POLICY AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Title	Critical Incident Management Policy		
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SOP(s) Ref. No			
Version No.	4.0		
Senior Officer Lead	Assistant Chief Constable Protective Services		
Author *(by job title)*	Head of Collaborated Uniformed Protective Services		
Ratifying Group	Operational Delivery Group	**Date**	December 2005

1. **Purpose**

1.1   This purpose of this policy is to set strategic guidance for Bedfordshire Police in the prevention, identification, management and review of critical incidents.

2. **Revision History**

Date	Revision	Change	Section	Schedule Review Due
December 2005	1.0	Unknown		
July 2008	2.0	Unknown		
September 2008	3.0	Unknown		
July 2010	4.0	Updated to Form 020 format and SOP included with Policy		July 2013

3. **Persons Affected**

3.1   Bedfordshire Police Staff, the public and in particular the victims, their families and communities subject of critical incidents.

4. **Policy**

4.1   The primary duty of Bedfordshire Police is the protection of life and property. Bedfordshire Police has a duty to maintain order and safety, prevent disorder and to minimise the consequences of disorder.

4.2   The Bedfordshire Police Strategic Plan 2008-2011 has four key outcomes:
- People are safer;
- People feel safer;
- People are more satisfied with the service they receive from Bedfordshire Police; and
- People have more confidence in Bedfordshire Police.

4.3   The intention of this policy is to support these outcomes by ensuring that Bedfordshire Police provides an effective response to any incident and in particular, events declared as 'critical incidents'.

5.   **Definitions**

5.1   'Effectiveness' is a measure of the professionalism, competence and integrity evident in the police response to an incident.

5.2   'Significant impact' should be interpreted as being particular to each incident but critically relates to the impact on the individual, family or community.

5.3   'Confidence' refers to the long-term confidence in policing of victims, families and communities.

6.   **Responsibilities**

6.1   The Assistant Chief Constable Protective Services has responsibility, through the Uniformed Protective Services Strategic Group and the Divisional Leadership Teams, for policy and procedure in relation to critical incidents.

7.   **Standard Operating Procedures**

7.1   Introduction

7.1.1   This document details the procedures for the management of critical incidents, in accordance with the critical incident policy. This includes the prevention, identification, notification, declaration, command and control and management of critical incidents. It also details the procedures, where necessary, for the restoration of public confidence.

7.1.2   The police response to any incident has to be effective from the start. Experience has shown that the confidence of victims, families and communities can be lost at an early stage and may never be resolved in a satisfactory manner.

7.1.3   A key aim of this procedure is to give supervisory and subsequently senior officers early notification of incidents that have escalated, or have the potential to escalate, into critical incidents. This will ensure an appropriate strategy is put in place to ensure/restore public confidence.

7.1.4   The definition is deliberately broad and should ensure that potential critical incidents are not missed. Although high profile or large-scale incidents have an increased potential to escalate into critical incidents smaller scale incidents can, and do, escalate if they are not managed correctly.

7.1.5   It recognises the fundamental importance of community confidence and trust in the police response to critical incidents.

7.1.6   It applies equally to internal critical incidents.

7.1.7   The fact that an incident has been declared a critical incident must not undermine the deployment of a competent and well-managed police response in line with standard policies and procedures. It is intended that this procedure be used in conjunction with these.

7.1.8   All Bedfordshire police officers, police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily must be aware of and are required to comply with this procedure.

7.2   Definition of Critical Incident

7.2.1   ACPO has adopted the definition of a critical incident as:

- Any incident where the **effectiveness** of the police response is likely to have a **significant impact** on the **confidence** of:
  - ➢   The Victim;
  - ➢   Their Family; and/or
  - ➢   The Community

Keywords:

- **Effectiveness** – this is a measure of the professionalism, competence and integrity evident in the police response to an incident;

- **Significant impact** – significant should be interpreted as being particular to each incident but critically relates to the impact on the individual, family or community**;**

- **Confidence** – this is a reference to a long-term confidence in policing – of victims, families and communities.

7.3   'Major' or 'Critical' Incident

7.3.1   There is often some confusion as to whether an incident should be defined as '**Major**' or '**Critical**'. A **Major** Incident is defined as:

"Any emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or all of the emergency services and will generally include involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people".

7.3.2   This normally involves some immediate impact on public safety, disruption and/or risk, and has to be immediately managed and contained, involving a wide use of resources not just police based. Although these incidents may also be identified as a critical incident it should be recognised that 'Major' and 'Critical' are distinct issues. These may run concurrently, independently or may overlap. On most occasions it is likely that either the 'Major' or 'Critical' part of the incident will be closed down while the other remains active until the police involvement in the incident is completed. It should be remembered that an incident status could change so that even if it has been closed originally, it can be re-opened, subsequently as a critical incident if confidence issues are identified.

7.3.3   Not all critical incidents are instantly identifiable as such and can often evolve from low-key incidents or small-scale volume crime reports. It is therefore important to assess and balance the relative status of an incident that may be of lower prioritisation to the Bedfordshire Police, but may still have a major impact on the victim and community relationships and partnerships.

7.4   **Impact of a Critical Incident**

7.4.1   The effect of a critical incident on an individual or community can be traumatic with the main impacts tending to be:

- Loss of faith in the police and the protection being offered;
- Increased suspicion of police actions;
- Reticence in supporting or providing information to the police;
- Reluctance to report further incidents or offences.

7.4.2   There are also practical impacts of Critical Incidents for Divisions and Bedfordshire Police as a whole, which include:

- Increased cost/time spent managing and recovering the situation;
- Stretching of limited resources;
- Loss of credibility within the community;
- Potential loss of support for future community based projects;
- Increased media criticism;
- Reduction in flow of community intelligence;
- Impact on Bedfordshire Police reputation nationally;
- A negative impact on crime reporting and reduction rates;
- Impact on successfully achieving BCU business objectives;
- Long-term impact in terms of affecting and changing Police responses procedures and policies (e.g. Murder of Stephen Lawrence).

Identification, Notification and Declaration of Critical Incidents

7.5   Identification of a Critical Incident

7.5.1   A critical incident may be identified either because:

- It is identified by the police during or after the response, that there are issues; or
- The police actions do not meet public expectations and concerns are expressed; or
- It is highlighted to the Police by partner agencies; or
- The presence of **criticality factors** heightens the scrutiny and confidence in the police response.

7.5.2   It is either verbally or through a written complaint that a victim/family/community normally express their concerns about the standard of the police response. It is imperative to recognise that where this occurs, as well as following Bedfordshire Police policies where a formal complaint is made, the incident or investigation should be reviewed as soon as possible. This allows all confidence issues to be identified and where possible immediately resolved.

7.5.3   On many occasions the nature of the offence or incident will have **criticality factors** and will possibly dictate them being treated as critical. With these it is recognised that if the police response is not effective enough, confidence issues will be caused. This identification can occur at any time in an incident or investigation. These criticality factors may be divided into two broad categories: **specific incidents** and **generic factors**.

> **Specific incidents** may include:
> - Suspicious, unexplained deaths;
> - Homicides;
> - Incidents requiring a police firearms response;
> - Domestic violence;
> - Vulnerable persons missing from home;
> - Serious sexual offences;
> - Deaths in police custody.
>
> **Generic factors** may include:
> - Hate crimes motivated by race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or other diversity factors;
> - Crimes involving particularly vulnerable or young victims;
> - Linked series crime, especially where it is directed at a single victim or part of a community;
> - Crimes involving high-profile victims or offenders;
> - Incidents which attract high profile media attention.

The above lists are **not** prescriptive or exhaustive. The identification of a critical incident will also need to take into account the local demographics such as ethnic mix, diversity, density of population and local geography. In addition the mood of the community and the local economic, political and social climate, at the time, will need to be considered.

7.5.4   All officers or members of police staff dealing with an incident (this may include call handling staff and those first responders) have a responsibility for the identification of potential critical incidents. Some critical incidents may be identified at the outset and others may not be identified until some time after the initial police response.

7.6   Role of First Responder

7.6.1   The initial actions of the first responder will have a significant impact on the immediate and future confidence that members of the public have in the ability of Bedfordshire Police to respond appropriately and effectively to their concerns.

7.6.2   The first responder must:
- Establish the nature of the incident and follow the relevant procedure for the situation faced;
- Use the 'Golden Hour' principles which can be summarised as follows;
  - **F**amily - Victim and Community
  - **F**orensics – Scenes, physical evidence, contamination
  - **S**cene – Identify, arrest and intelligence
  - **W**itnesses – Identify, support and prioritise
  - **C**CTV - Seizure and continuity
  - **M**edia – Media Officer

See Appendix A (The Golden Hour – Critical Incident Management)

- Identify and manage any confidence factors from the victim, family or community;
- Consider if critical factors are present which may aggravate or cause confidence issues in the police response;
- Notify a supervisor as soon as possible if it is believed the incident is potentially a critical incident.

7.6.3   In addition to the above the first responder should:

- Verify call details are correct with source (e.g. CHC) and clarify the time-scale between the original call and attendance;

- Conduct and assess background intelligence checks before attendance;

- Where able complete a dynamic risk assessment as soon as possible for the incident;

- Set appropriate risk strategies;

- Consider positive intervention e.g. prompt arrest of any suspects;

- Identify if specialist support is required;

- When a criminal allegation is made the Victims Code of Practice (VCOP) is to be followed;

- Any relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are to be followed.

7.7   Notification of a Potential Critical Incident

7.7.1   A key element of critical incident management is the early notification to supervisors and senior officers of incidents that have escalated, or have the potential to escalate, into critical incidents.

7.7.2   Where, in the opinion of the officer or staff member, an incident is or has the potential to become a critical incident this will be communicated immediately to a supervisor.

7.7.3   In relation to incidents that are still in-progress this will normally be a divisional-based Patrol Sergeant responsible for the area where the incident is occurring. If no Sergeant is available the Divisional Duty Inspector should be notified.

7.7.4   In relation to incidents that have occurred previously this will normally be the appropriate first line supervisor for the relevant area or department. This will include specialist departments.

7.8   Role of Supervisor – Sergeant/Supervisor (Uniform, Detective or Police Staff)

7.8.1   When a Sergeant/Supervisor is made aware of an incident that has been identified as a potential critical incident they should do the following:

- Immediately inquire into the circumstances of the incident. In relation to incidents that are still in-progress the Sergeant should attend and take control of the incident;

- Determine whether the incident potentially meets the criteria of a critical incident;

- Ensure that any standard operating procedures, for the type of incident, are being complied with;

- Take any steps to resolve victim, family or community confidence issues;

- In relation to incidents that are still in-progress, that appear to meet the criteria of critical incidents, inform the Inspector Contact Management Centre;
- In relation to other incidents, that appear to meet the criteria of critical incidents, inform the Inspector responsible for the area or department dealing with the incident.

Note: If the incident is one where death or serious injury has occurred as the result of police contact, such as a police shooting, roads pursuit or collision, during an arrest or a death in custody, the Inspector Contact Management Centre should call out the on duty Post Incident Manager (PIM). For a brief on the role of a PIM see Appendix K.

7.9   Declaration of a Critical Incident Inspector (or above) – (Uniform or Detective)

7.9.1   The Inspector (or above) notified in accordance with the above is responsible for declaring a critical incident.

7.9.2   To make the appropriate decision, declaring officers must ensure that they have access to all available sources of information, including:

- Current situation awareness;
- Decision logs and case files;
- Briefings;
- Family liaison officers.

Each incident must be assessed on its own merits. An incident should not be declared critical simply because there is a risk that the police may be criticised. The decision to declare should be based on whether the effectiveness of the police response will have a significant impact on public confidence.

7.9.3   Declaring a critical incident will add an additional layer of quality assurance and identify if action is required to enhance or recover the quality of the police response or public confidence.

7.9.4   If the Inspector (or above) declares a critical incident he/she will ensure the following:

- An entry is be made on the Critical Incident Register, maintained within the Contact Management Centre. A unique number will be allocated. This will be arranged via the Contact Management Centre Inspector or Sergeant;
- The declaring officer will assess the risk level of the incident as follows;

> **High**

- The effectiveness of the Police response has had a significant negative impact on the confidence of victim, family or community and requires <u>additional activity</u> to restore this confidence;

> **Medium**

- The effectiveness of the Police response has had a significant negative impact on the confidence of victim, family or community but is now stable with <u>ongoing activity and maintenance</u>; or

- A critical incident has been declared due to the <u>potential</u> significant impact or the presence of criticality factors. The incident requires <u>ongoing activity and maintenance</u> although no significant negative has been identified at this stage.

> **Low (Closed)**

- Declared incidents where <u>no ongoing activity or maintenance</u> is currently required to manage or prevent significant impact on confidence. This includes incidents where confidence issues were identified but have now been managed.

See Appendix B (Risk Levels – Critical Incident Management)

7.9.5   The Critical Incident Register will be endorsed to reflect the risk level;

7.9.6   In relation to incidents that are still in-progress the appropriate OIS incident log should record the fact the incident has now been declared as a critical incident. 'Criticalincident' (with no space between the words) should be typed into the text. This will enable specific searches to be made on the OIS system;

7.9.7   In relation to incidents that are still in-progress the Divisional Duty Patrol Inspector will be informed. They will take over operational command of the incident. This will include the establishment of an initial command structure based on the Gold, Silver, Bronze model;

7.9.8   In relation to incidents that have previously occurred command will be maintained by the declaring officer;

7.9.9   The declaration of the critical incident should not prevent the provision of an ongoing police response in accordance with policy or procedure relevant to the incident;

7.9.10 Ensure that a Superintendent is notified about the incident (within 24 hours) if it remains assessed as risk level High or Medium. This notification may take place at the Daily Divisional Management Team

Meetings. Critical incidents of a confidential or sensitive nature may need to be notified separately. Earlier notification to a Superintendent will be based on the circumstances assessed by the Inspector, in command of the incident. This is particularly important in incidents that are likely to be high profile, attract media attention or are likely to have an impact on more than one Division or the whole force.

7.9.11 The Superintendent informed will normally be the following;

Incidents that are still in-progress with a current police response.	Territorial Divisional Superintendent for area where incident is occurring or on-call Superintendent for out-of-hours notifications.
Spontaneous incidents that have been declared and are now assessed as low (closed).	Territorial Divisional Superintendent for area where incident occurred.
Incidents which are subject of investigation solely by specialist/support departments E.g. Child Protection, Professional Standards Investigations, Fatal Road Traffic Collisions.	Superintendent responsible for the investigating department.

7.9.12 Incidents that have been declared and then risk assessed as Low (closed) should be notified to the Superintendent at the next Daily Divisional Management Team Meeting. If the Inspector in command of the incident will not be present he/she will ensure that details have been forwarded to the Superintendent prior to the meeting;

7.9.13 The Contact Management Centre Inspector or Sergeant will ensure that an entry is made, regarding the critical incident, on the Chief Constable's Briefing Sheet.

7.10 **Role of Superintendent**

7.10.1 Where a Superintendent has been informed of the declaration of a critical incident he/she will have the following responsibilities; (in the absence of the Superintendent another member of the Divisional Leadership Team should undertake the responsibilities):

- Assess the situation based on all the available information and identify the reason(s) why an incident is being or was declared as a critical incident;

- Assess the grading of the critical incident i.e. High, Medium or Low and re-classify if necessary. Any changes should be notified to the Contact Management Centre Inspector/Sergeant to amend the Critical Incident Register;

- For all incidents risk assessed as either High or Medium adopt the role of Gold Commander and set the strategic aims;

- Decide whether to notify an ACPO Officer. This is particularly important in incidents that are likely to be high profile, attract media attention or are likely to have an impact on more than one Division or the whole force. All incidents where the command structure

is likely to be commanded at Tier 2 or 3 (see 3.2 below) should be notified to an ACPO officer;

- For all incidents that are risk assessed as Low (closed) ensure that a debrief of the incident took place and any issues raised are dealt with;

- Establish a command structure relevant to the incident to achieve the strategic aims of the strategy;

- Establish a strategy that ensures/restores the quality of the police response to maintain/re-build public confidence. This will include consideration of referring actions to other departments or partner agencies.

See Appendix C (Gold Groups – Critical Incident Management)
See Appendix D (Victim, Family and Community – Critical Incident Management)

7.11 **Role of Chief Officers**

7.11.1 Chief Officers (ACPO) have the overall responsibility, through their Divisional Leadership Teams, for the management of critical incidents within Bedfordshire Police. Not all incidents will be directly notified to ACPO. This is based on the assessment of the Superintendent above. Declared critical incidents will, however, be included in the daily Chief Constable's Briefing Sheet.

7.11.2 The Assistant Chief Constable (Protective Services) is Chair of the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Uniform Protective Services Strategic Group (UPSSG), formerly the Firearms, Public Order & Critical Incident Strategic Group. This group has a responsibility for the strategic development of critical incident management within the force.

7.11.3 Where an ACPO Officer has been notified of the declaration of a critical incident he/she will have the following responsibilities:

- Assess the situation based on all the available information and identify the reason(s) why an incident is being declared as a critical incident;

- Assess the grading of the critical incident i.e. High, Medium or Low and re-classify if necessary. Any changes should be notified to the Contact Management Centre Inspector/Sergeant to amend the Critical Incident Register;

- Decide on the appropriate command structure for the incident at Tier1, Tier2 or Tier 3 (see 3.2 below);

- For Tier 3 incidents adopt the role of Gold Commander and set the strategic aims;

- Establish a strategy that ensures/restores the quality of the police response to maintain/re-build public confidence.

See Appendix C (Gold Groups – Critical Incident Management)
See Appendix D (Victim, Family and Community – Critical Incident Management)
See Appendix F (Flow Chart – Critical Incident Management)

7.12   **Role of the Police Authority in Managing Critical Incidents**

7.12.1   It has been agreed that the Police Authority will be represented at a critical incident Gold Group for critical incidents where there are significant reputational, resource or financial risks for the Force and/or the Authority. A Police Authority Member will attend the Gold Group **by way of mutual agreement with** the Gold Commander of that Group. The Chief Executive of the Police Authority will be the point of contact to facilitate the nomination of a Police Authority Member.

7.12.2   The Authority's Member's role, which is to be agreed with the Gold Commander at the outset, will include **some or all of the following**:

- Constructively challenging any assumptions and mindsets;
- Ensuring that the Group has appropriate processes in place to identify and address the needs of the family, communities and officers/staff involved in the incident;
- Acting as a 'sounding-board' and providing support throughout, in particular supporting the ACPO lead/BCU Commander in any meetings with the public/media including chairing public meetings when required;
- Reporting back to the Chair, officers and members of the Authority;
- Working with the Force and the Authority to re-assess community impact, consider **additional** community engagement opportunities, and to consider any further action which may be necessary to restore **and enhance** public confidence;
- **The Police Authority will monitor force compliance with human rights and oversee   implementation of appropriate recommendations following a review of the critical   incident.**

7.12.3   The role of such a member relates to the oversight and public consultation responsibilities of the Authority and she/he should be mindful of the potential accountability issues should the Gold Group be subject to public scrutiny. If any Member feels that they have a conflict of interest, she/he should declare it and withdraw.

7.12.4   With prolonged incidents, updates and where necessary confidential briefings, will be provided to the Police Authority at agreed intervals and opportunities offered to Members to visit incident rooms, scenes, etc.

7.12.5   Police Authority Members local to an incident will be consulted, prior to or immediately after the incident to ensure the best use of local contacts and when appropriate, scrutinise community impact assessments when they are being considered for such high risk critical incidents.

7.12.6   In fulfilling their public consultation responsibilities the Police Authority may have a role to play within certain critical incidents which do not result in the specific formation of a dedicated Gold Group. In such circumstances the Gold Commander should engage with the Lead Member(s) who can then consider the nature and style of any potential Police Authority involvement.

7.12.7   Nothing within this paper precludes the current situation where the Chair of the Police Authority/Lead Member is briefed on other serious incidents that are not declared as 'critical'. Examples include incidents of particular local interest or concern, significant court cases, significant Professional Standards issues or incidents of countywide significance.
Refer to Appendices H and J.

7.13   **Command and Control of Critical Incidents**

7.13.1   Command and Control

7.13.2   Where a critical incident is declared it is essential that an unambiguous command and control system is established and that clearly outlines the roles. This will be the Gold, Silver and Bronze structure.

> By using the acronym **SAFER**, critical incident commanders will be able to quickly identify the action that is required to ensure and safeguard success in what could be a complex and dynamic environment.
>
> - **S**cenes of crime – well-defined and well-managed
> - **A**ctions – fast-track and intelligence-led, to arrest offenders(s)
> - **F**amily – supported and supportive of investigation
> - **E**vidence – comprehensive and relentless search for witnesses and evidence
> - **R**ecords – accurate and contemporaneous, clearly stating decisions and rationale
>
> *Bill Griffiths BEM QPM*
> *Metropolitan Police Service*

- **Gold Commander** – Overall command of the incident and the determination of the strategy.

Responsibilities include: (not an exhaustive list)

  - Determine police strategy – may include;
    – Preserve and protect lives

- Minimise the impact of the incident,
- Protect and preserve the scene,
- Inform the public and maintain public confidence,
- Prevent, deter and detect crime,
- Ensure health and safety of all attending,
- Safeguard the environment,
- Assist an early return to normality.

- Setting any parameter on the police response;
- Convene a Gold Group – If required;
- To be objective, intrusive and supportive.

- **Silver Commander** – Responsible to the Gold Commander to implement strategy and to establish and maintain control and co-ordination of the incident.

- The Gold Commander may feel it appropriate, dependent on the circumstances, to nominate more than one Silver Commander for different functions e.g. investigation, community reassurance etc.

Responsibilities include: (not an exhaustive list)

- Determine the tactical response to the incident;
- Obtain a briefing from the Bronze Commander;
- Assume tactical command of the incident and ensure this is reflected in the OIS log of the incident (incidents that are still in-progress);
- Review all actions to date and brief Gold Command on activity planned;
- Co-ordinate all police activities;
- Appoint and brief Bronze Commanders as required and ensure they are aware of their area of responsibility;
- Ensure adequate welfare facilities are available for resources deployed;
- Consider and manage command resilience in the early stages;
- Conduct tactical debrief.

- **Bronze Commander** – Responsible for the controlling and co-ordinating of all deployable resources. This will relate to either a functional e.g. cordons or geographical responsibility.

Responsibilities include: (not an exhaustive list)

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the tactical plan dictated by the Silver Commander;
- Brief all staff and ensure they are aware of their roles;
- Close Liaison with Silver Commander;
- Monitor staff and take responsibility for welfare;
- Conduct operational debrief of team.

7.14   Initial/Tiered Command Structure

7.14.1 The level of the command structure, for the critical incident, will be dependent on the circumstances of the incident. This may alter at any time during the incident due to any change in the circumstances. Any transfer of command roles must be clearly recorded and made aware to all relevant persons.

7.15   Initial Command Structure

7.15.1 In the initial and early stages of a critical incident, prior to the notification to a Superintendent, a compressed command structure will be established. An Inspector will take command of the incident and will perform the roles of Gold and Silver Commander until a new Gold is appointed.

Following notification to a Superintendent a three-tiered system has been identified as follows:

	Initial (Up to 24 hours)	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Gold	Inspector	Divisional Leadership Team (DLT)	Ch Supt/Supt (Lead Division)	ACPO
Silver	Inspector	Inspector	DLT as nominated by Gold	As nominated by Gold
Bronze	Sergeant	Sergeant	As nominated by Silver	As nominated by Silver

7.16   Tier 1 – Divisional Response

7.16.1 This will include incidents that are within the capability of one Division and where the actions and risks are limited to that area.

7.17   Tier 2 – Cross Divisional Response

7.17.1   This will include incidents that have an impact on more than one Division. It will include also include a series of linked incidents that have occurred on more than one Division. There is a limited potential for the actions and risks to spread further.

7.18   Tier 3 – Force Response

7.18.1   This will include incidents with a force, cross-force or national dimension and where there is a significant threat to public confidence and the reputation of the forces involved. Management of the incident will require substantial activity by a significant proportion of the lead force's Divisions.

7.19   **Record Keeping**

7.19.1   Any officer involved in a critical incident must ensure that actions and decisions are recorded in a clear and auditable manner. This includes attending officers, call takers and those managing the incident i.e. Gold, Silver and Bronze. This will ensure there is a permanent record of decisions made, the reasons why and the resultant actions. These may be referred to during the incident or subsequently during a debrief, case review or public inquiry.

7.19.2   The officer in initial tactical command, of declared critical incidents, must commence a Critical Incident Command Log (Form 72). This will normally be the Inspector performing the role of Silver Commander. However, due to any delay in attending an incident, this may be commenced prior to their arrival. Where the Silver role transfers from one officer to another must be recorded in the log. The original log should, where possible, continue to be used as it allows immediate reference to previously made decisions and information.

7.19.3   In relation to incidents where full firearms authority has been granted, the Firearms Silver Commander should use the specific Firearms Logs instead of the Critical Incident Log. If, however, at the conclusion of the firearms response the incident continues to be a critical incident the officer taking over Silver Command should commence a Critical Incident Log.

7.19.4   The log should be maintained until such time as the critical incident has been declared as risk level 'Low' (closed).

7.19.5   The Conflict Management Model should be used as structure on which to articulate the processes of any action, inaction and/or decision taken. The log should reflect this process.

7.19.6   Where decisions/rationale are recorded elsewhere e.g. SIO log, COMPACT, this should be recorded within the Critical Incident Log.

7.19.7   Records of discussions and decisions may also be recorded in the minutes of related meetings e.g. Gold Group meetings.

7.19.8 Records made will be retained in accordance with force Retention and Disposal Policy. A large number and type of records are likely to be produced during a critical incident. It is therefore impracticable to store all records, relating to a critical incident, centrally and each should be dealt with in accordance with the specific procedure for that document e.g. Pocket Note Books, Firearms Commander Logs, Missing Person Search Records, and Divisional Management Team Meeting Minutes.

7.19.9 The Critical Incident Command Log will be centrally stored within the Firearms Operations and Training Department, HQ. These should be addressed to the Administration Assistant. In the event of the log containing sensitive or personal information these may be stored separately depending on the circumstances. In this case the Administration Assistant should be informed so that a record of the location can be made. All documents should clearly indicate the unique number of the critical incident. Any other documents, that do not have a specific retention procedure, should be stored with the Critical Incident Command Log.

7.20   Management of Critical Incidents

7.20.1   The Conflict Management Model
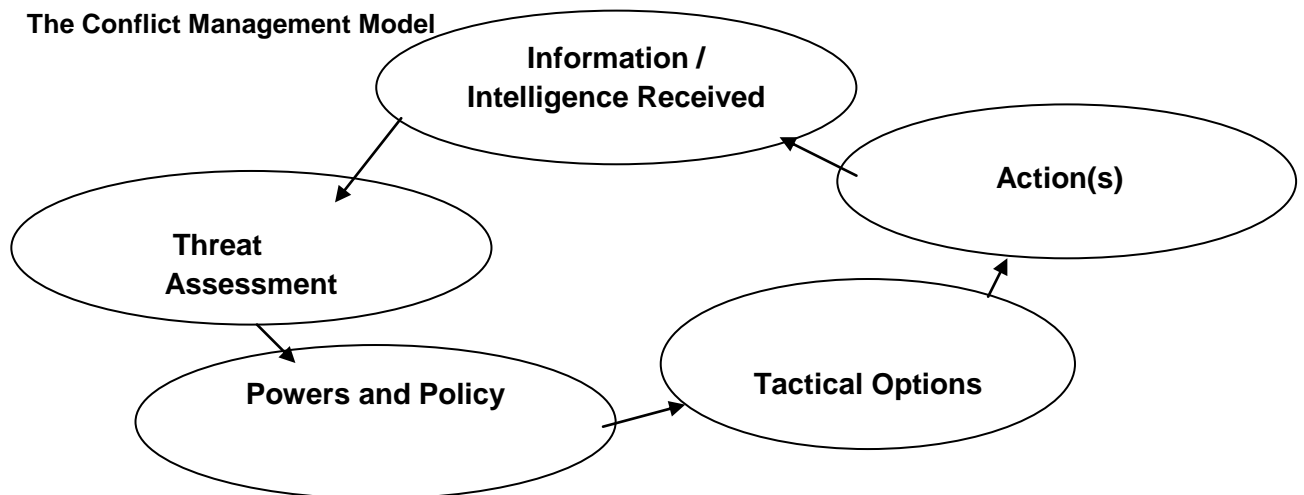
The Conflict Management Model provides the method for managing critical incidents.

7.20.2 Information/Intelligence Received

The start of the model will always be the receipt of information or intelligence. This may be obtained from a number of sources and is vital to the management of the incident. In relation to critical incidents this is likely to include the circumstances of the incident and what police response has taken place to date.

7.20.3   Threat Assessment

At this stage the information/intelligence will be evaluated and a threat assessment will take place.   This will include consideration of whether the incident is a critical incident by evaluating the level of impact the police response will potentially have or has already had on the confidence of the victim, family or community.   The assessment will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the police response. It will also include a legal threat assessment e.g. what offences have been committed.

7.20.4   Powers and Policy

At this stage a strategy for dealing with the incident will need to be established (Gold Commander role).   The main objective will be to provide a quality of service for the incident and to reassure the victim, family or community.   Where a loss of public confidence already exists the objective will be to find out why this has happened and to restore confidence.

Relevant powers and policies should be considered at this stage.   These will be procedural e.g. standard operating procedures for the type of incident, critical incident procedure etc. and legal e.g. powers of arrest, powers of search etc.

7.20.5   Tactical Options

At this stage the options for dealing with the incident will be considered (Silver Commander role). These may directly relate to tactical options for dealing with the direct incident management or the longer-term management of the incident e.g. Media Strategy, Community Liaison etc.   In order to assist with this process specific tactical advice may be sought e.g. Firearms Tactical Advisor, Media Advisor etc. The Silver Commander(s) will ensure that the options chosen are in accordance with the Gold Strategy and any parameters set.

7.20.6   Action(s)

Specific action(s) will then be decided and implemented based on the above stages (Bronze Commander role).

The cyclic nature of the model allows for constant re-assessment of the situation and for appropriate action to be taken on the basis of the most up to date information available. Those in command of an incident should put in place systems to gather information and intelligence, as this is the basis for all decision making. The Gold Commander should ensure that an updating process is put in place to review and amend the strategy according to any changing circumstances.

Notes made in relation to command and control of incidents should be made in accordance with the model as it provides an auditable process showing the full grounds behind decision making.

7.21   Gold Groups

7.21.1   As part of the management of a critical incident the Gold Commander may consider convening a Gold Group. This involves bringing together of appropriately skilled and qualified internal or external stakeholders who can advise, guide or otherwise support the management of an effective response to the identified incident, crime or matter.
See Appendix C (Gold Groups – Critical Incident Management)

7.22   Victim and Family Liaison

7.22.1   It is of high importance that throughout an incident/investigation the relationship between the victim, family and the police is maintained. Families must be treated appropriately, professionally, with respect and in accordance with their diverse needs.

The following may be considered:

- Family liaison;
- Family meetings;
- Use of family representatives.

See Appendix D (Victim, Family and Community – Critical Incident Management)

7.23   Community Engagement

7.23.1   Involving the community in the management of critical incidents can help reduce the impact of any problems and provide a bridge between the police, the victim and the wider community.

Where relevant a Community Engagement Plan should be devised and implemented.
See Appendix E (Community Engagement Plan – A Response to Critical Incidents)

The following could also be considered:

- Independent Advisors (IAG);
- Mediation;
- Public Meetings;
- Community Impact Assessments;
- Media.

See Appendix D (Victim, Family and Community – Critical Incident Management)

7.24 Daily Divisional Management Meetings

7.24.1 The daily Divisional Management Meetings provide a forum for the notification, to a Superintendent, of all ongoing (High/Medium) critical incidents, within their Division, that have not already been notified to a Superintendent. In addition those critical incidents that were declared since the last meeting, but are now risk assessed as Low (closed), should also be reviewed. Even though a critical incident has been closed any changes to the situation may necessitate the incident being re-classified at any time.

7.25 Closure of Critical Incident

7.25.1 It is the decision of the Gold Commander to close a critical incident. It may be difficult to state exactly when the incident is over, but in order to ensure that the police response remains proportionate, it should be scaled down as soon as circumstances allow, based on an assessment of the risk level. The decision to scale down a response will help to facilitate exit strategies in other areas such as family liaison.

7.25.2 The decision to conclude or scale down an investigation or operation, and the reasons for doing so, should always be recorded and fully explained to the victim, their family and the communities. This is particularly important where there is a clear operational reason for concluding the police response to an incident, but there has been no arrest or other form of closure for the victim and/or their family.

7.25.3 It must also be considered, when deciding whether to close a critical incident, whether monitoring of the incident is necessary to ensure that no emerging critical issues develop and the victim/families continue to have effective and appropriate police support.

7.25.4 When a critical incident is closed the Contact Management Centre Inspector/Sergeant should be contacted to amend the Critical Incident Register. The incident will then be risk assessed as Low (closed).

7.26 Debriefing

7.26.1 All police officers and staff involved in a critical incident must be debriefed on operational and welfare issues. The purpose is to identify areas for organisational learning and include this in future training, planning and risk management. In addition officers and staff can be referred to appropriate staff associations or occupational health representatives for support and advice.

7.26.2 The Bronze Commander(s) will normally be responsible for conducting an *operational* debrief of their teams. This will be in relation to their specific role and will relate to issues concerning the deployment of the resources.

7.26.3   The Silver Commander will normally be responsible for the *tactical* debrief. This will generally involve the debriefing of the Bronze Commanders on the implementation of the tactical plan.   The debrief must be documented within the Critical Incident Decision Log (pages 43-45).

7.26.4   Any issues raised should be highlighted and communicated to the relevant officers, groups or departments for information or further action as required.   Action owners should be identifiable.   The Firearms, Public Order & Critical Incident Practitioners Group provides a forum for review and discussion of any general learning points.

7.27   Reviews

7.27.1   A formal review of a critical incident will not be made on all occasions. The decision to conduct a review will normally be directed by the ACC (Protective Services), Chair of the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Uniform Protective Services Strategic Group (UPSSG), formerly the Firearms, Public Order & Critical Incident Strategic Group. The level and format of the review will be determined as part of the decision making process and articulated in accordance with the terms of reference provided. A review is particularly useful when a concern has been raised about a past incident.

7.27.2   A review will evaluate police response to the incident and determine whether:

- It conformed to nationally approved standards/force policy and procedure;
- It was thorough;
- It was conducted with integrity and objectivity;
- Investigative or other opportunities were overlooked;
- Good practice or areas for improvement exist. Monitoring Compliance

7.28   This Policy and SOP will be monitored for compliance by the Critical Incident Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) Territorial Policing (CI Waring, CI McCaffray and Insp Beresford) and the Critical Incident lead for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire (Supt Hawkins).

See following below Appendices as mentioned in policy:

Appendix A

The Golden Hour – Critical Incident Management

The Golden Hour Principles:

Strategic Intention:
• Save and preserve life • Protect persons from serious harm • Prevent significant crime and disorder • Secure and preserve information and intelligence • Provide reassurance in delivering a professional service that builds confidence within our communities • Diligently work towards a successful outcome • To return to a state of normality

Tactical Options	
Victims	Identify, support and sensitively preserve evidence. Consider witness vulnerability
Suspects	Identify, arrest and preserve evidence.
Scenes	Identify, preserve, cordons, assess and log.
Witnesses	Identify, support and prioritise. Note first account and description of any suspects.
Decision Log	Decisions, actions, inactions, rationale, resources, conditions, circumstances, risk assess.
Prevent Contamination	Victims, suspects, scenes, exhibits, officers. Consider using separate vehicles when transporting numerous suspects and victims. Consider separate custody facilities.
Clear Lines of Command	Identify, inform, brief, co-ordinate and review. Use Conflict Management Model
Physical Evidence	Preservations, CCTV, escape routes, including public transport routes and ambulances.
Advisers	Consider the nature of the incident and make best use of external and internal advisers at the earliest possible stage.
Family/Community	Identify, inform, establish needs, expectations, concerns, primary support, sensitivity and community impact.
Media Strategy	Make best use of Press Officer at the earliest possible stage.
Intelligence	Identify, prioritise, maximise, consider community and open source intelligence.
Community Concerns	Establish through advisers, IAGs, active citizens, anticipate possible developments, risks to public confidence and reassurance.

Appendix B

Risk Levels – Critical Incident Management

Risk levels

Where an Inspector (or above) is requested to support the identification of a Critical Incident and a review is required, a simple system using a 'traffic light system', has been introduced to assist. This enables an incident's level of criticality to be established and where applicable monitoring to be introduced. These levels are subject to change as the dynamics of the incident faced with alters:
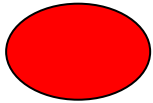
HIGH

The effectiveness of the Police response has had a significant negative impact on the confidence of victim, family or community and requires additional activity to restore this confidence.
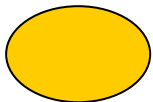
MEDIUM

The effectiveness of the Police response has had a significant negative impact on the confidence of victim, family or community but is now stable with ongoing Police activity and maintenance; or

A critical incident has been declared due to the potential significant impact or the presence of criticality factors. The incident requires ongoing Police activity and maintenance although no significant negative has been identified at this stage.
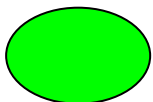
LOW (CLOSED)

Declared incidents where no ongoing Police activity or maintenance is currently required to manage or prevent significant impact on confidence. This includes incidents where confidence issues were identified but have now been managed.

In general assessing the main factors in the incident should identify the risk level; the critical elements that exist will influence the situation as will any managerial or organisational issues that may impact on the confidence in the police.

Appendix C

Gold Groups – Critical Incident Management

A Gold Group is a meeting designed to add value to the police response to an internal or external incident, crime or other matter. This involves bringing together appropriately skilled and qualified internal or external stakeholders who can advise, guide or otherwise support the management of an effective response to the identified incident, crime or matter.

Identifying whether an incident requires a Gold Group

Gold Groups should never be used to "rubber stamp" the police response to an incident. This is contrary to the rationale behind its original formation. The group is there to provide a critical but supportive view of what is being done and improve and maximise the effectiveness of the police response.

A Gold Group must be instigated by the Gold Commander.

A Gold Group should be considered when one of the following instances occurs:

Where action is required to ensure the police response to an issue/incident/offence is professional and effective in preventing the escalation of a situation into a critical incident or to identify and implement actions to reduce the issues in an existing critical incident;

Where actions are necessary to prevent the existing victim/family/community confidence issues from escalating and to ensure, a co-ordinated police, external agency and citizen/community focussed response occurs;

Where the police require internal and external stakeholders knowledge, skill, support and advice to effectively manage the police response to an incident/offence issue and there are no other alternative forums available to provide this.

Purpose of a Gold Group

The purpose of any Gold Group should be to ensure the effectiveness of the ongoing police response and, if confidence issues exist for the victim/victim's family and/or the communities, to resolve or prevent the escalation of their impact.

Prior to a Gold Group being convened it is imperative to identify:
What is the rationale for setting up a 'Gold Group'?
What value will it provide in effectively managing the Incident?
Whether other options exist, which could be used to provide the strategic support /lead necessary e.g. Daily Management Meeting, Investigation, Independent Advisory Group Meeting, Community Meetings.

Arranging a Gold Group

The relevant internal and external stakeholders, who may assist in a Gold Group, will be dependent on the original incident but on all occasions the Gold Commander and community representatives (if appropriate) should attend. It is essential that the membership reflects the incident or other matter being managed so that the Gold Group lead and membership can make valued and robust decisions. All attendees must add value to the Gold Group.

The following are a list of personnel who can be <u>considered</u> as part of a Gold Group depending on circumstances (not exhaustive):

- Gold Commander
- Silver Commander
- Senior Investigating Officer (SIO)
- Investigating Officer (IO)
- Independent Advisor(s)
- Family Liaison Co-ordinator (FLC)
- Professional Standards
- Press Officer
- Other specialist advisers – firearms officer,
- Senior Identification Manager (SIM)
- Force Solicitor
- Staff Union
- Diversity Adviser
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partners
- Staff Support Associations
- Staff Association representative
- People Services
- Family representative
- Faith Leaders
- Voluntary Organisations
- Health Service Representatives
- Local Authority representatives
- Adult/Children services
- Non-governmental Organisations
- Bedfordshire Police Authority. (A member will represent the Police Authority for high risk critical incidents where there are significant reputational, resource or financial implications for the Force and / or Authority, with a particular focus on issues of public consultation and community impact issues.

The Gold Commander should chair the meeting.

On implementing a Gold Group a strategy should be clearly set. This allows the reasons for the formation of the group to be documented and ensures that all participants are aware of what the parameters of the Gold Group's responsibilities are. The following should be considered when the group meets for the first time:

- Ensure the relevant stakeholders are present so that a joint approach, good communication and varied advice is available
- A review of resources to deal with the incident
- Communication strategy (internal and external) – should also include media strategy
- A review/briefing of the initial investigation
- Making clear this is an opportunity to provide leadership, direction and support to local staff and support the community
- Identifying strategies to resolve or reduce identifiable community confidence issues
- Whether any cross border issues (other Divisions and other forces) exist
- Ensuring the police response is applicable to local needs and demands
- An opportunity to assess the police response to identify options not yet considered or actioned
- Allows an evaluation of the intelligence and information for the incident

In addition other areas to be considered during the Gold Group meetings include:

- The impact and risk of the incident/issue/offence to the Division
- The impact and risk of the incident/issue/offence risk to Bedfordshire Police
- What the confidence issues are in relation to the victim, family and community
- Whether changes to local procedure are required
- Whether organisational learning exists and how best to capture and promulgate these.

Minutes from a Gold Group

All Gold Group meetings need to be accurately minuted reflecting all the decisions made, advice given and actions to be taken, and by whom. Minutes should be circulated in a timely manner. These minutes will form part of any future disclosure for the incident and it is important that they are accurate and stored with the papers for the incident.

Closing a Gold Group

A Gold Group should be closed when the Gold Commander recognises that strategy for the group has been met, the risk level is now low, and that the police response can be effectively managed and supported through routine business. All members of the Gold Group must be informed of the decision and the reasons as to why it has been closed. This reasoning must be accurately documented and retained locally.

Quality Assurance Processes

It is the responsibility of the Divisions to ensure that they have a quality assurance process in place to review their Gold Groups and ensure that any minutes or other documentation created are stored with the main file relating to the incident in a secure and retrievable way.

The Gold Commander should also ensure that any local recommendations/actions are completed and that any good practice and/or areas for improvement relating to Service policy or Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) should be communicated. The Firearms, Public Order & Critical Incident Practitioners Group provides a forum for discussion of issues where relevant.

The Assistant Chief Constable Protective Services has responsibility, through the Uniformed Protective Services Strategic Group and the Divisional Leadership Teams, for policy and procedure in relation to critical incidents.

Victim, Family and Community – Critical Incident Management

Victim and Family Engagement

It is of high importance that throughout an investigation the relationship between the victim, family and the police is maintained. Families must be treated appropriately, professionally, with respect and in accordance with their diverse needs.

The benefits include:

- Open and honest dialogue between the police, victims, families and communities;
- Increased understanding of family and community needs;
- Confidence in the investigation process;
- Improved community intelligence;
- Improved satisfaction and confidence in the police service.

Family Liaison

Within major crime procedures, where a victim has died as a result of criminal conduct or suspected criminal conduct, a family Liaison Officer (FLO) will be assigned to any relatives that the police consider may need this support. It may also be appropriate to assign FLOs to incidents involving missing persons, hate crime or any other incident identified as a critical incident.

The main objectives for family liaison include:

- Providing a documented two-way channel for communication between the family and the police;
- Gathering evidence and information from the family in a sensitive manner that contributes to and preserves the integrity of the police investigation;
- Providing timely information and practical support to the family;
- Contributing to a co-ordinated response that addresses the needs of families, involving Victim Support Services and other appropriate agencies as required;
- Ensuring appropriate support for staff who are involved in delivering effective family liaison.

Family Representatives

Some families or victims may not want to deal directly with the police and will appoint a solicitor or intermediary to represent their interests. They are entitled to take this stance and the police should respect their wishes. Every effort must be made to build and maintain a positive working relationship with the family representative. The police should:

- Try and anticipate, but not make assumptions about the needs of the family or their representative (e.g. information regarding the incident);
- Respond promptly, through pre-agreed communication methods, to all requests received from their representative;
- React quickly to changes in the nature and context of the incident and communicate these to the family and their representative in clear and unambiguous language or terms;

- Recognise that the needs of the family and their representative may vary over time or in changing circumstances (for example, case reviews, memorial services, and anniversaries).

Where an incident develops a significant public or media profile, strategies should be implemented to safeguard the welfare of the family. These should be reviewed regularly to take account of emerging issues.

A complete log of contacts, meetings and conversations should always be kept by the FLO and FLO Co-ordinator.

Family Meetings

Family meetings are likely to be used as an integral element of the family liaison strategy. They may include:

- Family members;
- The family solicitor;
- Other family advocates or representatives;
- The SIO and appropriate members of the investigation team;
- The Gold Commander;
- The Divisional Commander and/or ACPO representative.

The following points should be considered when arranging a family meeting:

- They should be planned in advance;
- They should be held at a venue agreed by the family;
- They must be open and accountable with the minutes recorded and circulated to named individuals;
- They may form part of a series of regular meetings;
- They should be followed by a debrief of police personnel and appropriate analysis;
- Where police action has been called into question, participants should consider a positive action plan and contingencies to address the concerns raised.

Community Impact Assessments

The purpose of a community impact assessment is to identify factors that may have an effect on community tranquillity. A comprehensive community impact assessment will also provide:

- Enhanced investigative assessment;
- Protection of vulnerable individuals and groups;
- Promotion and retention of community confidence;
- Development of community intelligence;
- An understanding of all aspects of the incident being dealt with.

The Bedfordshire Police Community Engagement Officers provide a weekly community impact assessment for the two territorial divisions. In addition a specific CIA will be undertaken in relation to a critical incident. This can provide an interpretation of the effect an incident has had on the community and assess the quality of the police response and whether it is proportionate, given the circumstances of the incident.

Community Engagement

Involving the community in the management of critical incidents can help reduce the impact of any problems and provide a bridge between the police, the victim and different communities.

Where relevant, a Community Engagement Plan should be devised and implemented.

(See Appendix E - Community Engagement Plan – A Response to Critical Incidents)

Independent Involvement

The principle of independent involvement is fundamental to:

- Developing sensitive and effective policing;
- Challenging assumptions and mindsets;
- Demonstrating openness and accountability;
- Providing an independent, community, non-police perspective;
- Building confidence and trust with families and communities.

When the involvement of independent persons is sought, the following issues should be addressed in every instance:

- Written terms of reference;
- Selection;
- Training;
- Resourcing and payment;
- Briefing and debriefing;
- Disclosure;
- Welfare;
- Review and closure;
- Appropriate security issues.

Independent Advice

Independent advisors are able to engage in a range of policing activities, either on a case-specific basis or as a member of the recognised Independent Advisory Group (IAG). The Community Engagement Officers on both County and Luton Divisions have a large number of community contacts that can assist in this process.

The following key points should be noted when taking independent advice:

- Advisors must remain entirely independent of the Police Service;
- The purpose of engaging an advisor is to critically appraise organisational policies, practices and procedures;
- Advisors can make a significant contribution in relation to both strategic and tactical considerations;
- Advisors are free to make observations both within the Police Service and to the wider community;
- Advisors are not liable for the outcome of police decision making;
- Advisors are not answerable to the police;
- The police are not responsible for the advisers' actions;
- The police are not obliged to follow the advice given (although appropriate explanations should be provided where recommendations are not followed);
- Independent advisers should maintain advice logs which are similar to decision logs.

Mediation

A non-police mediator or advocate is a person who carries out a negotiating, enabling or bridge-building role (e.g. with a family or community group) in support of the management or investigation of a crime, incident or event.

Mediation involves participation. Mediators are part of the process; they are not independent of it.

Public Meetings

It may be necessary to hold a public meeting either during or after a critical incident. This is to:

- Address public concerns about a case;
- Appeal for witnesses;
- Develop community intelligence – particularly with regard to community concerns and tensions;
- Provide information regarding police intentions and actions;
- Maintain the reputation of Bedfordshire Police.

Communication and Media

Whilst dealing with a critical incident a communication strategy should be considered. The Force Media Office must be consulted to assist.

The following should be considered when formulating the strategy:

- The media must not be used to negotiate with the family;
- The media strategy must be consistent with all other strategies;
- The type and tone of language used in media statements must be tactful and take account of past experience;
- There must be clarity about timing and content of any acknowledgement regarding previous mistakes or gaps in the investigation;
- A range of investigative tools can be used, e.g. Crimestoppers, Crimewatch, reward offers, appeals for mobile phone images;

- The strategy must recognise the fundamental role of the family and their representatives in liasing with the media;
- Consideration should be given to shared media statements with the family and their representatives – a united approach helps to build community trust and undermine the confidence of perpetrators;
- The strategy should also consider the perspectives of others involved in the response to the incident, e.g. advisory groups, police authorities;
- Key messages should be decided on to ensure clarity of objectives and consistency in future releases;
- Consideration should be given to the type of media to target;
- Force websites can be used to inform the local community;
- Advice should be sought on the effectiveness of types of messages for particular communities.

Appendix E

Community Engagement Plan – A Response to Critical Incidents

All critical incidents, which occur in Bedfordshire, have the potential to negatively impact on the community. It is not uncommon for such incidents to create an increase in community tension leading to policing implications, conflict or reduction in reassurance and satisfaction. It is therefore imperative that when such incidents occur a planned response to managing community tension and engagement runs in unison with the investigation strategy. It should be born in mind that in some circumstance the Investigation strategy might conflict with the community engagement plan, e.g. a series of arrests or house searches, which could increase community tension. Unless exceptional circumstances exist however the community engagement plan should not compromise any investigation.

Critical Incident Occurs – Trigger plan

Generally we cannot determine where and when such incidents may occur unless they have been identified through the National Intelligence Model process. From experience in policing Bedfordshire we can anticipate that such incidents will occur intermittently. When incidents do occur it is essential that we be in a position to identify and manage community tension from the outset. If tension is allowed to manifest the impact on residents, our communities and the impact on policing is significant

Once a critical incident has been identified which has the potential to increase Community Tension with an assessed risk level of Medium or High a Community Bronze will be appointed by the Silver Commander of the Critical Incident at the earliest opportunity. The Community Bronze will take on responsibility for the following key objectives:

- Formulation and implementing a Community Engagement Plan. This should be commensurate with the nature of the critical incident being dealt with to assist in returning the community to a status of normality as early as possible. To increase safety and reassurance;
- Formulate community command structure;
- Brief Community Cohesion team for informing/consultation with "Community opinion formers and influencers";
- Brief relevant SNT for informing/consultation with KINs and reassurance patrols if appropriate;
- Consult with Partner agencies and key stakeholders if appropriate;
- Ensure contact is made to Chief Inspector Community Engagement, Citizen Focus Division for deployment of appropriate IAG representative. IAG representative to sit at appropriate level as decided by Critical Incident Gold Command;
- Engage with the National Community Tension Team.

It is important that any "Operational Crisis Epicentre" (OCE) is identified at the earliest opportunity. This is the geographical area where we can anticipate the greatest impact on our communities as a result of the incident. This is not always the location of the incident, e.g. a serious assault in the town centre involving people who reside in the same area of the town. The OCE is likely to be within the area where the people involved reside, not the town centre.

Should initial information gained show there is significant potential for an increase in community tension or tension has already increased, then as soon as possible or within 24 hours of being appointed, Community "Bronze" will instigate:

Safer Neighbourhood Team

Formation of a SNT engagement team. – This will be a team of SNT officers (Constables, PCSOs and Special constables) who will focus on the operational crisis epicentre. Officers should initially be drawn from the SNT who has geographical responsibility for the area where the OCE is identified. Local officers will have expert knowledge of the area and will have a better understanding of "the state of normality" for the area and to what degree tension has increased. Where sufficient resources are not available from the relevant SNT experienced officers from other SNT areas should support them; this abstraction will be authorised from other Neighbourhoods by Community Bronze. The Community Bronze and duty planning will be responsible for ensuring adequate resources are available for the formation of this team.

The SNT engagement team will be briefed, tasked and deployed within 24 hrs of the declaration of a critical Incident being ratified as high or medium by the decision making Superintendent. Community "Bronze" (or Deputy) will be responsible for conducting the briefing. Where possible the Investigation SIO or Deputy should also provide a briefing.

The objectives of the SNT engagement team should include:

– Public reassurance through visible presence and circulation of key messages;
– Identify community tension and the core reason for the tension;
– Engage with local community to reduce community tension;
– Gather intelligence/evidence to assist the criminal investigation;
– Foster new relationships with members of the community, which can be maintained and used in the future;
– Counter any identified rumour or misinformation, which is circulating within the affected area;
– Provide feedback to Community Command team to assist their decision-making processes;
– To provide communication and to quell rumour SNT engagement team will contact KINs, engage with local residents (house to house where necessary), liaise with appropriate stakeholders/partners and visit key locations in the areas e.g. religious premises, shops, community groups, educational premises, doctors surgeries, businesses, youth clubs, community centres, etc;
– The need for continued deployment of the SNT engagement team would be reviewed at the end of each 24-hour period. Silver will be responsible for any decision to withdraw the team.

BASSG/Officer's Cultural and Language Skills

Where the SNT engagement team are to be deployed into an area specific to one or some of our minority communities' consideration should be giving to identifying officers with appropriate cultural and language skills. Such officers would be a significant addition to the engagement team and could also act in an advisory capacity when appropriate to the Community command team and SIOs.

The Faith, Language and Culture Database held at NCTT Tel: 020 7084 8950 should be consulted to consider the availability and suitability of officers and staff nationally who may be deployed to assist in this area.

Community Cohesion Team (Divisional Based)

– Will provide a written community impact assessment
– Will engage/consult with relevant external contacts (Community opinion formers) to use influence to assist in reducing tension.
– Identify key people to form a small "focus group" of "Community ambassadors" - Focus group to receive regular briefings from community lead and Investigation SIO providing them as much information as possible. Group to include IAG member and to act in an advisory capacity to both Community and Investigation teams. Group also to assist in tension monitoring and tension reduction.
– Update community impact assessment as necessary.

Other Divisional Officers and Non Divisional Officers

Despite any critical incident our normal policing business will still continue. This will undoubtedly necessitate patrol officers, dog handlers, Protective Services officers and other officers entering the operational crisis epicentre. It would be unprofessional and damaging to the Community engagement plan if such officers presented a contrary or inconsistent message to local people they came into contact with.

Such officers should therefore be briefed as necessary regarding the community engagement plan to ensure they conform and provide a positive and appropriate response when needed.
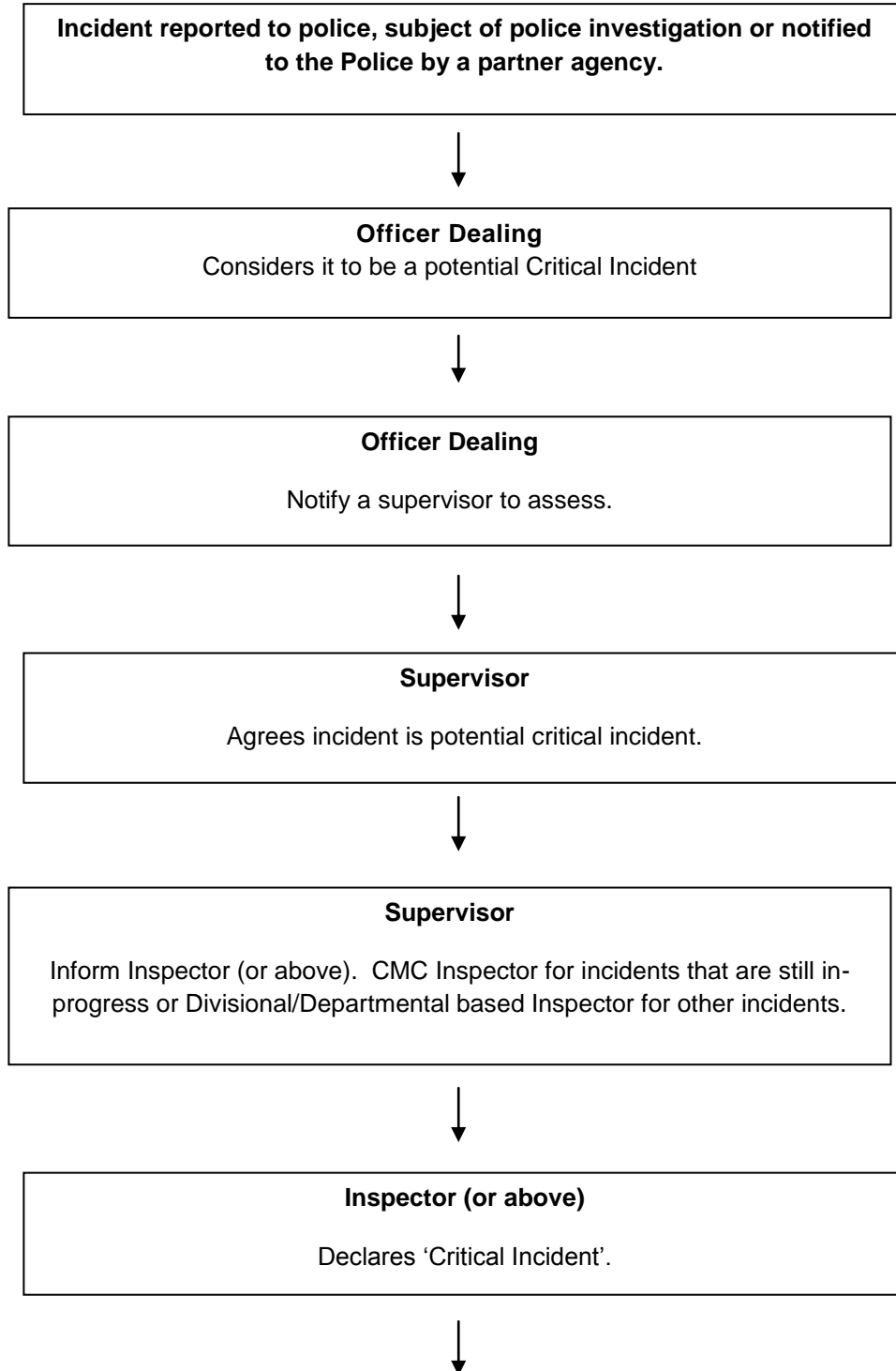
Media

Should the community engagement plan be triggered a media strategy will also come into being. Any media strategy will support this plan as well as the ongoing investigation.

When appropriate we should use existing media outlets aimed at our minority communities as appropriate to the critical incident e.g. Diverse FM, ACCDF new letter, BME newspapers, foreign radio/media.

Community Cohesion Contingency Plan

With all critical/serious incidents consideration should be given to the existence of the community cohesion contingency plan (CCCP). Should it be necessary to invoke the CCCP and call together the associated group, the community engagement trigger plan will still be appropriate and can be encompasses within any wider CCCP action plan.

Flow Chart – Critical Incident Management

Incident reported to police, subject of police investigation or notified to the Police by a partner agency.

↓

Officer Dealing
Considers it to be a potential Critical Incident

↓

Officer Dealing

Notify a supervisor to assess.

↓

Supervisor

Agrees incident is potential critical incident.

↓

Supervisor

Inform Inspector (or above). CMC Inspector for incidents that are still in-progress or Divisional/Departmental based Inspector for other incidents.

↓

Inspector (or above)

Declares 'Critical Incident'.

↓

Form 20. (Rev. Jun 10)

Inspector (or above)

1. CMC Oscar 1 or 2 to be informed and make entry on Critical Incident Register (Unique number allocated)
2. Declaring officer to assess risk level – High, Medium, Low
3. OIS to be updated with 'Critical Incident' for incidents that are still in-progress.
4. Duty Divisional Patrol Inspector to be informed to take over operational command of incidents that are still in-progress.
5. Initial command structure to be established – Gold/Silver/Bronze
6. Superintendent to be notified of critical incident (within 24hours) either:
7. At next daily Divisional Management Team Meeting or
8. Personally to on-call Superintendent or
9. Immediately if circumstances dictate.

Superintendent

1. Assess situation and re-classify incident if appropriate.
2. Establish an appropriate command structure – Gold, Silver, Bronze
3. Establish a strategy that ensures/restores the quality of the police response to maintain/re-build public confidence.
4. Decide whether to notify an ACPO Officer.

ACPO (If notified)
1. Assess situation and re-classify incident if appropriate.
2. Establish an appropriate command structure – Gold, Silver, Bronze
3. Establish a strategy that ensures/restores the quality of the police response to maintain/re-build public confidence.

Closure of Critical Incident (Gold Commander)

1. Exit strategy formulated.
2. Debrief of incident to be conducted.
3. Learning/good practice identified to be disseminated. (Firearms, Public Order and Critical Incident Practitioners Meeting)
4. Critical Incident Register to be updated – Low (closed)
5. All logs / documentation to be filed.
6. Consideration of review of incident. (Firearms, Public Order and Critical Incident Strategic Group)

Appendix G

Preventative and Reduction Options – Critical Incident Management

Examination of good practice and awareness of the critical elements will assist in preventing critical incidents and stabilising escalation of existing ones. The following options are not exhaustive but will assist in setting preventative and reduction strategies:

Preventative Options

- Monitor environment for Community and <u>Partner Agency</u> Intelligence
- The establishment of Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- Ensure specific Standard Operating Procedures for each incident are being followed
- Consult Community Engagement Teams to access community contacts/Independent Advice and gauge community concerns and opinion
- Consider FLO deployment to address family needs, assist the investigation and provide support, even if incident is not homicide
- Follow 'Golden Hour' principles to ensure lines of enquiry are pursued and actioned
- Consult Press officer to manage media coverage and communication strategy
- Monitor and assist in addressing legal issues arising, including disclosure, human rights, and right to life duty of care (UK v Osman)
- Convene family meetings if appropriate as developments occur
- Convene public meetings where there is evidence of wider community confidence issues
- Consider high visibility police patrols
- Consider Professional Standards involvement where potential complaints are identified
- Consider implementing a review of the incident
- Ensure all decisions are Human Rights compliant and inform the setting of strategic aims.
- Evaluate what specialist help will add value to managing the incident, e.g. Diversity, Public Protection, Family Liaison etc.
- Capture learning via debriefing to inform future Bedfordshire Police training.
- Set time limits for monitoring the effectiveness of the strategies set and recommendations made.
- Homicide Reduction Working Group
- Review of organisational learning by Firearms Public Order and Critical Incident Strategic Group

Reduction Options

When it has not been possible to prevent an issue escalating to critical status, steps should be taken to reduce the impact of the factors affecting confidence. Many of the prevention strategies above will still apply in addition to:

- Immediately review actions, decisions and strategies to ensure they are fit for purpose and meeting emerging dynamic issues
- Convene Gold Group and obtain the assistance and advice of identified relevant stakeholders
- Consider mediator to facilitate meetings within strict boundaries
- Instigate pro-active media strategy to address criticisms and promote positive police responses
- Instigate dialogue with community representatives to address critical issues and reduce community concerns
- Re-investigate the matter
- Comparative review of like incidents to establish whether the Division or Force has internal procedural weaknesses leading to failure in service delivery
- Where the services of an FLO have been declined or are not appropriate, establish a police single point of contact for the victim, family or community

Appendix H

Protocol between Bedfordshire Police and the Police Authority on Critical Incidents

<u>**The Role of the Police Authority in Managing Critical Incidents**</u>

It has been agreed that the Police Authority will be represented at a Gold Group for critical incidents where there are significant reputational, resource or financial risks for the Force and/or the Authority. A Police Authority Member will attend the Gold Group by way of mutual agreement with the Gold Commander of that Group.

The Authority member's role, which is to be agreed with the Gold Commander at the outset, will include some or all of the following:

- Constructively challenging any assumptions and mindsets;

- Ensuring that the Group has appropriate processes in place to identify and address the needs of the family, communities and officers/staff involved in the incident;

- Acting as a 'sounding-board' and providing support throughout, in particular supporting the ACPO lead / BCU Commander in any meetings with the public/media including chairing public meetings when required;

- Reporting back to the Chair, officers and members of the Authority;

- Working with the Force and the Authority to re-assess community impact, consider additional community engagement opportunities, and to consider any further action which may be necessary to restore and enhance public confidence.

- The Police Authority will monitor force compliance with human rights and oversee implementation of appropriate recommendations following a review of the critical incident.

Where a Gold Group is formed to oversee a particular critical incident then the Chief Constable and Chief Executive (or Chair/Vice-Chair dependent on availability) will discuss whether the Authority will provide a Member for that Gold Group.

The role of such a member relates to the oversight and public consultation responsibilities of the Authority and she/he should be mindful of the potential accountability issues should the Gold Group be subject to public scrutiny. If any Member feels that they have a conflict of interest, she/he should declare it and withdraw.

With prolonged incidents, updates and where necessary confidential briefings, will be provided to the Police Authority at agreed intervals and opportunities offered to Members to visit incident rooms, scenes, etc.

Police Authority Members local to an incident will be consulted, prior to or immediately after the incident to ensure the best use of local contacts and when appropriate, scrutinise community impact assessments when they are being considered for such high risk critical incidents.

The Independent Advisory Group (IAG) has a particular role in relation to criticalIncidents as laid down in national guidance but this does not replace the statutory role of the Police Authority including oversight and

public consultation. Briefings to the Police Authority on critical incidents will include details of IAG involvement.

In fulfilling their public consultation responsibilities the Police Authority may have a role to play within certain critical incidents which do not result in the specific formation of a dedicated Gold Group. In such circumstances the Gold Commander should engage with the Lead Member(s) who can then consider the nature and style of any potential Police Authority involvement.

Nothing within this policy precludes the current situation where the Chair of the Police Authority/Lead Member is briefed on other serious incidents that are not declared as 'critical'. Examples include incidents of particular local interest or concern, significant court cases, significant Professional Standards issues or incidents of countywide significance.

In summary, a member will represent the Police Authority on the Gold Group for critical incidents where there are significant reputational, resources or financial risks for the Force and/or the Authority, with a particular focus on issues of public consultation and community impact issues.

Protocol concerning visits by Independent Custody Visitors made at the request of Police to persons detained in connection with Critical Incidents

An agreement between Bedfordshire Police and Bedfordshire Police Authority regarding visits requested by police and made by Independent Custody Visitors to persons detained in Bedfordshire in connection with "critical incidents."

1.   Background

1.1   This protocol is created to ensure that when persons have been detained in Bedfordshire Police custody in connection with "critical incidents," the Gold or Silver Commander may request, in certain circumstances, that visits to such detainees be made by nominated Independent Custody Visitors.

1.2   A Critical Incident is defined in the Bedfordshire Police Critical Incident Policy as: -
"Any incident where the effectiveness of the police response could have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family and / or the community."

1.3   'Confidence' refers to the long- term confidence in policing of victims, families and communities.

1.4   This definition and policy for critical incidents has its origins in the Macpherson enquiry. It has been developed as a result of feedback from practitioners and on the basis of organisational experience of dealing with critical incidents. It recognises the fundamental significance of community trust and confidence in the police ability to respond to critical incidents.

1.5   Examples of a critical incident where the visit of an Independent Custody Visitor to a detainee connected to the incident may prove beneficial include:-

   ▪ Homicide
   ▪ Terrorist Incident
   ▪ Public Order Incident
   ▪ Community Unrest
   ▪ Racial or Homophobic Incident
   ▪ Vulnerable Missing Person

2.   Protocol

2.1   The delivery of this protocol will involve co-operation between Bedfordshire Police and the Bedfordshire Police Authority (Complaints and Professional Standards Committee / Independent Custody Visitors.)

2.2   The protocol does not alter the statutory rights under Section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002, which puts the responsibility for organising and overseeing the delivery of independent custody visiting with Police Authorities, in consultation with Chief Officers.

2.3   In the event that an incident is assessed as a "critical incident" the appropriate Gold/Silver/Bronze command structure will be instigated.

2.4   Incidents where a person or persons are detained by police in connection with the critical incident and where a visit by an Independent Custody Visitor may serve to allay community anxiety or concern will be communicated without delay to the Chair of the Independent Visitors Panel and the Scheme Administrator. This decision will be made by the Police Command Structure.

2.5   The Independent Visitors Panel will have a small cadre of experienced, suitably vetted Custody Visitors, which will include the Scheme Co-ordinator, who can be made available at short notice to visit detainees at the request of the police.

2.6   Oscar 1 will hold details of the nominated Independent Custody Visitors and the Scheme Co-ordinator in the Force Information Room.

3.   Implementation

3.1   The protocol will be monitored by the Superintendent, Administration of Justice Department, Bedfordshire Police, who will undertake to make arrangements for the resolution of problems or difficulties that may arise at a local level with the Police Authority.

3.2   The signatories agree to the implementation of the provisions of this protocol.

Bedfordshire Police

Debbie Simpson
T(Assistant Chief Constable.)

Bedfordshire Police Authority

Mrs P Fletcher
(Chair of Independent Custody Visitors Panel)

Appendix K

Post Incident Manager

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire have a number of senior police officers who can perform the role of a Post Incident Manager (PIM). The role of these officers has been to provide support to staff that have been directly involved in fatal police shootings. That remit is now being expanded to include staff that have been directly involved in any incidents where death or serious injury has occurred as the result of police contact, such as a roads pursuit or collision, during an arrest or a death in custody. Incidents where death or serious injury has occurred as the direct result of police contact will be thoroughly investigated by the IPCC and the usually traumatic nature of the incident, the intensity of the investigation and interest from other quarters such as the media will all have a cumulative impact upon the welfare of the staff directly involved in the incident.

The role of the PIM is to look after the welfare needs of the staff directly involved in the incident (the 'Principal Officers') whilst also facilitating the thorough investigation the incident.

The key duties of the PIM are:

- To ensure that the Principal Officers are taken away from the scene and to one of our two Post Incident Suites at the earliest opportunity,
- To address any immediate welfare needs such as medical and/or psychological support for those that are physically injured or severely traumatised,
- To ensure that Welfare are called out to offer support to the Principal Officers,
- To ensure that the Principal Officers get the opportunity to make early contact with partners/family to reassure them and to cater for urgent issues (e.g. child care),
- To arrange for the relevant Staff Associations (e.g. Federation, Unison) to be called out to represent their members and to arrange for legal representation,
- To contact the IPCC to facilitate the investigation whilst ensuring that any requests for forensic samples are fully justified.

The PIM will arrange for a 'factual only' debrief to take place once the staff have received legal advice. Statements or interviews will not usually take place for at least 24/48 hours.

The 24/7 PIM call out rota can be accessed via the link below and going into the 'Standby Rotas' document:

http://falcon/opsupadmin/Rotas/

8. Monitoring Compliance

8.1 Not applicable

9. Communications/Implementation Plan

9.1 Not required as this is not a new or significantly altered policy.

10. **Associated Documentation / Legislation**

10.1 Associated Legislation/ Standards / Documents included:

- Bedfordshire Police / Bedfordshire Police Authority Protocol.-

  ➢ Visits by Independent Custody Visitors made at the request of Police to Persons detained in connection with Critical Incidents.

http://hydrogen5/newintranet/operational_information/information_sharing/protocols/cv_critical_incidents.doc

- Article 14 European Convention Human Rights (ECHR).

- In the application of this policy Bedfordshire Police will not discriminate against any persons regardless of sex, race, colour, language, religion, political, or other opinion, national or social origin, association with national minority, property, birth or other national status as defined under Article 14 European Convention Human Rights (ECHR).

11. **Freedom of Information.**

11.1 Suitable for External Publication.   Yes

Exempted Paragraphs	Reason for Exemption

12 Equality Impact Assessment

12.1 The equality impact assessment for this document is provided below.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - PART ONE

Name of proposal to be assessed	R011 Critical Incident Management	Date of Assessment	23/07/2010
Is this a policy or a SOP? Standard Operating Procedure		Person(s) responsible for assessment	Superintendent 1043 MARTIN

Designation: Low

1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose.	**To set strategic guidance for Bedfordshire Police in the prevention, identification, management and review of critical incidents.**
2. Are there any associated objectives? Please explain.	
3. Who is intended to benefit and in what way?	Victims, victim's family and community subject of a critical incident.
4. What outcomes are wanted?	Secure public confidence via effective response to critical incidents.
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Failure to identify a critical incident and failure to respond effectively.
6. Who are the main stakeholders?	Bedfordshire Police Staff, the public and in particular the victims, their families and communities subject of critical incidents.

7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact on racial groups?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to gender?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to Transgender?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
10. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to disability?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
11. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	

12. Are there concerns that there <u>could </u>be a differential impact due to age?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
13. Are there concerns that there <u>could </u>be a differential impact due to religion and belief?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
14. Are there concerns that there <u>could </u>be a differential impact due to dependants/caring responsibilities?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
15. Could the differential impact identified in 8 – 14 amount to a potential adverse impact?	No
16. Can the impact be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?	No
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	
17. Should this proceed to a full impact assessment? If yes, proceed to the EIA Part Two.	No
18. If No, are there any changes required to improve it around the equality agenda?	No

Approved by Author   Date: 27/07//2010

Approved by Sponsor   Date:

Approved by Diversity Advisor   Date: N/A

Contact Information Governance: Bedfordshire Police Headquarters, Woburn Road, Kempston, Bedfordshire.MK43 9AX.