

Date: 10/09/2021

Our Reference: FOIA-2021-090

RE: Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

I write in response to your Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or 'FoIA 2000') request dated 23/08/2021:

"I request the latest version of your document named "Stay Safe - Keeping the public and unarmed responders safe at incidents involving the use, or suspected use, of firearms or potentially lethal weapons". I would like to receive this in a format accessible to a screenreader (e.g. not a scanned PDF)."

When a request for information is made under FoIA 2000, a public authority has a general duty under section 1(1) of the Act to inform an applicant whether the requested information is held. There is then a general obligation to communicate that information to the applicant. If a public authority decides that the information should not be disclosed because an exemption applies, it must, under section 17(1) cite the appropriate section or exemption of the Act and provide an explanation for relying upon it.

It is important to note that a freedom of information request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself and any information disclosed are considered suitable for open publication, that is, once access to information is granted to one person under the legislation, it is then considered public information and must be communicated to any individual should a request be received. In light of this, our responses and disclosures are published on our external website at a later date. This should be borne in mind where a request is made for personal data of named individuals.

Decision

After conducting careful searches for any information relevant to your request I can confirm that information is held. The document is partially disclosed to you but elements of it have been refused as per the below:

Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement

As a publicly funded body and from an ethical perspective, the College accepts it has a duty to make appropriate information available to the public wherever possible. We appreciate that there is a public interest in the nature of firearms training or guidance provided by the College to staff and police forces.

However, the College must also consider the wider impact of disclosing specific detail about our firearms training. By the very nature of our work, the disclosure of the information requested carries the potential risk of highlighting areas of weakness within a country or police force. The possible disclosure of law enforcement capabilities, or lack thereof, may have a negative impact on law enforcement operations, both in the UK and abroad. This in turn could increase the risk to the safety of the public and indeed law enforcement personnel with which we engage. Disclosure could hinder the effective prevention and detection of crime as it has the potential to reveal gaps in capabilities. Disclosure of information that undermines the operational integrity of law enforcement capabilities is highly likely to have an adverse impact on public safety and a negative effect on law enforcement generally. This risk to public safety cannot be said to be in the public interest.

As stated above, the public interest test is a consideration of whether the community benefit of possession of the information outweighs the potential harm. It is not an evaluation of what interests the public. On weighing up the competing interests, I consider that the public interest test favours withholding any further detail of the requested information.

Section 38(1) (b) – Health & Safety

This exemption falls to be considered where there is a risk of danger to any individual.

We accept for the reasons outlined above, there is a strong public interest in providing information about firearms training. However, it is our view that revealing the information you have requested may reveal weaknesses in the law enforcement capabilities. These weaknesses could then be exploited by criminals, which potentially presents a risk to the public within those countries, along with law enforcement personnel. On balance, the risk of undermining firearms enforcement capabilities and affecting public safety cannot be mitigated by the public interest in disclosure of the requested information.

Section 40 (2) – Personal information

Section 40(2) states that:

"Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if-

- (a) It constitutes personal data which do not fall within subsection (1), and
- (b) Either the first or the second condition below is satisfied."

Essentially, under section 40(2) FOIA (by virtue of section 40(3A)), personal data of a third party can be withheld if any of the data protection principles would be breached by disclosing that data.

Personal data is defined in section 3(2) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), as being:

"Any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual". Section 3(3) DPA defines an identifiable living individual as: "a living individual who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to – (a) an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data or an online identifier, or (b) one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual".

As is stated above, the two main elements of personal data are: that the information must 'relate' to a living person and that the person must be identifiable. Information will relate to a person if it is: about them, linked to them, has some biographical significance for them, is used to inform decisions affecting them, and has them as its main focus or impacts on them in any way.

We consider that releasing the names of individuals contained within the disclosure document may lead to the direct identification of a living individual, therefore breaching data protection principles laid out in the Data Protection Act 2018.

Your rights are provided in **Appendix A**.

Yours sincerely,

**Legal Services
Information Management and Legal Team
College of Policing**

Email: FOI@college.pnn.police.uk

Website: www.college.police.uk

Appendix A

Rights

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision of the College of Policing made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) regarding access to information you can request that the decision is reviewed internally.

Internal review requests should be made in writing, within **forty (40) working days** from the date of the refusal notice, and addressed to: FOI team, Central House, Beckwith Knowle, Otley Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 1UF or email: FOI@college.pnn.police.uk

In all possible circumstances the College of Policing will aim to respond to your request for internal review within **20 working days**.

The Information Commissioner

If, after lodging an internal review request with the College of Policing you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make application to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>.

Alternatively, write to:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Phone: 0303 123 1113



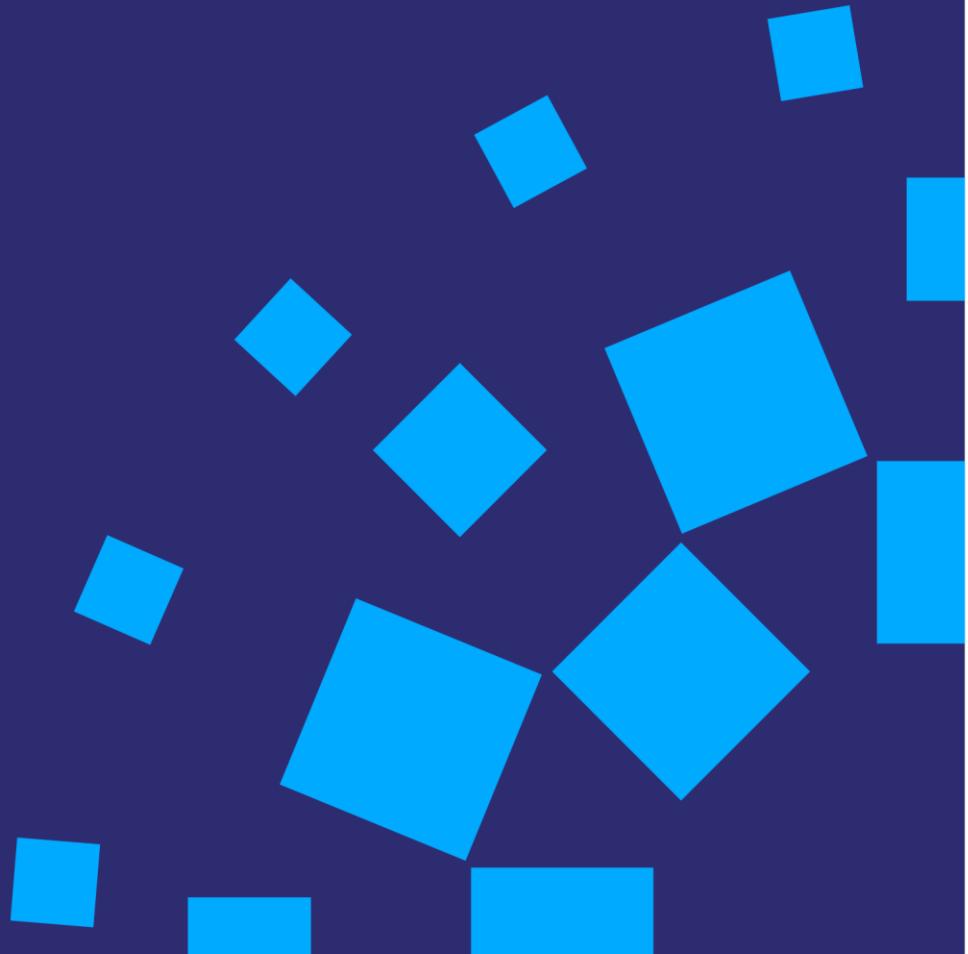
College of
Policing

Working together
to keep people safe

Stay safe

Keeping the public and unarmed responders safe at incidents involving the use, or suspected use, of firearms or potentially lethal weapons.

Version number 3.0



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Introduction

This guide is designed to assist operational unarmed initial responders and supervisors who may be called upon to respond to an incident involving:

- the criminal use, or suspected use, of firearms/other potentially lethal weapons
- lower sophistication marauding attacks (eg, use of knives or vehicles as weapons)
- marauding attacks involving firearms

It also provides guidance to control room staff in the gathering and disseminating of information and providing guidance to callers.

Police responders

The initial police responders to arrive at the scene of an incident will, in many cases, be unarmed. Where it becomes apparent that the incident requires the deployment of Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs), the safety of unarmed officers and police staff, and the impact that they may have on the situation needs to be considered. The extent of the impact will be dependent on the circumstances and nature of the threat.

Subject to risk assessment, unarmed responders may undertake tasks such as:

- providing a physical or visible deterrent, or reassurance
- directing potential victims or other vulnerable persons from locations where harm may occur
- dealing with casualties and, where possible, providing immediate first aid
- gathering information and reporting back
- implementing cordons

Those directing the use of unarmed responders should provide them with clear instructions regarding what they should and should not attempt to do.

Although negotiating principles are included in all initial training of AFOs, this is unlikely to be the case for unarmed responders attending the scene. Initial, unarmed responders may be confronted by a subject attempting to engage them in some form of communication. This should not be ignored and responders may try to reduce the

threat level or neutralise it by early communication with the subject. Unarmed responders should not try to communicate, however, if by doing so they would place themselves or members of the public in danger.

The deployment of unarmed responders should be coordinated with that of AFO's, and subject to appropriate risk assessment. Consideration should be given to the balance of competing priorities, such as saving life and the duty of care to those deployed, while taking steps to mitigate the threat.

APP content>Armed policing>Armed deployment>5. Police responders

The guide has been divided into three parts in order to focus on specific roles or types of incident.

Part 1: Material for all operational unarmed initial responders

(Police Officers/Police Community Support Officers (PCSO)/Special Constables and other police staff who may be the first on the scene)

Part 2: Additional information for supervisors at the scene

Part 3: Guidance for control room staff

The Authorised Professional Practice on Armed Policing (APP-AP) and the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum (NPFTC) are the definitive documents on armed policing.

Operation PLATO contingency planning guidance and the Responding to a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) Joint Operating Principles for the Emergency Services (JOPs) are the definitive national doctrine on MTAs.

Part one

Material for operational unarmed initial responders

(Police Officers/Special Constables/Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and other relevant police staff)

What is a firearms incident?

The deployment of 'Authorised Firearms Officers' (AFOs) should only be authorised in the following circumstances:

Where the officer authorising the deployment has reason to suppose that officers may have to protect themselves or others from a person who:

- is in possession of, or has immediate access to, a firearm or other potentially lethal weapon, or
- is otherwise so dangerous that the deployment of armed officers is considered to be appropriate, or
- as an operational contingency in a specific operation (based on the threat assessment), or
- for the destruction of animals which are dangerous or suffering unnecessarily

[APP content>Armed policing>Use of Force, Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons> Deployment of AFOs> 1 Criteria for the Deployment of AFOs](#)

Unarmed officers and staff are at greatest risk when called upon to deal with armed subjects if they act upon their own initiative.

Armed officers have a range of tactics that can be used in responding to the incident. Prior to the attendance of armed officers it may be possible for unarmed initial responders to take action as previously described. They may also be required to perform specific roles in support of armed officers.

What is a marauding attack?

A marauding attack may take many forms, ranging from a single attacker in possession of a bladed weapon, to a multi sited attack with multiple subjects and involving firearms and explosives.

A marauding attack will involve attacker(s) actively and deliberately seeking out new victims. The “marauding” element may involve attackers moving between or within structures or other populated areas searching for victims. It may also include the circumstances where an attacker seeks out new victims with little or no need for such movement; for example an attacker discharging a high powered firearm from a vantage point into a crowded area.

The motivation for a marauding attack may be terrorism, and where this is the case it will be referred to as a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA). Operation Plato is the agreed national identifier for the multi-agency response to such an attack which is designed to inform and prepare personnel from all three emergency services for the response to an extraordinary event.

The motivation may also be personal disaffection with family, an employer or school. In these cases the subject is likely to be alone or have one other accomplice, and when accompanied will ordinarily target one venue at a time. They often take their own life before they are confronted by the police. These are sometimes referred to as an ‘active shooter’ (particularly in the USA), however they may be using weaponry other than firearms.

During the early stages of an incident, it may not be possible to identify the motivation of the subject(s) and the initial policing response may be informed more by the nature of the attack than its motivation. For that reason this guidance concentrates on the nature of the threat rather than the motivation of the subjects. Where there is any indication at the early stage that the incident may be terrorist motivated those in command will initiate the necessary protocols and brief you accordingly.

Unarmed officers and police staff may already be present at a scene, or be the initial responders during the early stages of marauding attack and unaware as to the actual nature of the incident. They may be required to perform a wide range of life saving activities to protect the public particularly when the attack methodology is lower in sophistication.

The unarmed response principles and guidance that follows can therefore, in most respects, be applied to marauding attacks. There is further guidance specific to marauding attacks later in this document.

What are your responsibilities under human rights legislation?

Under human rights legislation, the police, as a public authority, have a positive obligation to ensure that the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the legislation are protected, the rights of all people must be considered, including those of the subjects. The police service has an overriding duty to protect the public and to prevent the loss of life, but this must be balanced against their duty of care to police responders and the need to minimise the risk to those responders.

Remember

The initial responder is a vital link in the gathering of relevant information to assist firearms commanders, armed officers and other unarmed responders in determining an appropriate response.

Unarmed responders are most likely to provide the initial response to any spontaneous armed incident or marauding attack, and are at greater risk when called upon to deal with armed subjects if they act upon their own initiative.

Unarmed responders have a role in the response to a firearms incident or marauding attack in accordance with the SEE TELL ACT principles and without unnecessarily exposing themselves to risk.

Prior to the attendance of armed officers it may be possible for unarmed initial responders to take some initial action.

What can **YOU** do at the scene?

- **Stay Safe** Think about your own and the public's safety.
- **See** What is happening and where.
- **Tell** Communicate, describe incident/type of weapon.
- **Act** Stay Safe, update, observe/contain, taking positive action to confront and neutralise the threat where this is appropriate, proportionate and achievable.

Stay safe

- Do not approach unnecessarily
- Use cover from firearms
- Consider safe approach/escape routes
- Consider safety of others
- Wear correct PPE

Do not approach unnecessarily

It is important that you consider your own safety. Do not unnecessarily expose yourself to danger and do not go straight to the scene without assessing the risk to yourself and others.

Use cover from firearms

The use of effective cover from firearms can offer a degree of protection. There are two types of cover:

1. **Cover from fire.** Cover from fire is sometimes also described as hard cover.

Examples would include:

- substantial brick
- stone walls (not breeze block)
- substantial tree
- earth banks
- vehicle engine block – vehicles offer very little ballistic protection with the possible exception of the engine block

Where cover from fire is not available it may be possible to make use of:

2. **Cover from view.** If the subject cannot see you, they may not fire at you.

However it is possible to anticipate where you are and shoot through the cover.

Examples would include:

- wooden fence
- hedgerow
- vehicles

You must consider the type of weapon that the subject may possess as this will alter your assessment of risk and the cover required.

Firearms generally fall into three categories:

- handgun
- shotgun
- rifles

The bullet or shot fired from any weapon can travel over some distance and still cause injury. **Remember** that rifles are normally more powerful and accurate than other firearms and their ammunition is capable of travelling the greatest distance (in some cases miles). If you cannot confirm the type of firearm '**treat it as a rifle**'.

Treat all firearms as real and loaded until proved otherwise (normally when in possession of the police).

Not all incidents involve firearms carried by the subject. You may have to consider whether cover is needed if the subject is armed with a bladed or other potentially deadly weapon (eg, crossbow).

Consider safe approach and escape routes

Ideally the subject should not be able to see your approach and will therefore be unaware of your presence or position. Whatever the cover you have been able to utilise always ensure that you have a safe approach and escape route from it. If a subject approaches you or identifies where you are, you may need to move.

If utilising cover of darkness consider how safe your position and escape route would be during daylight hours when darkness no longer provides any cover.

Consider safety of others

Remember your duty under the Human Rights legislation. The police service has an overriding duty to protect the public and to prevent the loss of life, but this must be balanced against your safety. You may be required, and able, to perform a wide range of life saving activities to protect the public.

Direct and/or disperse

Consider the direction you might give to your colleagues and members of the public to prevent them from coming into the danger areas. For example, direct the public to safety via a safe route or colleagues to safe containment positions or, where appropriate, a suitable rendezvous point.

Directing everybody to move in a single direction, or allowing them to congregate in one place, may make them more vulnerable to secondary attacks or devices.

Consider allowing or encouraging the public to disperse in multiple directions if appropriate. The advice provided to the public is to 'Run Hide Tell'.

Wear correct personal protective equipment (PPE)

Do you know what protection your force issue patrol body armour gives you?

1. Is it stab resistant?
2. Does it protect you from firearms?
3. What size, type or calibre of firearm/ammunition will it stop?

If you cannot answer these questions you could be at risk. **Find out.**

Most issue patrol body armour is only effective against short barrelled handguns.
(Not shotguns or rifles.)

You should check that your body armour is in good condition and still fits you correctly.

See

- **What** is happening and where
- **Where** are the subjects now or going
- **How many** casualties and/or subject(s)
- **What** weapons are they carrying, what are their actions

What is happening and where?

As an initial responder you have a vital role in the gathering of first hand 'real time' information and intelligence. Accurate information from the scene will enable armed officers to be deployed more quickly and effectively.

Where are the subjects now/going? How many casualties/subjects?

Confirm, as far as possible, the exact location of the subject(s) and the nature of the incident, without unnecessarily exposing yourself to danger.

Gather relevant intelligence on the subject(s) and related premises or vehicles, potential victims and casualties. Accurate information and descriptions are important.

The subject(s) location is vital to directing armed officers, colleagues and the public to the right place as quickly as possible. Where the subject(s) are moving about, real time updates allow effective redirection if required.

What weapons, actions?

The type of weapon will have an impact on the equipment and tactics used by armed officers and the cover used by colleagues.

- Is it a firearm or other type of weapon?
- What type of firearm/weapon is it? Describe what you see or have been told at the scene. If it is a firearm, is it a handgun or does it have a long barrel?

Detail is important, for example, type and size of knife. Not just that it is a knife.

- What is the subject(s) doing with the weapon?
- Have threats been made?

Tell

- **Communication**
- **Describe** location and subjects
- **Explain** type of Incident
- **Accuracy, brevity, clarity**

The information that you gather at the scene needs to be passed accurately, briefly and clearly to the control room. The picture in the control room may not be as clear as the initial responder thinks.

The deployment and tasking of unarmed responders may also rely on the information/intelligence that can be provided and the associated threat and risk. To

ensure consistent communication is achieved adopt the METHANE method of reporting:

M Major incident

Has a major incident been declared? It may be unclear to you but if you believe the incident may require the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services for initial treatment, rescue or there is a large amount of causalities, you may consider declaring this as a Major Incident.

E Exact location

Commanders will be relying on accurate information from you at the scene in order to plan an effective response and deploy suitable resources to protect the public and assist you as an initial responder. Accuracy around location is essential such as postcodes or grid references. Try and look for any road or street name and if possible property number. If you are unsure of your location look for any known landmarks. Don't delay reporting an incident in order to ascertain in depth detail around location, as the incident evolves, and responders are on route, exact location may become clearer which can then be communicated. Remember your police radios can also identify your location to control room staff.

T Type of incident

If you **think** you have a firearms incident or **a marauding attack just say so**. Do not wait to report such an incident in order to provide greater clarification as to the incident type as this may delay the deployment of other responders, potentially putting lives at risk. If it transpires that the incident wasn't what you thought it was, resources can be redirected or cancelled on route.

H Hazards

These could involve the use of firearms, less sophisticated weapons such as knives, vehicles, fire etc. Where possible provide descriptions of any weapons used. Where vehicles are involved descriptions should be provided such as – make, model and colour. The use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Person Bourne IEDs (PBIEDs) or Vehicle Bourne IEDS (VBIEDs) may be suspected within a marauding attack. Where this is believed to be the case a description of the package containing an IED, the person wearing the PBIED or the vehicle containing the VBIED should

be provided where possible. Ensure descriptions are accurate. If you don't know details, guard against guessing or speculating. In many armed incidents different descriptions of the same subject have led to confusion about the number of subjects involved.

A Access

Identifying the best route in enables responders to arrive at a scene as quickly as possible. Try to identify any routes that may be congested/obstructed or present significant danger so, where possible, other responders can avoid those. If you believe alerting subject(s) to the arrival of emergency responders may impact on an effective policing response, a request for a silent approach could also be considered. As well as identifying the best routes in, where possible, try to identify the best routes out to allow the quick exit of emergency responders conducting evacuation roles. The early identification of a rendezvous point (RVP) and Forward Control Point (FCP) enhance the possibility of a cohesive emergency service response being achieved.

N Number of casualties

Where numbers of casualties are known, these numbers should be provided so that the most effective casualty response can be achieved. In an incident such as a marauding attack or the aftermath of an explosion, rough estimates should be provided if it appears the casualty rate is significant. Information on the types of injuries, general conditions and whether any casualties are able to self-evacuate will also assist other responders to develop a casualty response plan at an early stage.

E Emergency services

Establish which other emergency responders are likely to be required at the scene. As well as the police, ambulance service and fire and rescue service consider if any specialist resources may be required such as Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). During any marauding attack the demand on the emergency services communications network could be overwhelming and all responders need to ensure the use of the radio in both monitoring and transmitting is disciplined and appropriate.

Act

- **Stay safe**
- **Update**
- **Observe/contain**
- **First aid**

Stay safe

Consideration should be given to minimising the risk to the public and maximising the safety of other responding officers by:

- directing the public to a place of safety or prevent them from approaching the scene if appropriate
- taking positive action to confront and neutralise the threat where this is appropriate, proportionate and achievable. (This is unlikely to be the case if subjects have immediate access to firearms.)
- seeking opportunities to maintain and develop observations and situational awareness from positions of cover
- speaking to the public who have evacuated an area in order to gain information on the last sighting and direction of travel of subjects
- identifying safe access routes and RVPs for armed officers in order to give a 'face to face' situational awareness briefing prior to their deployment
- checking RVPs for suspicious objects prior to the arrival of additional resources

Update

Where you gain additional relevant information, provide updates whenever possible. You are the eyes and ears on the ground supplying 'real time information'.

Observe/contain

Two of the tactical options that may be viable for use by unarmed officers and staff are observation and containment.

Keeping the subject under observation, either overtly, discreetly or covertly, will assist with the gathering of information and the subsequent deployment of armed officers.

Containment is an option when the subject is known or believed to be in a particular location, the intention being to isolate the subject or place limits on their permitted movement. Where the subject is in possession of a firearm it is much less likely that their movement can be constrained safely by unarmed officers or staff. Where viable, containment may be either static or, in some circumstances, may move with the subject. It may also allow time for more detailed planning of a police response.

First aid

You have an obligation under Human Rights legislation to render first aid if safe to do so. In a marauding attack you may be required to perform a wide range of life saving activities to protect the public.

The priority for armed responders will be to locate and confront the subjects in order to neutralise the threat that they pose. Whilst this may necessitate armed officers initially leaving casualties unaided, it may create a more permissive environment in which unarmed colleagues can then operate and administer assistance.

What are the marauding attack specific considerations in relation to the scene(s)?

The response to a marauding attack may differ from the normal police response to an armed incident in a number of ways. Commanders may zone geographical areas in order to identify and differentiate levels of risk. This ensures the appropriate and proportionate deployment of emergency service responders into different locations.

The zones are described as hot, warm and cold to indicate the areas of most serious risk to those of low risk. Unarmed responders will play a vital role in the initial stages of the response and this may include activity within each of the zones.

The hot zone

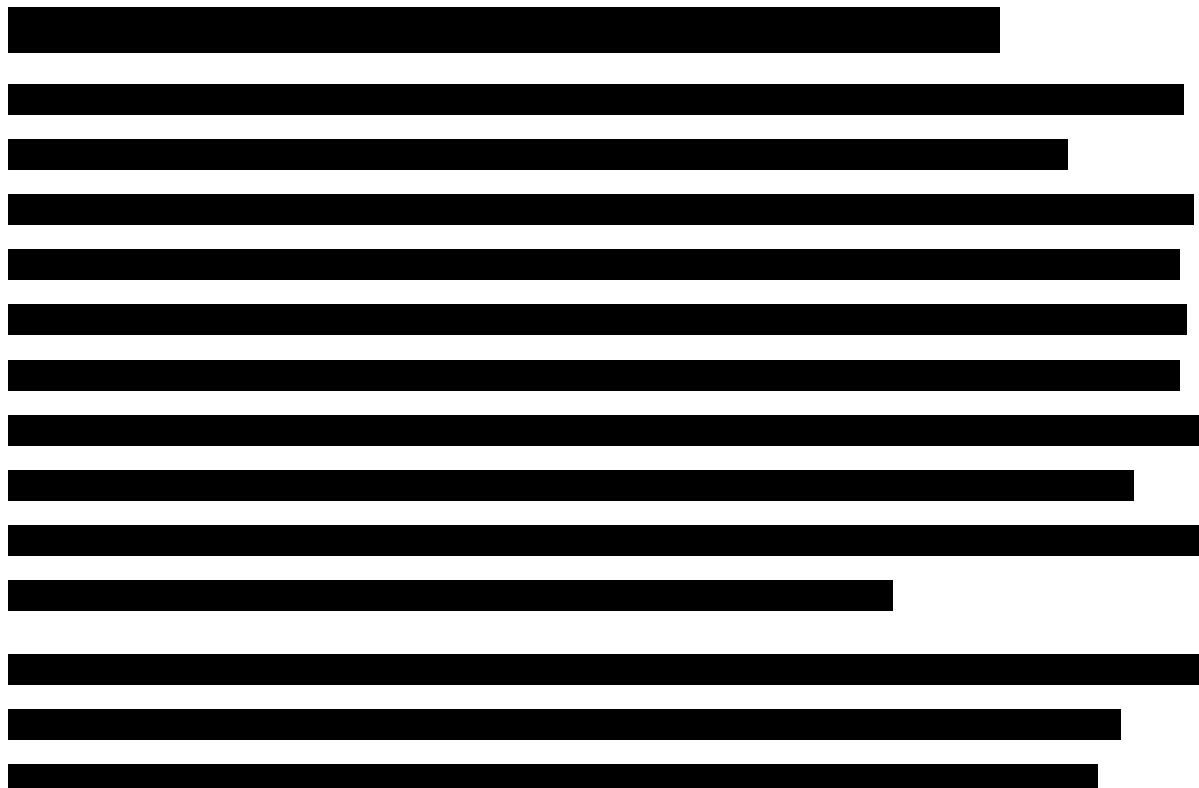
A hot zone is an area assessed to contain a credible and continuing threat to life, including the presence of attackers with weapons.

The warm zone

The warm zone is an area assessed as where the attackers are not believed to be present but an identified threat remains.

The cold zone

The cold zone is an area where no known threat exists or where appropriate control measures have been implemented. Some cold zones will not require any control measures. The RVP and FCP will be within this zone.



High explosive (HE) grenades

Whilst the criminal use of HE grenades is extremely rare in the United Kingdom, there remains the potential that both armed and unarmed initial police responders may be required to respond to such a threat.

The characteristics of HE grenades are inherently unpredictable. The following guidance should therefore be considered to be indicative rather than prescriptive.

[REDACTED]

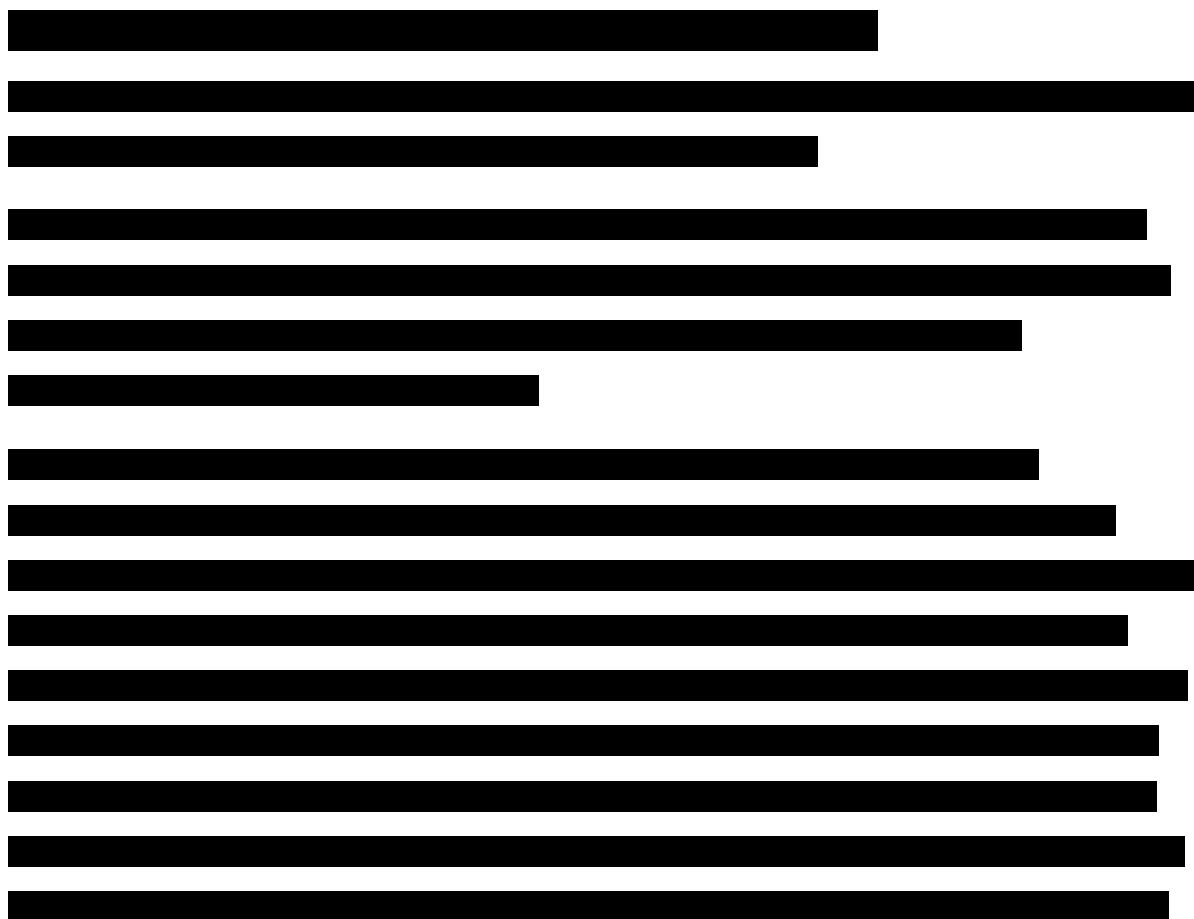
Characteristics of the blast

A grenade blast and accompanying fragmentation tends to travel upwards and outwards in a conical shape from the ground. The angle of this blast direction depends upon factors such as the type of ground.

Cover

Effective hard cover will generally protect a person from the effects of a grenade even when it is deployed in close proximity. Effective cover could be provided by structures and objects such as substantial brick walls, vehicle engine blocks, earth banks, substantial trees.

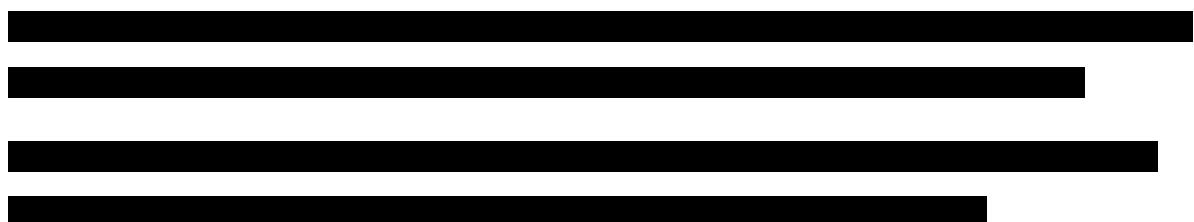
Generally cover that would stop conventional firearms ammunition would also be effective against grenades. The potential for the grenade to be thrown and subsequently explode behind or to the side of the cover being used should be considered.



Improvised explosive devices (IEDs)

IEDs can be hidden to maximise effect and could take any shape or size. Context is key; consider what is normal for the location or situation.

Treat all IEDs as REAL until you know differently.



Five Cs

Confirm

- Police responder confirms (as far as practicable) as a potential terrorist device.
- Location, position and characteristics have been noted.

Clear

- The public have been safely cleared away from the area – clearing those nearest to the suspect device first.
- Evacuation of nearby premises or moving of persons to an internal location away from windows has been considered.

Cordon

- Cordoned to appropriate distances.
- Not in direct line of sight and behind hard cover.
- Away from glass and parked vehicles.

Control

- Ensure the control room/senior officer in charge is informed.
- RVP designated and searched.
- Use terrorism powers if necessary.

Check

- Cordoned area checked to ensure it is clear.
- Secondary devices and hazards considered. Other locations searched.
- Checks for CCTV and suspects made.
- Request more resources as necessary.

Five Ws

What

- What is it? Size, components and description?
- The confirming officer should prepare a drawing from memory.

Where

- Where is it? Exact position. Map of approach route.
- Is it marked? How can it be located?

When

- Exact time it was found?

- Has it been moved by anyone?

Why

- Why is it suspicious?
- Any potential targets nearby (people or places)?
- Any suspects?

Who

- Who are the witnesses/informants?
- Keep them available at the RVP for the EOD officer.

Person borne (PB) IEDs

- Maintain your minimum cordon safety distance during any movement of the subject.
- Use hard cover if available but maintain observations.
- Direct and/or disperse public from the immediate area and any anticipated direction of travel taken by the subject(s).

[REDACTED]

Post or partial detonation

- For any “Explosion” [REDACTED] as there may be a remaining explosive hazard. However, where there are casualties then the situation may be too dynamic to achieve that immediately.
- Don’t touch or move anything you don’t have to.
- Move people away from the seat of explosion as quickly as possible (accepting that casualties may make this a slower process).
- Essential personnel may go forward to protect and save life, following an NDM assessment.
- Utilise any available hard cover.
- Spend the minimum amount of time in the area as possible and keep the numbers to a minimum.
- Consider the need for respiratory protection measures. Dust, smoke, debris, and CBRN hazards can be present.

Part two

Additional information for supervisors at scene

Supervisors should have read part 1 of this guide to gain an understanding of the role of unarmed initial responders at a firearms incident/marauding attack.

What is your role as a supervisor at a firearms incident?

As an unarmed supervisor at the scene of an armed incident you will not be responsible for the deployment, tactics or actions of the armed officers, who will have a separate command structure.

You do however have a role to play in implementing and coordinating unarmed police activity, in support of the armed response, which will contribute to the mitigation of identified risks.

What actions should you consider?

Firearms incidents are resource intensive. Use the list below to assist you with actions at the scene:

RECIPE for success

React	Confirm firearms incident Direct resources Request armed support Inform/Liaise with the Tactical Firearms Commander (TFC)
Evaluate	Immediate risk, what and where is it? Request assistance Record information and actions Considers the safety of all persons present
Cordon(s)	What will be effective/is the location safe? Initial cordons may move closer when deemed safe Public – exclude those outside the cordon from entry

Public – evacuate those inside the cordon (if safe to do so)
Safety and security of inner cordon (armed?)

Inform Inform your officers of what:

- the information is
- has been done
- the plan is
- their individual roles and responsibilities are

Plan/Prepare Confirm the actions required with the TFC

Gather information about:

- Location
- Subject identity
- Subject weapons and capability
- Injured parties/hostages
- Relevant information/intelligence
- Rendezvous Point (safe routes)
- Witnesses

Evaluate Confirm actions with the TFC

- Welfare of public/officers/subject
- Resources at scene and requested
- Risk assessment

What is your role as a supervisor at a marauding attack?

When firearms are involved in a marauding attack the supervisory actions would be the same as above. However, where a less sophisticated attack is taking place you may be able to coordinate unarmed responders in taking positive action to confront and neutralise threat where this is appropriate, proportionate and achievable.

As a supervisor on scene you may be required to conduct the role of the on scene commander in the initial stages of the incident.

The initial on scene commander provides scene command on behalf of the control room TFC and includes:

- liaising with the other emergency services under the direction of the control room TFC
- assisting the control room TFC in zoning geographical areas in order to identify and differentiate levels of risk. This ensures the appropriate and proportionate deployment of emergency service responders into different locations.
- directing unarmed responders in line with the working strategy set by the control room TFC
- providing the control room TFC with situational awareness

Part three

Information for control room staff (gathering and disseminating information/guidance to callers)

Control room staff should have read parts 1 and 2 of this guide to gain an understanding of the role of unarmed initial responders and supervisor at a firearms incident/marauding attack.

Guidance for control room staff

Control room staff are vital to an effective policing response to any armed incident or a marauding attack. The key principles in respect of all of these incidents are consistent. There may however be some specific individual requirements or considerations for each. There may also be a force policy or standard operating procedure which has to be followed.

During a marauding attack control rooms will be under considerable pressure due to increased volume of calls and the need for the rapid and effective flow of information to and from specialist and non-specialist responders as well as the coordination with other emergency services and agencies. Business as usual structures will struggle to cope.

What is your role as first contact in an armed incident?

You may be the first contact that the public or subject has with the police during an armed incident. The information that you gather will help to determine the initial response to the incident by responders.

What can you expect?

- Initial information may be confusing.
- It may be hard to communicate with the caller as they may be distressed.
- You may receive multiple calls.

You may have initial contact with the subject; consider that the individual may be emotionally or mentally distressed.

What can you do during initial contact?

- Listen
- Ask
- Record
- Communicate
- Support

Listen, ask, record

Keep the caller (if safe) on the phone and ascertain:

- the callers contact details
- an accurate description of subject(s)
- the nature of injuries and the number of casualties
- the exact location of the subject(s) and casualties
- the type of weapon(s) used (eg, firearm/knife)?
- if it is a firearm, is it a handgun or does it have a long barrel?
- what the subject(s) is/are doing with the weapon(s)?
- have threats been made, if so what is the nature of those threats?
- have shots been fired, if so approximately how many?

Accurate information from the scene should enable unarmed and armed officers to be deployed more quickly and effectively.

Gather relevant intelligence on the subject(s) and related premises or vehicles, potential victims and casualties.

The subject(s) location is vital to directing armed officers to the right place as quickly as possible. Where the subject(s) are moving about, real time updates allow the effective redirection of those officers.

Communicate

Inform the control room TFC, **as soon as possible**, as per your force policy or standing operating procedure for an armed incident.

Maintain contact with the caller if possible.

Support

Your role is to report what is happening and continue to gather information from the callers(s) or initial responders on the ground. This information can be used to support resources being deployed to the incident.

Information gathering and guidance to callers during a marauding attack

Call handlers should provide key initial advice to callers (Run, Hide, Tell).

Callers providing information should be focused around the below detail:

- **Identification** of subject(s), (descriptions)
- **Location** of subject(s)
- **Capability** of subject(s) (type of weapon)

Callers who are unable to provide priority information in relation to the current identification, location and capability of subjects should be offered key initial advice and the call terminated.

Dissemination of information

If, due to the circumstances of the incident, the control room TFC declares the incident as Operation PLATO (marauding **terrorist** attack), that message should be communicated, in plain speech, to all police officers and staff without delay, including the attack methodology.

It is likely that control room staff will adopt the use of 'Action Cards' to direct activity.

As a priority the control room will instigate the pre-planned tri service communication link between the emergency services control rooms, this should be achieved via the relevant Emergency Services Inter-Control (ESICTRL) Talk-Group. Early and ongoing information sharing between the Emergency Services control rooms and their services responders is an essential requirement in delivering a coordinated response and will assist with the activation of contingency plans.

This talk group link between control rooms should be kept open and resourced appropriately for the duration of the incident and should not be terminated until all parties agree that it is appropriate to do so.

The tri service communication message should clearly state whether Operation PLATO has been declared and include details of the attack methodology being used, or suspected, in clear unambiguous plain speech as well as any relevant METHANE messages from the scene.

This will assist the emergency services to deliver an effective and coordinated response to an ongoing marauding attack.

The foundation to every marauding attack response will be the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) which provide a framework for joined up working between the emergency services at a range of incidents.

The priority will be to deliver a coordinated response to an attack to save life, by neutralising the threat, delivering emergency medical care and rescuing or removing casualties or survivors.

Control room staff tasks may include:

- using nominated talk groups to allocate specific tasks to non-specialist responders and their supervisors
- providing regular updates from the TFC to police officers and those from other emergency services regarding changes or updates in attack methodology
- the mobilisation of additional regional and national firearms assets through pre-determined contact processes

Control room staff should remember that:

- they have a significant role to play in delivering an effective response to a marauding attack
- the priority will be to save life and those calls that identify and provide a current location for attackers should be prioritised in order to achieve this
- clear and concise communication with responders, and the use of METHANE messaging will support the overall coordination of the response
- tri service communication will be key in delivering the multi-agency response. Police staff and emergency service colleagues should be kept fully informed and updated with details of the attack methodology

About the College

We're the professional body for the police service in England and Wales.

Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

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