



**College of
Policing**



Investigation:

PIP Level 1

Responding to an Incident

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The College is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities. Every effort has been made throughout this text to avoid exclusionary language or stereotypical terms. Occasionally, to ensure clarity, it has been necessary to refer to an individual by gender.

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Authorised Professional Practice

These notes are aimed at learners completing their Initial training to meet the learning outcomes specified on the National Policing Curriculum. The primary source of content is the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and the supporting evidence based research of “what works” in policing.

APP can be found at: <http://www.app.college.police.uk/>

1. Introduction

These notes are for the use of **Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)**. You should consider how the content applies in relation to PCSO powers, 'any person' powers of arrest Section 24A of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and local force policy.

The notes are designed to provide you with an understanding of the actions you should take when responding to an incident.

The following topics are covered:

- Legal requirements
- Actions taken prior to arriving at the scene of an incident
- Actions to take on arrival at the scene of an incident
- Gathering information
- Making notes at the scene of an incident
- Protecting the scene of an incident
- Working with and supporting victims and witnesses.

These notes will help you to understand why it is important to follow a structured process in order to obtain as much material in the crucial "golden hour" phase after an incident has occurred.

The notes also highlight the requirement for an initial responder to behave in a calm, professional and ethical manner when dealing with victims and witnesses and how to support people who may be affected by an incident.

2. Responding to Incidents

As a police officer you will respond to a wide range of incidents all of which will require varying levels of investigation dependent on the type of incident and the circumstances involved.

You will have to respond to incidents that are reported directly to the police e.g. 999 calls to the force control centre, as well as incidents that you may encounter or be informed of by a member of the public when on patrol.

There is no legal definition of a "police incident" but the term covers the whole range of events which police have to deal with. For example; shoplifting and burglaries, assaults, traffic collisions as well as accidents involving serious injury or fatalities. Each incident does not always result in a crime, for example in cases such as traffic collisions or missing persons.

2.1 Actions Prior to Arriving at an Incident

On receiving a report of an incident, force control centre staff will grade it according to urgency of the situation in accordance with the National Call Handling Standard and the National Contact Management Principles and Guidance. However, many police forces have refined their incident grading policy to better meet local challenges and force priorities and you should familiarise yourself with the procedure used in your force. Consequently grading of incidents vary from force to force but typically are:

- Those requiring an immediate response, e.g. a traffic collision where injuries have occurred, someone threatening to use a weapon or a report of gunfire
- Those where a response may be delayed, e.g. a car parked illegally
- Those requiring no response.

The most serious calls, or the most serious cases, receive the most urgent response. After grading the incident, the centre staff will allocate appropriate resources to deal with it.

You will need to apply the same grading procedure to incidents reported to you or which you encounter when on patrol. You will need to assess whether an instant response is required or the facts can be reported for later action. In either case you should inform the force control centre with details of the incident.

If you are sent by the control centre to an incident you will need to consider your manner of approach i.e. whether or not to give a prior warning. For example; if you are attending a traffic collision giving warning of your approach would be appropriate and necessary and help to clear the road so that you can arrive as soon as possible. On the other hand it may be wiser to approach a suspected burglary without warning in order not to give the intruders an opportunity to leave the property.

You should obtain as much information from the control centre as possible whilst en route to the incident:

- The location of the incident
- The type of incident e.g.:
 - Dispute
 - Public order
 - Traffic collision
- How many people are, or may be, involved
- If a suspect/s are still at the scene
- Whether there have been any injuries
- The name of the caller reporting the incident and if they are still at the scene
- Whether there have been previous incidents of a similar nature at the same location e.g. in a case of domestic abuse

- If any action has been taken to date, e.g. an ambulance called.

You will need to be aware of:

- Your powers to deal with the incident
- Your obligation to deal with the matter ethically and with respect for equality, diversity and human rights
- Your force procedures and documentation used when responding to an incident.

2.2 Initial Action at the Scene of the Incident

You should consider the following when responding to an incident

1. Preservation of life/prioritising casualties/prevention of injury to people at the scene
2. Preservation of the scene(s)
3. Identifying victim(s) and witnesses
4. Identifying suspect(s)
5. Identifying potential evidence.

APC

The acronym APC is a simple way to remember the fundamental steps for managing any crime scene in three distinct phases:

1. Assessing the scene of the incident.
2. Protecting people and the scene of the incident.
3. Communicating details of the incident to control room staff.

Assessing the Scene of an Incident

On arrival at the scene of an incident you will need to assess the situation then take whatever action you feel is required. Factors to consider when carrying out your assessment include:

- Are there any casualties?
- Are there any victims?
- Is there a danger to others e.g. to passing traffic or passers by?
- Do you need to control a suspect?
- Do you need to gather evidence?
- Is there a need to preserve evidence?
- Are there witnesses to be identified and interviewed?
- Is everyone accounted for?
- Are there any children and/or vulnerable adults?
- Do you need assistance?

Protecting People

Having completed your initial assessment it is now necessary to help and protect anyone involved in the incident as well as anyone who the incident may impact upon. Remember that the primary duty of a police officer is the preservation of life and this must be your first consideration at any incident.

The action you take will vary according to the type of incident and may include:

- Applying first aid to an injured person
- Protecting children or vulnerable people
- Instituting a search for a missing person
- Obtaining assistance from:
 - Other police officers

- Other emergency services; Ambulance, the Fire Service
 - The Highways Agency
 - Specialist officers, e.g. Crime Scene Examiners or Search Teams
 - Other organisations who can help e.g. the RSPCA if animals are involved
- Restraining a suspect, or someone who is drunk
 - Obtaining medical assistance for someone who is experiencing mental ill health or other illness.

Protecting the Scene of an Incident

You must protect the scene in order to preserve any evidence it may contain to be thoroughly examined and documented. You should assume that there may be contact trace evidence at the scene and take great care to not contaminate the evidence and minimise the damage caused to the scene. Be very careful where you walk and try to avoid following the obvious route taken by an offender. Advise other personnel to use the same route as you. This is referred to as using a Common Approach Path (CAP).

You can prevent evidence being contaminated or removed by:

- Placing a cordon around the scene
- Denying access by e.g. closing doors
- Diverting traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular.

The actions you take and the order in which they are carried out will depend on the type of incident, the presence of casualties and the initial information that you are able to gather. You will need to prioritise your actions after assessing the incident according to the particular circumstances. At an incident where a crime has been committed the first action may be to attend to the needs of a victim, arresting and cautioning a suspect before protecting the scene.

The identity of a victim is not always obvious; he or she may be injured or in distress and been taken to a place of safety or for medical attention or to the house of a friend or neighbour, in which case you will need to establish their identity by questioning any witnesses present. Some cases may require the assistance of a Crime Scene Examiner to obtain DNA or fingerprints. At a non-crime scene, e.g. a minor traffic collision, your priority will be to ensure that there are no casualties before establishing whether the parties involved have exchanged relevant contact and insurance details; called for breakdown assistance if required; and removing any obstructions in the road.

Communicating with others

Effective communication is crucial to the successful outcome of any investigation. Throughout your initial assessment and protection of a scene you will be asking questions, establishing facts and giving advice and assistance where necessary.

You must keep the force control centre updated with details of the situation who will arrange for any assistance you may require to be sent to the scene. Other agencies will also require information about the incident to enable them to operate as efficiently as possible. They will need to know the location, your contact details, what has occurred to date, details of casualties, and an estimate of how the situation may develop.

2.3 Gathering Information at the Scene of the Incident

You should gather as much information as soon as possible while events are still fresh in the minds of witnesses, so that there is a good base on which the investigation or enquiry can be mounted. Initial enquiries at the scene will enable you to establish whether the incident is one that you can handle without assistance or with some back up from your colleagues, or an incident that is serious enough to need the attendance of a Search Team, a Crime Scene Examiner or an Investigation Team.

The amount of information available will depend on the type of incident and the place at which it occurs. Examples may include:

- The position of vehicles at a crash scene
- Injuries to a victim or someone involved in a traffic collision
- Evidence of any damage to a vehicle or premises
- Signs of a break in following a burglary.

You should record your observations in your pocket notebook, or your force equivalent documentation and, if possible, reinforce the entry with photographs, sketches, maps etc. In particular, you should note the position of any CCTV cameras and find out who is responsible for them as they may provide useful information at a later stage.

Witnesses

Witnesses may be able to provide valuable information about the incident. You should ask them if they have records such as photographs. These should be retained for future use. Witnesses may be able to provide a description of a suspect who has fled the scene and any transport used. Remember to record the witness' name and contact details. In addition, people living nearby or working in local shops and businesses may also be able to provide useful information.

Suspects

Suspects are not always present at an incident. Identification may be by a variety of means including a description given by victims or witnesses. You may be the first to interview a suspect; anything they say is relevant to a subsequent investigation and you may have to arrest and caution them. You may also have to search the suspect, for example; weapons or drugs. Once arrested, suspects should be interviewed at a police station or authorised place of detention unless delaying the interview will interfere or harm evidence or people, alert other suspects or hinder the recovery of property. Suspects are entitled to the protection of the law and must be treated fairly, accorded their human and legal rights as prescribed by law and not be subjected to any treatment that is biased or discriminatory.

Juveniles or persons experiencing mental ill health can only be interviewed in the presence of an appropriate adult and it may be difficult to arrange this at the scene of an incident. It is advisable to ask for guidance from your force control centre before attempting an interview of this nature.

3. Making Notes at the Scene of an Incident

Making notes is crucial to police operational effectiveness. It is imperative that timely and accurate information is recorded which could help you to recall details of incidents as and when needed and, specifically, during the course of criminal, civil or disciplinary proceedings and if you are called to give evidence in court.

It is vital that you understand:

- What documentation is used for making notes
- Why you are making notes at the time of an incident
- What information should be recorded at the time of an incident
- How you should record information.

You will need to develop the skills necessary to make notes in accordance with accepted good practice and of the high standard required in policing.

3.1 Pocket Note Books/Evidence and Action Books (PNB & EAB)

It is essential that you make accurate records of every incident regardless of whether it is something you are able to deal with as the first responder or one that will require further investigation. Your record must include all information collected and actions taken from the time that you were informed of the incident. The initial record will be in your pocket book, or by other means used in your force. The record you make concerning the incident is the first step in any subsequent enquiry or prosecution and it is essential that the record is legible, accurate and complete.

For consistency the terms "Pocket Note Books/Evidence and Action Books (PNB/EAB)" are used in this text. Some police forces use different forms of documentation so you will need to find out what is used in your force. Regardless of the type of documentation used all notes must be made in accordance with your force policy and you must comply with all policies and procedures in relation to:

- The issue of PNB/EAB or force equivalent documentation
- Use of PNB/EAB or force equivalent documentation
- Secure storage of PNB/EAB or force equivalent documentation.

You should carry your notebook at all times unless your duties prevent you from doing so: e.g. during a covert operation. It should be easily identifiable with your name, Force Identification Number (FIN) an issue (start) date and end date. Any loss should be reported to your supervisor or line manager as a matter of urgency.

3.2 Evidential Notes

The term "evidential notes" refers to records of information that may be used as evidence in any subsequent legal proceedings, whether it is in the criminal courts or the civil courts.

Evidential notes must be original and made at the time of the incident. If they are not, then you will not be permitted to refer to them whilst giving your evidence. This may result in a case being lost because of your inability to accurately recall the incident.

3.3 Non-Evidential Notes

Your PNB/EAB may be used to record information that is not of an evidential nature, but which may assist you in carrying out your duties. Examples of non-evidential notes are:

- Information given to you at pre-patrol briefings (e.g. details of stolen vehicles; wanted or missing persons, local crime patterns, details of recent burglaries in the area etc.)

- Details of persons stopped and searched
- Details of PNC vehicle and persons checks you conduct.

3.4 Why Notes are Made at the Scene of an Incident

All police officers and staff, irrespective of their rank or role, with evidential and supervisory responsibilities, are required to make notes at the time of an incident. You have a statutory responsibility, when you are involved in the conduct of a criminal investigation, to record and retain relevant material which could be used as evidence.

Under Part II of the Code of Practice to the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA) 1996:

“All investigators have a responsibility for carrying out the duties imposed on them under this code, including in particular recording information and retaining records of information and other material”

During the course of your police career you will attend a great many incidents, some of which will result in you having to attend court to give evidence. At court you will be expected to provide a clear, honest and accurate account of the incident, even though it may be months after the incident has occurred. In order to assist you the court will allow you to refresh your memory from original notes you made at the time of the incident.

If there is a suggestion that something in your notes was improperly altered or deleted it may be challenged in court. If a case was jeopardised or lost due to the inadmissibility of information this could have a severe impact on public confidence, the reputation of the police and confidence in the criminal justice system. There are also financial implications for taxpayers' money in terms of lost police and court time.

Your notes are used:

- To record, at the earliest point, evidence and details of any incident that may result in criminal or civil proceedings. Entries in a PNB/EAB

should be made at the time the event occurs or as soon as reasonably practicable

- As the first record of evidence and should state full details of any incident and any other information you feel may assist you to recall the circumstances of the event at a later date, in particular when you are giving evidence in court
- To record information about an occurrence or event which you consider to be significant
- To record when you are on and off duty; rest days, annual leave and periods of sickness in order to justify any gaps between entries
- To record "verbal comments" made by a victim, suspect or witness
- To record any offer made to a suspect to sign the PNB/EAB to acknowledge the accuracy of the notes. If a suspect refuses to sign or otherwise disagrees with the content, this should also be noted
- To record any contact, either in person or by other media, e.g. text messages, voicemail, email, and social media must be regarded as potentially relevant and therefore should be recorded and retained in a durable and retrievable form, for examination by a Disclosure Officer when compiling a prosecution file.

3.5 How to Make Notes

Information common to all incidents

The type of information you record in your pocket notebook/evidence and actions book will vary according to the particular type of incident you are dealing with, but there are certain pieces of information you should record at all incidents such as:

- Times of coming on and going off duty and refreshment periods
- Details of annual leave, rest days, sickness, and overtime

- . The time you were informed of and/or sent to the incident. Always use the 24 hour clock for example 3.30pm would be written as 15:30hrs
- . The time of your arrival at the scene of the incident
- . The name, address and telephone number of the person(s) reporting the incident
- . The nature of the incident e.g. road traffic collision; assault; domestic dispute etc.
- . The date and time when the incident occurred
- . The exact location where the incident occurred
- . The names, addresses and telephone numbers of persons involved in the incident and their involvement e.g. victims, witnesses, independent witnesses, suspects, other police officers and police community support officers and professional witnesses such as a medical practitioner or health professional
- . Details of what occurred at the scene of the incident.

Depending on the type of incident you may also need to record all or some of the following information:

- . Records of any interview conducted at the scene with questions and answers recorded in direct speech
- . Times of cautions given and record of any replies given in direct speech
- . Descriptions of suspects
- . Checks of people using the Police National Computer (PNC)
- . Details of property stolen including a description and approximate value
- . Details of property damaged including description, severity and, if possible, approximate cost of the damage

- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of any persons injured together with details of injuries sustained
- Vehicle descriptions including registration numbers
- Checks of vehicles using the Police National Computer (PNC)
- Registered keepers of vehicles
- Damage caused to vehicles
- Road and weather conditions
- Rough sketches/diagrams or measurements
- Lighting conditions (e.g. daylight, night, street lighting).

This is not an exhaustive list. You should make a record of anything you consider may be of assistance to you in your enquiries and in recalling the incident later on in court. Remember your notes are your record of an incident and you can write as much as you feel you need, provided they are notes made at the time of the incident or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards.

3.6 Presentation and Legibility of Notes

Your notes should be clear, precise and readable by any person who may be required to examine them at a subsequent date. Accurate, timely and comprehensive notes will be invaluable if you need to recall an event or incident later e.g. when giving evidence in court. Your notes should:

- a. Be recorded in plain English and be clearly legible
- b. Be written in black ink (black ink photocopies well)
- c. Have last names/family names written in upper case or underlined to give emphasis, for example:

John SMITH

John SMITH

Robert STEVENS

Steven ROBERTS

- d. Have the day and date written across each page and underlined at the start of each period of work
- e. Be made directly into your pocket book, not onto scrap paper or supplementary books as they would need to be retained and revealed under disclosure rules.

Pocket Note Book/Evidence and Action Book Rules: "NO ELBOWS"

These are commonly referred to by the mnemonic "no **ELBOWS**"

- NO** **E** erasures
- NO** **L** leaves (pages) torn out
- NO** **B** blank spaces
- NO** **O** overwriting text
- NO** **W** writing between lines
- S** statements should be written in direct speech

No Erasures

You must not erase anything in your notes by any means including the use of correction fluid, using an eraser or defacing in any way. There are two ways of dealing with a mistake depending on when you realise it has happened:

- 1. If you realise immediately that you have written the wrong word then the correct procedure is to insert a single line with your initials, and then enter the correct word alongside. An example of this is shown below:

An entry made by Police Constable 1234 Sam Miller:

On FRIDAY 21 September 2013, at 0930 hours Mr Richard SM Robert STEVENSON alleged that he had been assaulted.

2. If a mistake is noticed later you should cross-out the incorrect word with a single line and initial in the same way. However, in this situation you should also enter the letter 'A' above the error. An example of this is shown below:

An entry made by Police Constable 1234 Sam Miller:

On FRIDAY 21 September 2013, at 0930 hours MR RICHARD SM Robert 'A' STEVENSON alleged that he had been assaulted.

Subsequent words that have been omitted should be identified as ...B, C etc. An example of this is shown below:

An entry made by Police Constable 1234 Sam Miller:

On FRIDAY 21 September 2013, at 0930 hours MR RICHARD SM Robert 'A' STEVENSON alleged that he had been assaulted by a woman I now 'B' to be MRS Linda JOHNSON of....

An explanation of the errors can then be given at the end of the entry before it is signed.

An example of this is shown below:

Example of an entry made by Police Constable 1234 Sam Miller:

Informed control room at 1015 HOURS.

Error 'A' = "Robert"

Error 'B' = "know"

Sam MILLER PC1234

Countersignatures

If an entry in your notes has been countersigned by someone else, for example a person you have interviewed, that person must also initial any corrections made after they signed it. This will show that the alterations were made with that person's knowledge.

If pages are accidentally left blank they should be crossed through diagonally and the words 'omitted in error' written with date, time and officer's signature across the page.

No pages torn out

Under no circumstances must any pages be removed, torn out or changed. This rule always applies even during your training.

No blank spaces

Anyone scrutinising your original notes should be satisfied that it was impossible for anything to have been added since they were originally signed by all persons whose signatures appear in them or after other evidence was revealed.

Blank spaces must not be left:

- between words
- between lines, or
- at either end of the line of text.

Paragraphs are not used. Plan ahead as you write and ensure that the written matter fills the line or draw a line to the edge of the page. Initially you may find this difficult to do but it will become easier with practice. Meanwhile, if there is insufficient space to complete a word, break it and continue on the next line.

Not filling a whole line with text is only permitted on the following occasions:

- a. In a record of questions and answers, if you want to start each on a new line

- b. When listing property, with each item on a separate line (you could still draw a line to the edge of the page if you wish).

At the end of each entry, if there is insufficient space your full signature should be at the beginning of the next line. In these circumstances, fill the space by drawing a line to the end and initialling at the end of the line.

If you draw a sketch, sign the last line of writing before it and start any further writing on the next clear line after it.

No overwriting

Overwriting to alter or correct any word, letter or number is not permitted as it may not be fully legible.

No writing between lines

You must not write between lines of writing. There should only be one line of writing on each line.

Statements in direct speech

Record all statements in direct speech, for example;

He said, "I was going..."

not He told me he was going...

Collaborated notes

Notes may be produced in consultation when two or more officers/ members of staff are jointly engaged in any police matter. In such instances you will need to record the fact that you completed your notes together with details of the name and FIN of the officer or member of staff involved.

The exception to this may be where there is a death or serious injury following police contact. If the details can be remembered easily, each officer/member of staff should write the notes separately, independently and without consultation. In more complex cases where two or more officers/members of staff witness the same incident or are present at the

same interview there is no objection to these officers/members of staff conferring together when preparing notes so that they may be as full and comprehensive as possible. In any case, where consultation takes place a note to this effect should be added.

Where two or more officers/members of staff are witnesses to an incident or present at an interview and the decision is taken to make notes, it is acceptable for one officer/member of staff to make a full and accurate entry. This should be countersigned by other officers/members of staff involved. If it is not convenient or appropriate to adopt this practice, officers/members of staff should make individual notes. If one officer has no recollection of a point observed or of a remark remembered by his/her colleague, he/she should not incorporate such a matter into his/her notes. A note, whether made in consultation with a colleague or otherwise, must reflect a genuine personal observation and recollection.

You should understand and comply with your force policy on collaborated notes.

Use of audio and/or video equipment

Finally, the use of audio and/or video equipment such as mobile phones, tablets and body-worn cameras is on the increase. The use of "helmet-cams", for example, that have the potential to record everything audible and visible that happens at a scene, is becoming more wide-spread and likely to become commonplace. You should ensure that you are fully familiar with your force policy on such matters, together with the evidential and non-evidential implications of such use.

Providing support for those at the scene of an incident

When the incident has been dealt with, you may need to offer support, or arrange for it to be provided, to victims and their family members, or witnesses. Such support could include:

- Organisations that can provide emotional support to victims and witnesses
- Medical treatment for people experiencing mental ill health

- Care and support for any children involved
- Care and support for vulnerable adults
- Interpreters for anyone for whom English is not their first language. (You need to be aware of the legal requirements and your force procedures in respect of the use of interpreters)
- You may have to arrange for a property to be made safe and secure; for example in the case of a burglary where damage has occurred
- Public protection teams/specialist units within your force that can assist victims of racist attacks, sexual assaults and domestic and child abuse
- Family members, friends or neighbours who can help people who do not require special advice or attention.

At all incidents you will have to balance the needs of police action or investigation, with your duty to protect and reassure the public.

Examples of actions taken at the scene of an incident

Example One

You receive a call from your force control centre. An intruder alarm has sounded at an office block and the control centre staff have been unable to contact the security guard on the telephone number provided. You are given the address of the office and directed to attend. There is no further information. You arrive at 8am.

At the office block you find that the outer door has been forced open and is loose; the woodwork is splintered and broken. Inside the door there are bloodstains on the floor, and the marks of shoeprints in the blood.

Further into the premises you find the security guard; he has been tied up. He is badly injured, with cuts to his head, but is alive and can speak.

Assessment

- The security guard is injured and will need medical assistance

- If he is well enough to do so, the security guard may be able to give you some information about the incident
- There is evidence to preserve
- The case may be taken by an investigative team.

Action

- Call for an ambulance
- Untie the guard and render first aid if necessary, reassure him that help is en route and ask if he wants anybody informed about the situation
- Ask him for:
 - His details
 - If he is able to relate what occurred
 - A description of his attacker(s)
 - Whether any attacker was injured (in case the blood stains may be created by them)
- Secure whatever was used to bind the guard as evidence, bag and label it
- Contact the control centre and report what has occurred and ask for:
 - A crime scene examiner for a forensic examination
 - The owner/occupier of the building to be informed and asked if there are any CCTV cameras
 - The description of the suspect(s) to be circulated
- Photograph the shoeprints and the forced door, if possible
- Put warning tape on the outside of the door to prevent anyone from entering. This will protect and preserve the scene and also prevent any contact with the blood
- If practicable consider searching the rest of the office area

- Check outside the building for:
 - Any CCTV cameras
 - Any possible evidence
 - Any witnesses in the area, including nearby buildings
- When the ambulance arrives ensure that the scene is not contaminated and establish to which hospital the victim will be taken
- Keep a full record of all that occurs
- Keep the control centre updated.

The above is a relatively simple example. There are no witnesses or suspects at the scene to confuse or contaminate the evidence and you may be able to control the incident without assistance.

Example Two

You are contacted by the control centre about a disturbance reported at a local address; shouting and screaming has been heard coming from inside the house. There have been previous incidents of domestic abuse at the address. There is no further information. At the scene the door is opened by a child aged about eight. In the living room there is a man, who appears to be angry and belligerent, and a woman whose face is cut and bleeding. As you enter the room you see that he has hold of her hair and is shaking her.

Assessment

- The situation is violent and likely to become more so
- There is a suspect that needs to be controlled
- The victim, the woman, is in danger and the danger is liable to become worse
- There is a child at risk
- You will need to gather evidence

- Because of the violence you may need assistance.

Action

- To prevent further violence it is necessary to control the suspect, so you should consider arresting him on suspicion of assault and you may need to restrain him e.g. by using handcuffs
- You will need to caution the suspect and consider a search of person in case he has a weapon (consider that he may have consumed alcohol or drugs)
- You will need assistance to take the suspect to a station
- When the suspect is under control you will need to attend to the victim
 - Ascertain other injuries beyond the cuts to her face
 - Call for medical assistance
 - Ask her for an account of the events before your arrival
 - Ask if she will permit you to photograph her injuries
- Note any other evidence, e.g. damage to furniture, that is relevant
- Offer support to the victim
 - Notify the Domestic Abuse Unit in your force
 - Ask if there is a relative or friend she would like informed
 - Make arrangements to safeguard the child if necessary
 - Ask if there are other children that may need to be safeguarded
- Continually update the force control centre
- Make a full record of the incident by whatever means your force has in place.

This example differs from the first in that there is a suspect to control and may not need the involvement of a specialist crime scene examiner or an investigating team. There may be witnesses, neighbours possibly, who

heard the disturbance, as well as the person who reported it, and you will need to contact them. However it is likely that if there is a prosecution you and your colleagues will be the prime witnesses, so you will need to have an exact record of what took place. Further assistance may be required for the victim and child. Using the child as a witness should not be undertaken without consulting your force specialists trained to do so.

Recognise and manage the stress of traumatic incidents

It is important that you are aware of the effects of stress and are able to recognise the symptoms of stress in yourself and other people. Working as a police officer and dealing with traumatic incidents such as road collisions, deaths, abuse, murder, and assaults as well as other work pressures can lead to increased stress levels. Stress affects people differently and what may cause stress to one person may not necessarily affect someone else in the same way. There is no timescale for the onset of trauma related stress; it can occur at any time after an incident. The more exposure a person has to traumatic and difficult situations the more likely they are to experience symptoms of stress especially if they are also under pressure outside work. In everyday terms it's too much to bear. Stress can have short term and long term physical and psychological effects and show itself as behavioural and emotional symptoms. The adrenaline produced by the body under stress can cause an increase in blood pressure and heart rate, excessive perspiration, a clammy skin and palpitations. There may also be symptoms of indigestion, nausea and headaches. Emotional symptoms include anxiety, fear, anger, frustration, depression and guilt. It can be difficult to identify these symptoms in other people. In addition people may not be aware that they are suffering from stress, others may be reluctant to admit it and try to disguise it.

Behavioural symptoms are easier to recognise. The person afflicted may become withdrawn, indecisive, inflexible, aggressive, irritable, tearful and experience insomnia. People suffering from stress often become dependent on alcohol or drugs. Do not ignore stress in yourself or a colleague. It is better to deal with the problem early. Stress reduces

efficiency and for a police officer this can result in increased health and safety risks. If you suspect a colleague may be experiencing stress, talk to them about it, as this often helps. You may also suggest that they seek help from a doctor or force occupational health department. You should monitor yourself for signs of stress, identify the underlying causes and try to address them, seeking help to do so.

Debriefing sessions held after a stressful incident e.g. a fatal road collision can help those involved to discuss the matter and help to reduce the risk of stress by releasing pent up emotions.

Victims and witnesses often, and understandably, experience stress as a result of an incident. If you need to interview someone who is experiencing stress, and it will not adversely affect the outcome of the investigation, it may be advisable to delay the interview until the stress has had time to abate. You will need to balance the needs of the investigation with the needs of the person involved. Simply allowing them to talk about the incident may assist them to relieve the strain. Having a friend or relative present at the interview may be of some comfort to the person involved and most forces have access to victim support services.

4. Protecting the Scene of an Incident/ Preserving Evidence

4.1 The Golden Hour

The Golden Hour is a term used for the period immediately following an offence when material is abundant and readily available to the police.

Positive action in the period immediately following the report of a crime minimises the attrition of material and maximises the chance of securing evidence that will be admissible in court. The list below outlines some key Golden Hour considerations:

Victims	Identify, support and sensitively preserve evidence
Scenes	Identify, preserve, assess and commence log
Suspects	Identify, arrest and preserve
Witnesses	Identify, support and prioritise (key and significant), record first account and description of suspect(s)
Log	Decisions and rationale, circumstances, resources, and conditions
Family/community	Identify, inform, primary support (needs, concerns expectations, sensitivity)
Physical evidence	Preservation (CCTV, public transport, escape routes, ambulances, hospitals)
Intelligence	Identify, prioritise, maximise, exploit, consider, community and open source
Prevent contamination	Victims, scenes, witnesses, suspects
Lines of responsibility	Identify, inform, brief, co-ordinate and review

4.2 Gathering material during the 'Golden Hour'

The quality of the initial investigation which you carry out as first responder is a significant factor in gathering material that leads to the detection of a crime. The first opportunity to locate and gather material may be the only opportunity. Scenes that are not identified and secured will deteriorate quickly; witnesses who are not identified and interviewed straight away may discuss events with others and thus contaminate their recollection of the event or may leave the area and be difficult to trace later. The acronym CCSC refers to the actions you should take to ensure

that the opportunity to obtain relevant and important material during the “golden hour” is not lost:

Confirm exactly what has taken place.

Cordon off the crime scene.

Secure the crime scene.

Control the crime scene.

4.3 Protecting the Scene of an Incident

If the scene is indoors the area protected should include the centre of the scene and entry and exit points which may have been used during the incident. It is your responsibility to put a cordon in place, guard the scene and restrict access. Anyone without a direct role to play in the investigation should not be permitted to enter the scene. A crime scene log should be kept and will usually include:

- details of the officer keeping the log
- names and details of all personnel entering and exiting the scene
- date and time of all personnel entering and exiting the scene
- reasons why personnel are entering and exiting the scene
- signatures of everyone entering and exiting the scene.

You should familiarise yourself with your force procedures relating to crime scene logs policy and/or seek advice from your supervisor. In order to ascertain the full details of the offence and actions of the offender the scene must be preserved as intact as possible. Protecting a crime scene can be a highly responsible and difficult task. No one should enter the scene without the permission of the attending Crime Scene Examiner/Manager or the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO). This includes other investigating officers and senior officers who have no function at the scene. It is your responsibility to challenge anyone entering a scene, regardless of their rank or function, and asking for identification. You should do this politely and firmly. Do not use or allow others to touch or

use any equipment within the scene such as telephones, toilets, washbasins, sinks or towels which may carry valuable evidence. Keep detailed notes as you may later be asked by the SIO to account for every action taken at the scene.

4.4 Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996

The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA) deals with the retention, recording and disclosure of all relevant material gathered during the course of any investigation.

The CPIA defines everyone involved in a criminal investigation as an investigator. This Act applies to you, especially in relation to recording and retaining material.

Further information about the CPIA code of practice issued under Part II of the Act can be found at:

http://www.xact.org.uk/information/downloads/CPIA/Disclosure_code_of_practice.pdf

4.5 Relevant Material

Relevant material is material of any kind, including information and objects, obtained in the course of a criminal investigation. This includes material which come into your possession during the investigation such as documents seized whilst searching premises as well as material which you generate such as interview records. In the early stages of an investigation, when it may be difficult to determine the relevance of material, it is wise to err on the side of caution whilst also applying common sense to ensure that material which may later be considered relevant is not overlooked.

4.6 The Disclosure Officer

The disclosure officer is responsible for examining material obtained during the investigation. They are responsible for revealing relevant material to the prosecutor and must certify that they have done this.

They may also be required to reveal further relevant material to the prosecutor so that it can be considered for disclosure to the defence if the case proceeds.

In most criminal cases the primary investigator will also have the role of “disclosure officer” although serious and complex cases often have a separate and dedicated disclosure officer.

4.7 Officer in Charge of an Investigation

The officer in charge of an investigation is the police officer responsible for directing a criminal investigation. That officer is also responsible for ensuring that correct procedures are in place for recording information, retaining records of information and other material, collected during the investigation.

4.8 Recording and Retaining Information Obtained During an Investigation

Information must be recorded at the time it is obtained or as soon as is possible after that. Material must be recorded/stored in a durable or retrievable form, for example, in writing, on video or audio tape, or on a computer disc. If it is not practicable to retain the original record, (e.g. because it forms part of a larger record which is to be destroyed), the information must be transferred to a secure and retrievable form beforehand.

5. Revision Questions

- . Give examples of ways in which the police are informed of an incident.
- . What information would you require prior to responding to an incident?
- . What does the acronym APC mean and how is APC relevant to an officer attending an incident?
- . What would your priorities be at the scene of an incident?
- . Give examples of information you would record in your Pocket Note Books (PNB)/Evidence and Actions Books (EAB) or force equivalent?
- . What action would you take to support people involved in an incident?

6. Key Legislation

- . Codes of Practice to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- . Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996
- . Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984