02/2013 | Minor grammatical changes. Returned to author re FOI section | 4566 Brookes 51289 Gutteridge |
| | 04/02/2013 | To ACC Rowe for approval | |
| 1.4 | 25.02.2013 | To CC Sims for approval | 4566 |
| 1.4 | 26/09/2013 | Amended grammar/spelling mistakes | 56408 Couchman |