

# MISSING PERSONS

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

<b>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE</b>			
<b>REFERENCE.</b>	SOP/221/10		
<b>PROTECTIVE MARKING</b>	Not protectively marked (except sections 3.1 & 3.2 which are restricted -tactics)		
<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	Protective Services Portfolio		
<b>OWNER</b>	ACC Protective Services		
<b>START DATE</b>	3 August 2010		
<b>REVIEW DATE</b>	August 2011		
<b>THIS POLICY REPLACES:</b>	This updates SOP 202/09 which updated and replaces the Lost / Missing Persons Policy (D56555)		
<b>VERSION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>REASON FOR AMENDMENT</b>	<b>AMENDED BY</b>
10	21/04/2010	Review	D/Supt Field/DI Rogers
11	May 2010 – June 2010	Preparation for consultation and publishing – post meeting on 24.06.10	Policy Team and DCI Taylor
12	1/07/2010	Further amendments	Policy Team and DCI Taylor
13	6/07/2010	Further amendments	Policy Team and DCI Taylor
14	14/07/2010	Further amendments	T/DCS Croft and Policy Team
15	26/07/2010	Final amendments	T/ACC Flood



## MISSING PERSONS STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This procedure effects and is subject to the conditions of the [Investigation of Crime Policy - 086/07](#).
- 1.2 This procedure applies to England, Wales and Scotland.
- 1.3 This procedure applies to all police officers and police staff.
- 1.4 The ACPO definition of a Missing Person is, **“Anyone whose whereabouts is unknown, whatever the circumstances of disappearance. They will be considered missing until located and their well-being or otherwise established.”**
- 1.5 Missing Person replaces the previously used terms ‘Missing From Home’, ‘MISPER’, and ‘concern for welfare’. These terms should **no** longer be used.
- 1.6 Home Office (HO) Forces in England and Wales and Scottish Police Forces (local Forces) have primacy when dealing with Missing Persons. However, although British Transport Police (BTP) do not have a primary role in recording or investigating reports of missing persons, they do have a valuable role in supporting police forces with Missing Person investigations. BTP will do all that is reasonable to assist the local force within BTP’s jurisdiction.
- 1.7 Missing Person investigations should be regarded as a high risk area of policing and given appropriate levels of priority and resources. Officers must be aware that missing persons are often vulnerable and may be victims of abuse and should be dealt with accordingly.

1.8 The commencement of a Missing Person Report form is not just noting down the facts, it is the beginning of an investigation. Therefore the lead HO force should always take the report, not BTP.

## 2 ACPO APPROVED MISSING PERSON CATEGORIES

- High risk
- Medium risk
- Low risk

2.1 HIGH RISK: The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through their own vulnerability, or may have been the victim of a serious crime, or the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public are in danger.

2.2 MEDIUM RISK: The risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others.

2.3 LOW RISK: There is no apparent threat of danger to either the subject or the public.

2.4 It must be remembered that a Missing Person's category can change due to fresh information and there is a need to continuously evaluate the category.

## 3 PROCEDURES

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

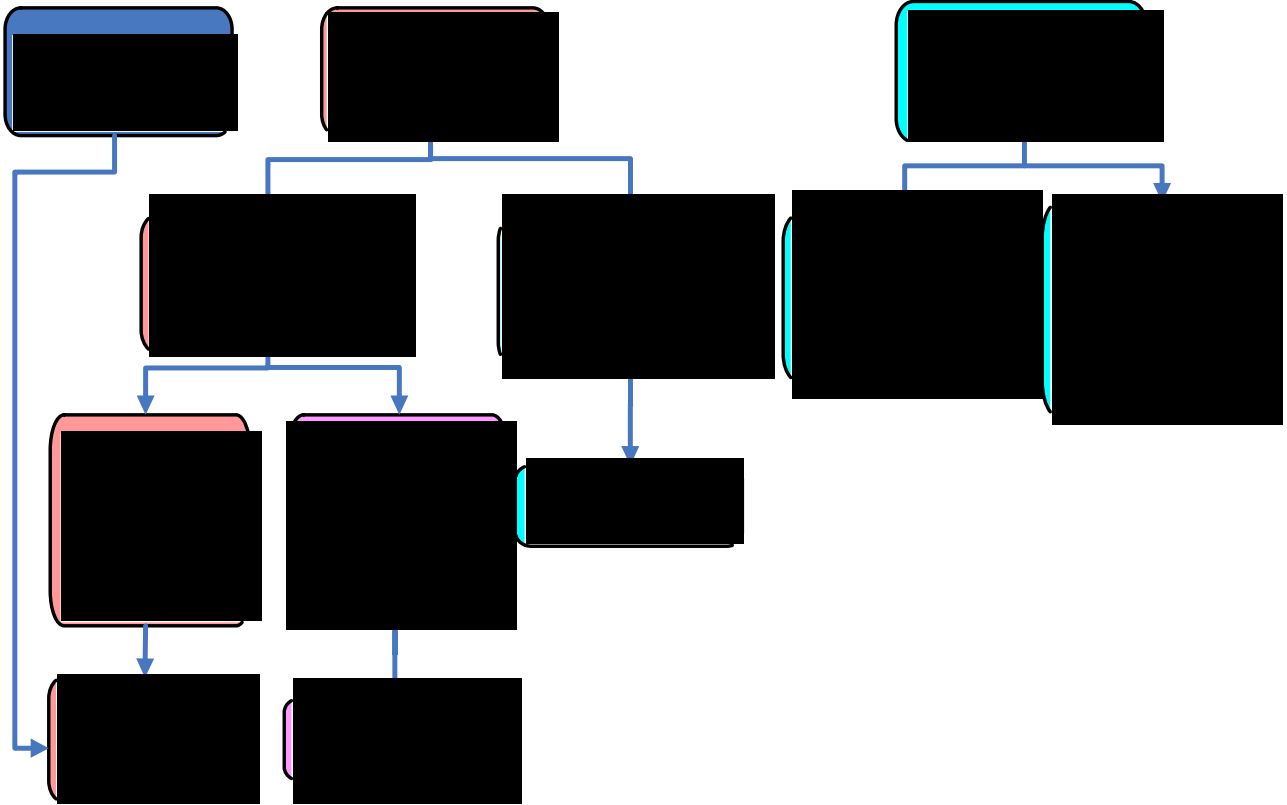
[REDACTED]



British  
Transport  
Police

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED  
(EXCEPT SECTIONS 3.1 & 3.2 WHICH ARE RESTRICTED)  
**BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE**

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Missing [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]





[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]



█ [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]  
█ [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
█ [REDACTED]  
█ [REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
█ [REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### **3.3 FOUND PERSONS FCR & AREA OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.3.1 Missing Persons may come to the notice of BTP officers where they have been involved in incidents on the railway or simply through stop checks. Officers locating a Missing Person or officers receiving reports confirming the finding of Missing Persons must notify the FCR who will inform the local force where the person is recorded as missing.

- 3.3.2 If the found person is suspected of preparing for or attempting suicide or self-harm within BTP's jurisdiction, they should be dealt with in accordance with the [Suicide Prevention SOP](#) (SOP/216/10) and be made subject to an Area PIER Plan, through the AIB manager.
- 3.3.3 It is the HO Force's responsibility to conduct checks to ensure the missing person is safe and well. It is not appropriate for a BTP officer to fulfil this function.
- 3.3.4 A Missing Person should not be returned to any premises by BTP officers without having first confirmed with the investigating force that it is appropriate to do so, so that Missing Persons are not inadvertently returned into the hands of an abuser. The name and number of the HO Force officer confirming that it is appropriate to do so must be recorded. If a missing person is returned to a premises, a debrief must be carried out by the BTP officer dealing and the details passed to the investigating force.
- 3.3.5 If the Missing Person is a child or young person a return interview should be considered by an independent person. Such an interview may also be considered for vulnerable adults. This will be the responsibility of the local lead force to arrange. However if the person is a child and comes into the contact of a BTP Officer it is a BTP responsibility to submit a [CYP/1 form](#).
- 3.3.6 Police officers must be mindful that when a non-vulnerable adult Missing Person is located, their whereabouts must not be disclosed if this is against their wishes. They should inform the person reporting them missing that they have been located and reassure them about their well-being. History has shown that some people are reported missing to the police in order that their whereabouts can be found, for a variety of reasons.

### **3.3.7 Found Person – Not Reported Missing**

In circumstances where a found child or vulnerable adult has **not** been reported missing to a Police Force the FCR will advise the Area Duty Officer who will liaise with the Local Force where the found person resides and agree a plan of action. The fact that a child or vulnerable adult has not been reported missing to the police may be an indicator of abuse. An abuser may not wish to report the matter to the police in order that police are not alerted to the possibility of abuse. Therefore it is good practice to deal with the found person the same way as a recorded Missing Person. This will ensure that BTP comply with the principle aim of the current ACPO Missing Person guidance, "To protect those at risk of harm". Therefore actions at 3.3.4 to 3.3.5 should be agreed with the Local Force where the person resides.

3.3.8 If the found person is suspected of preparing for or attempting suicide or self-harm within BTP's jurisdiction, they should be dealt with in accordance with the [Suicide Prevention SOP](#) (SOP/216/10) and be made subject to an Area PIER Plan through the AIB manager.

3.3.9 If the Local Force decline to deal with the found vulnerable person in the same way as a found reported Missing Person then BTP must deal with the matter. The Area Duty Officer will appoint an Investigating Officer (IO) and oversee the enquiry.

### **3.3.10 The appointed Investigating Officer WILL ensure:**

- That a physical check is made to ensure the missing person is safe and well.
- That checks are made with local police intelligence, Youth Offending Teams, the Child Abuse Investigation Unit, the Missing Persons Bureau (MPB) and with the local Social Services department covering the area where the found person lives.
- That checks are made on: FIS and PNC.

- 3.3.11 This list is not exhaustive but is the minimum standard. If enquiries reveal that there is no apparent risk if the person is returned home, then the Duty Officer will authorise the IO to arrange for the person to be returned. If the person is a child a [CYP/1 form](#) should be submitted in accordance with local procedure.
- 3.3.12 If enquiries reveal that a child may be at risk if returned home then the Area Duty Officer will make contact with the local HO Force designated officer for child protection issues. A decision will then be made whether to take the person into police protection. (The Children's Act 1989 **requires** that the HO Police Force designated officer for the area where the youth was detained **must** be notified). In these circumstances a [CYP/2 form](#) must be completed and submitted in accordance with local procedure.
- 3.3.13 Where evidence suggests any abuse the local force will be responsible for the investigation. BTP will be responsible for reporting the incident to the Local Force Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU). Therefore BTP staff must be aware of what constitutes child abuse and what to record for evidential purposes ([see Child Protection Policy](#)).

### **3.4 MISSING PERSONS BUREAU (MPB)**

- 3.4.1 The MPB is part of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA). The contact number for the Bureau is 01256 602979. The BTP SPOC for the MPB is the Field Intelligence Officer (FIO) on the Vulnerable Persons Desk in FIB. The FIO will be the SPOC for any routine communication with MPB.

### **3.5 MEDIA**

3.5.1 Media enquiries should be referred to the lead local force; however the relevant BTP media officer must be kept apprised of all cases where BTP actions are a significant part of the investigation.

### **3.6 PNC**

3.6.1 It is the HO Police Force who has primacy for the Missing Person enquiry that is responsible for placing entries onto PNC and removing entries from PNC. This is not a BTP responsibility.

### **3.7 FAMILY LIAISON**

3.7.1 Family liaison and feedback to families is the responsibility of the lead Force.

## **4. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE**

### **4.1 Monitoring and Compliance of Missing Person Investigations**

4.1.1 Assistant Chief Constable Protective Services is the 'Force Lead' for Missing Persons.

4.1.2 The Detective Chief Superintendent (Head of Protective Services) or Head of Department is accountable for ensuring that review and audit processes are in place to monitor compliance with these Standard Operating Procedures and where necessary to debrief any Missing Person investigation and record any lessons learnt.

4.1.3 Area Commanders are accountable for compliance with this SOP within their Police Area and Missing Person (High and Medium) investigations will be monitored and managed by Area Senior Management Teams at their daily tasking meetings.



- 4.1.4 Some Missing Person Investigations may be declared as Critical Incidents. Please refer to [Critical Incident SOP](#) (SOP/123/10) for procedures, monitoring and compliance.
- 4.1.5 This SOP will be reviewed after 12 months then every three years thereafter.

## **5 APPENDICES**

- 5.1 [Appendix A Search Protocols](#)
- 5.2 [Appendix B PIER Plan Guidance](#)
- 5.3 [Appendix C Glossary of Terms](#)