Summary

This policy document identifies the debriefing procedures and the necessity when analysing the results of policing activity.

STOP If you are unsure about the validity of the content of this policy please refer to the Policy Owner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy owner</th>
<th>Head of Protective Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy holder</td>
<td>Head of Specialist Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>DCI Major Investigations Team</td>
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| FPD no.   | 61 |
| GPS Group        | Specialist Operations |

Approved by

| Legal Services | ✔ |
| Policy owner   | ✔ |

Implementation date 22.01.11.
Review date 24.01.15.

Note: Please send the original final FPD with both signatures on it to the Force Policy Officer for the audit trail.

Please note that if the FPD still has the word DRAFT in the footer when asked for production, it is not taken as the definitive FPD policy.
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Legal Basis
(Please list below the relevant legislation which is the legal basis for this policy document).
You must update this list with changes in legislation that are relevant to this policy document.

Legislation specific to the subject of this policy document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Equality Act 2010</td>
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<td>Freedom Of Information Act 2000</td>
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Other legislation which you must check this document against

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Other Related Documentation:

Major Incident Room Standard Administration Procedures (MIRSAP)
Murder Investigations Manual (MIM)
Road Death Investigation Manual
National Briefing Model
IIIMARCH

Policy Statement:

1. Debriefing in the workplace is a way of capturing those learning experiences and sharing the learning for the good of all. Through the debriefing process, the transference of that learning to future work practices and procedures is made to ensure that good practices are endorsed and where possible, bad practices are eliminated.
Introduction:

Within the emergency planning and response environment we can learn from debriefing a variety of experiences, including:

- Planning an event, for example an outdoor music festival
- Exercise
- Response to an incident

The aim of the debrief is to reflect upon the event in an open and honest way, identifying and sharing personal experiences so the learning from them can be used positively in the future for the benefit of that person, other individuals and the organisation for whom they work. The ethics of the process should be consistent with professional responsibilities, respecting the rights of individuals and adding value to all those involved.

Debriefing is not about recriminations or blame but is a disciplined yet flexible technique for learning through reflection that is used for identifying how best to learn from experiences encountered during the event and to move forward.

Debriefings are necessary when analysing the results of policing activity. The information gathered from debriefings enhances intelligence dissemination which benefits future policing activity. The discipline of analysing results relies upon the thorough debriefing of patrol activity, pre-planned operations, investigations and crime prevention and reduction initiatives. Effective structured debriefing allows accurate organisational memory systems to be developed which creates a pool of policing knowledge that staff can consult when planning future operations.

The primary purpose of the debriefing procedure is to pass on information. Information captured from patrol activity, neighbourhood policing or any other operation, investigation or crime reduction initiative must be obtained through the debriefing process. Information submitted to the Intelligence Unit through the debriefing process needs to be accurately summarised and disseminated in a timely fashion.
Debriefing improves policing activity by highlighting areas of good practice as well as examining actions that were less successful. It also allows early resolution of incidents where mistakes have been made; identification and early resolution of complaints from members of the public; effective management of ongoing investigations; and the early identification of welfare and performance issues.

Staff debriefing is likely to be one of the most productive areas for the capture of information. Investigative staff are also a rich source of information and they too should be debriefed when they have been involved in an operation, investigation or crime reduction initiative. A debriefing must be tailored to the needs of the team in question but the structure, purpose and focus of the debriefing should always remain the same. Although a debriefing will ideally occur at the end of each operation, it is recognised that this may not always be possible. In such circumstances the debriefing should be conducted as soon as possible. Should a policing operation take place over an extended period the opportunity to carry out regular structured debriefs must be taken in addition to the formal end of operation debrief.

The debriefing process must be routine and enforced as part of everyday policing. This is necessary in order to complete the cycle of intelligence through information capture; to analyse operational tactics and crime investigations; and to ensure the service delivered is appropriate.
Flowchart 1: Pre Planned (Cold)

Pre planned Event

Deployment ends? Yes

Debrief to take place by leading department within 14 – 28 days of event ending

- Consider location

Max 2hrs

Debriefing minuted and approved by Chair, noting any actions.

Send a copy of minutes to all attendees

Consideration to be made on placing relevant information on Genesis and OI

Government Protective Markings to be considered

Send in line with Government Protective Marking guidelines

Consideration to use Debriefing as an example in future seminars/training

End

Possible Attendees:
- Department involved in enquiry.
- Witness Care
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Local LDU Insp
- District Supt/Commander
- Forensics
- FLO’s
- Training Department
- Press Office
- POLSA
- Specialist Operations
- Firearms – Silver Commander
- PSU – Tactical Advisor
- Other relevant agencies i.e. Fire Brigade, Aventguard etc.

FPD Title: Debriefing
Policy owner: Head of Protective Services
Dept/Unit: Specialist Operations

Review 2011: No changes
Implementation date: 21.01.10.
Review date: 24.01.13.
If there are issues regarding the operational performance of a team during an operation, investigation or crime reduction initiative, a report should be sent by the supervisor to the manager in charge of that team. This will ensure that lessons learned are disseminated appropriately. It will also help prevent recurring mistakes and allow the spread of good practice.

The timeliness and accuracy of information capture, submission, input and dissemination is vital to intelligence-led policing as this directly influences the effectiveness of the subsequent tactical response. It is essential therefore, that information gained during a debriefing is input as a priority. This will have an impact on the capacity of the Intelligence Unit and this must be taken into consideration when setting up systems and processes. The dissemination of intelligence must also be conducted as soon as possible.
The dissemination of information and other products from the debriefing process should be circulated at the relevant level (SNT, LDU, CDU, Department) and force level so that it is accessible to all staff members. This ensures that organisational memory systems can grow and develop. Consideration should also be given to passing information to Genesis, the online information service provided by NPIA. This has been designed as a secure repository for good practice and other operational policing information for police forces in the United Kingdom.

The pressure on operational staff can lead to debriefing being overlooked. This should not be allowed to happen as effective debriefing will ultimately minimise bureaucracy, streamline current procedures and reduce demands on operational staff.

A full record of the debriefing, including the time, location and those present must be retained for auditing purposes. This record is material which is potentially disclosable under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA), and must be considered for appropriate disclosure to prosecuting authorities where necessary.

**Guidance on debriefing**

Activities in the following arenas must be considered as requiring a **mandatory** briefing:

- Declared Firearms incidents
- Major Incidents
- Critical Incidents
- Incidents resulting in fatalities or serious injuries
- Protracted incidents or operations
- Any incident on which legislation makes a requirement to conduct a debriefing
In all policing activities a debriefing should be considered. This is especially so when the activity fails to follow a pre-determined plan or where it is assessed that value can be gained from a debrief.

Where intelligence is realized as a result of the debriefing then this should be submitted via a 5x5x5 intelligence form.

Operational/evidential debriefings should not be conducted during any period of welfare or counselling processes.

**Debriefing location and timings**

Where possible, debriefings should be conducted as timely as practical to the conclusion of the patrol activity, pre-planned operation and investigation or crime prevention and reduction initiative. This maximises the intelligence opportunity gained and negates the need to conduct more than one debriefing.

Debriefings should follow the general format contained within this policy however consideration should be given to specific information sought and the necessity to disseminate that information. The welfare of staff should also be taken into consideration and debriefings should be no longer than necessary.

Where practicable debriefings should be conducted in an environment where staff can relax and be comfortable in order to properly reflect on the matter. This is notwithstanding the necessity to conduct ‘hot’ debriefings at, or immediately after an incident.

**Recording the debriefing**

Debrief will be recorded to comply with best practice and the obligation placed on Police to ‘record, retain and reveal’ thus ensuring transparency.

It is anticipated that everyday debriefs will be recorded in writing. This will be the most widespread method of recording debriefings. The existence of briefing material such as diagrams, photographs etc should be referred to within the debriefing record.
and retained within the debriefing record or the relevant material should be placed into the nearest Area property store as exhibits, as appropriate.

Video recording the debrief has disadvantages such as the potential to inhibit staff and can encourage ‘real’ debriefings ‘off camera’. However, this can be an excellent method of recording as it provides a professional, accurate and reliable method of recording.

Audio recording is a more flexible medium than video recording but has disadvantages in that it does not record visual aids and the clarity during larger debriefings can be poor. However, similarly again, this can be an excellent method of recording as it provides a professional, accurate and reliable method of recording.

The method of recording the debrief must take into consideration issues such as disclosure and personal liability. The inclusion of a disclosure officer within the debriefing should be considered to guide the flow of information.

Care should be taken to ensure the integrity of the debrief is retained by ensuring the most appropriate method of recording the debrief is exercised.

**Types of debriefing**

Operational debriefing should be divided into two areas:

The ‘Evidential’ debrief. This should chronologically follow the IIMARCH system of the briefing to ensure that all components of the operation/event are covered. A useful template is often the operational order prepared in advance of the deployment which allows for a review of the accuracy of the operational order, the effectiveness of tactics used and the capture and validation of new intelligence.

The ‘Performance’ debrief. Staff should focus upon how the participants performed as a ‘team’. This should not be seen as a faultfinding session but an opportunity where faults or mistakes are exposed, accepted and identified as issues requiring a resolution.
Either type of debrief may take place either immediately after the operation/event in which case they are termed ‘hot’ debriefs or at some time later when they are termed ‘cold’ debriefs. The advantages and disadvantages of either type of debrief must be considered and evidenced by the designated individual.

**Conducting a Debrief**

A designated debriefing individual should be nominated to conduct the debriefing. The designated debriefing individual must have a working knowledge of the matter being debriefed. The designated debriefing individual will have responsibility to arrange the time and location of the debriefing and to chair the debriefing itself. The designated briefing individual will ensure that the aims of the process are achieved and any criticisms are of a constructive nature and must exercise control over the debriefing.

?? For mandatory debriefings the designated debriefing individual initiate the debriefing with the following statement, ‘The following personnel were involved in ………………… (event) which took place on/between ……………….. (date) between ………………..(time) and wish to refer to this debriefing for evidential purposes:’ There will follow the details of all personnel present.

The debriefing will follow the general format contained within this policy and a record of the matters raised and discussed will be maintained. This record should be as full as possible.

If the debrief is recorded on a paper log, at the completion of the debriefing all personnel present will sign the log to confirm their presence and the validity of the written record. This task is the responsibility of the designated debriefing individual.

Staff involved in the debrief should be informed of the aims of the process and encouraged to participate with views, suggestions and comments. The debrief will not be used to apportion blame and any criticism should be of a constructive nature.

At the conclusion of the debrief the debriefing record will be submitted to the relevant department or team which assumes control of the incident or operation. The record
will then be reviewed and matters of note or recommendation brought to the attention of the relevant Senior Management Team. Notes or logs will be retained for 7 years.

**Roles and responsibilities during inter-department and multi-agency working**

The designated debriefing individual should be identified at the earliest opportunity when engaged in inter-department or multi-agency working and should inform the relevant supervisors of the intention to conduct a debrief.

The team or department assuming control or primacy for the incident or event should be identified and the designated briefing officer appointed from that area. The individual will then assume the roles and responsibilities listed in this policy.

**Debriefing Format**

It is recognised that Firearms, Special Operations and Event Planning have specific tailored debriefing structures in place. However the below detailed format is recommended to all staff without a pre-determined structure.

The designated debriefing individual should begin by providing a very brief synopsis of the operation/event.

The operation event should then be spoken through chronologically, ideally utilising the IIMARCH briefing format, with individuals or team leaders talking through their part.

The following points may be useful to consider when planning the debrief process:

- Try to position lower ranking members of staff in the centre of the group (even if officers are divided into their relevant groups).
- Staff should be allowed to provide examples and suggestions relating to any debrief issues they have.
- “What if?” questions/scenarios should be raised as and when appropriate to promote further discussion.
- Encourage and reward participation, especially self-critique.
o Keep the debrief focused by staying within the framework of IIMARCH.

o All staff have an obligation to consider the health and safety of others including welfare issues, the debriefing officer must therefore consider welfare/critical incident stress management

Staff should be encourage to interject and raise points where appropriate.

The designated debriefing individual must chair the debriefing to ensure that the chronological series of events is adhered to and that points raised do not divert the chronology of the debrief. A suggested template can be found at Appendix A.

**Capturing Intelligence and Learning Points**

Effective use of debriefing methodology will result in a growth in the number and quality of intelligence reports, stop and search forms, offence reports and files, and tasking results. These are referred to as the outputs of the debriefing process, and can be subject to performance measurement. In addition, debriefing will encourage reflective practice, for example, through performance reviews.

An effective briefing and debriefing process leads to many positive results for the organisation. The use of the National Briefing Model ensures a consistent flow of communication between different departments and from managers to patrol and neighbourhood teams. This means that more staff have an increased understanding of their role within the organisation and how they can contribute to performance. It also allows for more information to be collected.

The information that is collected through the debriefing process and returned to the Intelligence Unit adds to the operational review process. This leads to a more accurate assessment of the intelligence acquired and any new intelligence gaps that have emerged.

An operational review will ensure that the information gained from incidents, tactical plans or investigations, as well as any impacts and lessons learned, are entered into the organisational memory.
The evaluation of the outcomes and processes of operations enhances corporate knowledge and develops the expertise of staff involved. A greater understanding of policing issues will lead to improved effectiveness of future operations.

Debriefing forms part of the National Briefing Model and this Policy is aimed to ensure that Debriefing of staff is carried out at the optimum time, capturing intelligence and information for the benefit of the organisation. It is also essential that key learning points both positive and negative become part of the organisational memory and made available to other Policing organisations through the NPIA.

### Roles and responsibilities

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Investigating Officer</td>
<td>Nationally Accredited officer who has responsibility for the investigation of major crime, setting policy and determining strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure Officer</td>
<td>Officer trained to review all the documentary and evidential material within an investigation to record it on schedules and assess whether it is sensitive/non-sensitive, assists the defence or undermines the prosecution case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Debriefing Individual</td>
<td>Person responsible for conducting the structured debrief of an incident or enquiry.</td>
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### Definitions

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pre Planned (Cold)</td>
<td>A critical or major event that is planned in the future providing adequate time for planning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spontaneous Events (Hot)</td>
<td>An event occurring or about to occur imminently requiring an immediate plan of action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>The location of holding a debrief should be convenient for proposed attendees. Where possible the use of Police buildings should be take presidency due to the nature of the material discussed within the debriefing.</td>
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