



Threat Management & Threats to Life (Policy)

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

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Policy

Statement

Merseyside Police is committed to fighting crime and protecting communities. It will take all reasonable steps to manage threats to people and against property when there is a real and immediate risk to them from criminal intent.

In particular, the Force is legally obliged to take all reasonable steps to protect the life of people where there is a real and immediate risk to them from the criminal acts of another.

This policy has been reviewed in line with the NPCC National Threats to Life Guidelines (January 2013) and seeks to establish a commonality of approach with other NPCC forces.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that all threats to people and property that the Force becomes aware of are properly considered and that all threats, particularly threats to life, receive an appropriate police response. That response shall be in line with Article 2 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the principles of *Osman v UK 1988*. The dictum of *Osman v UK 1988* requires public agencies; in consideration of threat and in light of available resources and against competing demands, to undertake reasonable action to counter the threat.

This policy is therefore underpinned by procedures designed to provide clear, definitive and unambiguous direction for all those involved in its deployment.

Objectives

Policy objectives are to:

- a) Provide a structure to deliver consistent corporate response to threat management, including specific legislative obligations around Threats to Life.
- b) Provide a model for the assessment of threat to support informed decision-making and proportionate deployment of resources and tactics to reduce the immediate risk of harm.
- c) Ensure business processes are in place to record, review and quality assure our response.
- d) Provide a protocol to ensure cross border threats are managed with clarity of command and in line with national policy.

In order to:

- Reduce the risk to people and property from such threats,
- Reduce the harm caused to families and communities by such threats,
- Maintain the safety of those involved in mitigating the risks,
- Promote informed decision making around appropriate use of resources,
- Identify clear 'ownership' of threat at the appropriate level and
- Deliver a corporate memory around the management of threat
- Provide a strategic overview of threats

Application and Scope

All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to Merseyside Police must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant policy and associated procedures. All references to Policing ranks will include Police staff equivalents also.

This policy will particularly apply to:

- All officers and staff in Intelligence
- All officers and staff in Response and Resolution
- All officers and staff in Investigation
- All officers and staff in Local Policing
- Chief Officers

“This policy document sets out principles to help guide decision making and is in some parts quite prescriptive. However, it is vital that officers and staff have the freedom to innovate, exercise discretion and take risk based decisions centred on the needs of the victim and the merits of each case. Non-statutory policies, including College of Policing APP, provide guidance only. They are ‘living documents’ and it is recognised that there may be a better way of doing this. Accordingly, if staff depart from a policy but are able to give a good rationale for their actions, and have acted with honesty, integrity and professionalism, to make the best decision for the community we serve, they will be trusted and supported”

Outcomes and Evaluation

In general terms, adherence to this policy should:

- Ensure that all relevant personnel have a shared perspective of their individual responsibilities and the procedures that need to be followed
- Help prevent threats materialising into violence
- Result in efficient and proportionate use of resources
- Reassure the public through the effective management of threats
- Ensure compliance with legal obligations

Governance will be achieved via the Protective Services governance arrangements.

Policy compliance may also be measured through inspections performed by Corporate Support Department.

The Professional Standards Department will monitor complaints and IPCC referrals.