



Heddlu
Gwent
Police

MISSING PERSON **POLICY and PROCEDURE**

Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

APP is developed and owned by the College of Policing (the professional body for policing) and can be accessed online. It is authorised by the College of Policing as the official and most up-to-date source of policing practice. The range of subjects covered by APP is growing all the time.

It has the same legal status as previous guidance; it is not the law and so, while Police Officers and Staff are expected to have regard to APP in discharging their responsibilities, the status of APP is advisory. There may be circumstances when it is legitimate to deviate from APP, providing there is a clear rationale for doing so.

- This Policy and Procedure has been checked against APP. Gwent Police has adopted the APP provisions, with supplementary information contained herein, which reflects local practice and the needs of the communities served by Gwent Police.

*Those provisions are shown in the links below and can be accessed via the home page of the APP website:

<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/missing-persons/>

PRINTED VERSIONS SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON. THE MOST UP TO DATE VERSION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTRANET POLICIES SITE. A LINK WILL BE PROVIDED ON THE POLICIES SITE TO THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TO THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURE.

Policy

Aims

- a) Gwent Police is committed to providing a highly professional service to its communities in line with its statement of purpose, values, aims and standards.
- b) The aim of this Policy and Procedure is to direct police involvement in the management of Missing Person enquiries, taking into account best practice and the legal and moral responsibility of the Police Service to prevent and detect crime and maintain public safety. It also aims to comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- c) This Policy and Procedure is aimed at Police Officers and Police Staff having responsibility for the investigation of reports of Persons Missing and Found within Gwent Police. It demonstrates the commitment of Gwent Police to the *Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) (2010) Guidance on the Management, Recording and Investigation of Missing Persons, ACPO (2013) interim guidance and supporting documents (**ACPO has been replaced by the National Police Chiefs' Council – NPCC*).
- d) Gwent Police is committed to reducing and detecting crime, and bringing offenders to justice. The investigation and resolution of Missing Person enquiries has been recognised as an area of business that presents a significant impact upon our communities and as such, Gwent Police will work closely with our partners, including the charity 'Missing People', in order to safeguard missing persons.
- e) The implementation of this Policy and Procedure and change of operating system from COMPACT to NICHE recognises the need to keep unnecessary bureaucracy to a minimum, in order to maximise the time available for investigation of the enquiry. At the same time it facilitates the secure and speedy management of information, intelligence, instruction and investigation. NICHE allows for the full integration of intelligence, crime reports, custody and missing people, ensuring a more seamless and integrated approach.

Definitions

- a) Gwent Police has adopted the 2013 revised ACPO definition of a 'Missing Person':

Missing: *"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another."*

Absent: *"A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be."*

Child: *"A child is any person who has not yet reached the age of 18".*

- b) As highlighted by the ACPO (2013) revised guidance, the 'Absent' category should comprise cases in which people are not presently where they are supposed to be and there is no apparent risk. 'Absent' cases should not be ignored, and must be monitored over periods of time with consideration given to escalating to 'missing' if there is a change to the circumstances that has increased the level of risk.

1.0 Procedure

1.1 Interpretation & Locally Agreed Practice

- 1.1.1 Officers and Staff are expected to follow APP guidance on all matters pertaining to missing persons, which can be accessed by following this link:

<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/missing-persons/>.

- 1.1.2 Some local procedures exist in order to complement existing national processes and policies. It is emphasised that the over-riding principle within any missing person enquiry is to safeguard the missing people with the over-arching aim of being able to confirm that they are safe and well.

1.2 Gwent Police Systems Utilised for Recording Missing and Absent Incidents:

1.2.1 STORM (Command and Control)

STORM will be utilised to record the incident at first point of contact and to deploy resources. For every missing persons report, an electronic missing persons question set will be completed by the person taking the initial call.

The STORM command and control log will remain open for all fast-track enquiries. This may mean that high risk missing person enquiries remain open for several days until such time as these enquiries have been exhausted.

1.2.2 NICHE Records Management System

A NICHE record will be created for every missing and absent report. This will be utilised to record details of the investigation to locate the individual.

1.2.3 MIRAF (Missing Incident Risk Assessment Framework)

This is a multi-agency vulnerability and risk assessment tool developed by Gwent Police and partners for the purposes of vulnerability and risk assessments relating to missing and absent children.

1.3 Gwent Missing Children Team

- 1.3.1 Due to the inherent risks and safeguarding requirements associated with young persons and children, Gwent Police, along with representatives from Education, Health and Social Services have established a Multi-Agency Team where an on-going data-sharing agreement exists.

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- 1.3.2 The Team is based at Brecon House, Mamhilad and reviews every incident where a child is reported missing or absent. Police, Social Care, Education and Health systems are checked for indicators of vulnerability and risk.
- 1.3.3 A risk assessment is then recorded on the MIRAF system for that child and can be accessed by front-line Officers and Staff across a range of agencies. The purpose is to provide information to assist in decision making and the investigation to locate a child should they be reported as missing or absent in the future.
- 1.3.4 Missing children are especially concerning due to the added vulnerability that comes with age. Often they fail to see the risks in their behaviour or actions.
- 1.3.5 HMIC and the IPCC have been critical of children being treated as 'Absent'. In some situations, it will be appropriate to deem a child 'Absent', however it is imperative that there is clear rationale for this decision and no inherent risk to the child.
- 1.3.6 The Team does not investigate 'live' missing persons; moreover they provide a comprehensive platform for the collection and sharing of data regarding missing children via the Missing Individual Risk Assessment Form (MIRAF) system which is regularly populated by all key agencies.
- 1.3.7 Additionally, the Team does not conduct 'safe and well' checks or 'hot debriefs' with missing children, but does utilise experienced individuals from a charity in order to conduct in-depth debriefs with missing children in order to understand why they went missing and to attempt to prevent recurrence.
- 1.3.8 A local procedure has been agreed with 'First Point of Contact' Staff that the MIRAF must be checked immediately, in addition to any other risk assessment in order to make an informed decision of the risk that the missing child(ren) poses. The guiding principle for all reports of missing children is that they will be risk assessed utilising the data within the MIRAF.
- 1.3.9 Children who are missing longer than 7 days will be considered 'long term' and subject to a multi-agency review meeting, as per APP guidelines and HMIC recommendations. Any risk assessment which deviates from the risk highlighted within the MIRAF should be clearly documented within the NICHE risk-assessment and be immediately reviewed by a Supervisor.
- 1.3.10 It is highlighted that the fact that some children are deemed as 'regular' missing people and/or 'street-wise' actually increases their risk and susceptibility to harm.

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1.4 Recording of 'Missing' Incidents on NICHE

- 1.4.1 This a fundamental part of ensuring the appropriate response to all missing persons. In all instances, the incident should be sent across to the NICHE Records Management System from the Force Command & Control System (STORM).
- 1.4.2 This should be completed for both 'missing' persons and those deemed as 'absent'.
- 1.4.3 As part of the Force's approach to managing threat, risk, harm and vulnerability, a check of NICHE is undertaken at the earliest opportunity by First Point of Contact Staff in order to ascertain whether any existing flags or warning exist for that person.
- 1.4.4 It is emphasised that even when a missing person returns prior to police having arrived to take further details, the NICHE occurrence must be populated and completed. In such instances, the risk is unknown and attendance is therefore required to ensure that any risks are identified, managed and mitigated, as well as submission of appropriate referrals as requires. This allows for local management teams to accurately assess individual risk, for appropriate referrals to be made and for demand to be mapped within local areas, allowing management teams to proactively identify the nature and scale of any problem(s) that may exist in terms of individuals, locations and/or key times/dates of missing instances.
- 1.4.5 Whilst STORM automatically sends all incidents which have been categorised as 'missing' to the NICHE system, it is good practice for this to be done as soon as possible. This complements the recent changes to the Threat, Risk and Harm (THRIVE) assessment procedure that came into practice in March 2016.
- 1.4.6 Officers are encouraged to open the missing person occurrence and update it utilising their mobile data devices, whilst taking initial details. Where this is not possible, Officers must utilise the 'Missing Person Reporting Form'. Once complete, this should be scanned onto NICHE in order to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act.

1.5 'Missing People' Charity.

- 1.5.1 As part of Gwent Police's commitment to providing protection and reassurance, the Force utilises the services of 'Missing People'. The charity is able to support an inquiry in a number of ways, from assisting in contacting the missing person directly, to providing holistic support and guidance to families, as well as free publicity throughout the UK.
- 1.5.2 Officers should consider using the services of 'Missing People' in every missing person investigation. There are a number of services available from the Charity which can be accessed simply by calling 116 000 or e-mailing 116000@missingpeople.org.uk

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1.6 Long-Term Missing Person Enquiries

- 1.6.1 All reports of missing **children** who are missing longer than **7 days** will be considered 'long term' and subject to a multi-agency review meeting, as per APP guidelines and HMIC recommendations.
- 1.6.2 All reports of missing **adults** will be reviewed by a Detective after being missing for 28 days and then by a Senior Officer at 3 months, 6 months and then annually thereafter.
- 1.6.3 An **adult** will generally be classed as a long term missing person after being missing for 28 days or longer.
- 1.6.4 For all high risk cases, a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) will be appointed at the earliest opportunity, as per APP guidelines, regardless of length of time missing, but in any case within 48hrs.
- 1.6.5 Following the 3 month review, the Senior Officer (Detective Chief Inspector East/West or above, depending on geographical area) will make the decision as to whether to move the missing person onto the 'Long Term' Missing Person whiteboard within NICHE instead of the regular East and West LPA whiteboards. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the level of activity which is on-going by local Officers.

1.7 Cross-Border Enquiries

- 1.7.1 Gwent Police will take full details of any missing person reported to them. As per APP guidance, consideration will be given to the most appropriate Force to investigate, based around where the bulk of enquiries lie.
- 1.7.2 It is imperative that any decision to move primacy for a missing person investigation from Gwent Police to another Police Force is fully documented, and a 'warm' handover is given to the receiving Force, to ensure that they are in receipt of all details regarding the report.
- 1.7.3 The Force Incident Manager (FIM) will be the ultimate in-force adjudicator and will consult Gold Command should they be unable to resolve the matter with the receiving Police Force.

1.8 Wanted Persons

- 1.8.1 It is acknowledged that persons who are 'Wanted' often avoid the Police and potentially break contact with family and friends. These types of incidents can often present themselves initially or during any wanted persons investigation, as a potentially 'missing' investigation.
- 1.8.2 First Point of Contact staff will always conduct a thorough risk assessment of any calls received regarding missing persons *regardless* of whether the person is also wanted. If a family member or friend is concerned enough about the person to contact the emergency services,

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then Gwent Police will take the time to understand why they believe them to be missing and conduct a thorough risk assessment in order to establish any threat, risk or harm specific to that person.

- 1.8.3 Where additional risk, threat or harm is identified pertaining to the wanted person, this should be immediately referred to the Force Incident Manager (FIM) for a decision as to whether this person should also be also be categorised as missing. There may be additional investigative opportunities that present themselves due to the person being considered missing.
- 1.8.4 The Force Daily Management Meeting (DMM) document should highlight the fact that the family have reported the person missing to ensure continued local ownership and regular contact with the family/next of kin.

1.9 Safe & Well Checks

- 1.9.1 Safe and Well Checks are conducted for every missing person who returns home. These checks are to be conducted at the earliest opportunity, in order identify any on-going risk posed to the individual and to try to ascertain why the individual went missing in the first place and whether any steps can be taken to reduce the risk of recurrence.
- 1.9.2 Officers will always consider whether a referral is required to Social Services for vulnerable adults. The Missing Children Team will automatically submit a referral for young persons *unless* additional child protection concerns are identified e.g. a person is missing but 'neglect' is also identified.
- 1.9.3 The suitability of the 'returning location' of the missing person must be assessed by the attending Officer. If in doubt whether the returning location is a suitable place for the missing person (whether adult or child), advice should be sought from the duty Sergeant and/or Bronze Inspector.

1.10 Roles & Responsibilities

1.10.1 Force Communications Suite:

- Taking of initial call using NSIR and national call grading standards to assess initial risk and deployment of Officers.
- Use of MIRAF system in missing children cases to inform the initial risk assessment and grading of call as emergency/ priority.
- Transfer to NICHE.

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- Inform Supervisor/ Bronze inspector for all High Risk missing persons
- PNC updates.
- Cancellation of circulations.
- FIM review of SPOC requests for grade 1 missing persons.
- Negotiator liaison by FIM.
- POLSA liaison by FIM.
- NPAS liaison and call out by FIM.

1.10.2 Local Policing Area:

- Investigation and ownership of case.
- Conduct comprehensive risk assessment, ratified by a Supervisor.
- Searches.
- SPOC/ financial work.
- Family Liaison.
- SMT review.
- DI and SIO reviews.
- POLSA support on ground.
- Negotiator support at incident.
- Identification of persons found deceased.
- Liaison with HM Coroner.
- DMM review of all high risk cases.
- Carrying out safe and well checks where a risk of harm has been identified.

1.10.3 Missing Children Team:

- Multi-agency review of all incidents involving missing children.
- Multi-agency vulnerability and risk assessment, including CSE and Human Trafficking assessments.
- Deployment of independent de-brief service.
- Signposting to relevant support services.
- Co-ordination with Children's Services.
- Establishing trusting relationships with children at high risk of CSE.
- Training delivery Police, Health, Social Care, Residential Units.
- Building relationships and information sharing protocols with Residential Units.

2.0 The Legal Basis and Legitimate Aims

2.1 This Policy and Procedure takes into account:

- Duties within the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to protect life and protect persons from inhuman and degrading treatment.
- The common law duty of the Police to protect life and property and detect crime.

3.0 Human Rights Certification of Compliance

3.1 This Policy and Procedure has been checked for compliance with the Human Rights Act; with particular reference to the legal basis of its precepts, the legitimacy of its aims, the justification and proportionality of the actions intended by it, that it is the least intrusive and damaging option necessary to achieve the aims and that it defines the need to document the relevant decision making processes and outcomes of actions.

4.0 Compliance with The Welsh Language Scheme

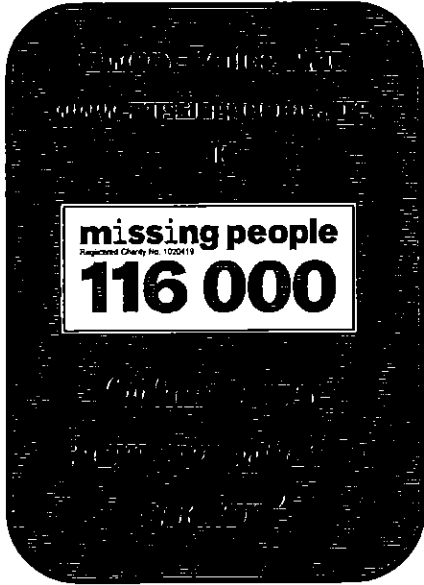
4.1 This Policy and Procedure aims to comply with the organisation's Welsh Language Scheme in terms of dealing with the Welsh speaking public, impact upon the public image of the organisation and the implementation of the Language Scheme.

5.0 Risk Assessment / Health & Safety Considerations

5.1 The Gwent Police Service Dynamic Risk Assessment should be applied as necessary. A training package in the use of risk assessment will be provided to all police personnel if requested or required.

6.0 Identification Section

Policy and Procedure Title:	Missing Person
Reference:	225/1 issue 5
Chief Officer Lead:	Assistant Chief Constable
Service Area Owner:	Detective Chief Superintendent, Protective Services
Department Responsible:	Public Protection Unit
Links to other Policies/ Procedures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Sexual Exploitation• Code of Ethics• Community Impact Assessment• Critical Incidents• Data Protection• Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)• Freedom of Information• Licence to Lead• National Decision Model
Implementation Date:	24 August 2016
Review Date:	01 August 2018



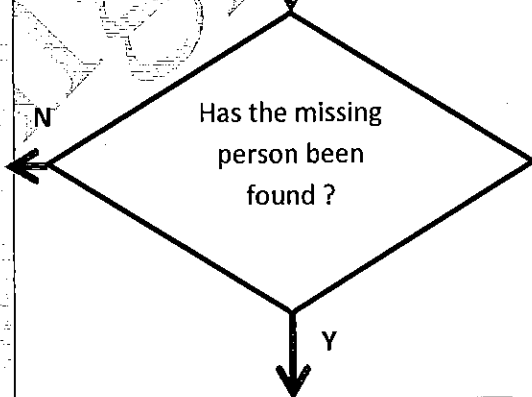
Report of a missing person received by Gwent Police

Gwent Police notes and records details of the missing person -- risk assessment conducted and officer allocated

Officer attends location of caller who is reporting missing person. Details recorded

Commence actions to locate missing person

Commence actions to locate missing person



Consider using the www.missingpeople.org.uk Aftercare service

Provide information to the caller regarding the services available through www.missingpeople.org.uk i.e.:

1. Request for family support
2. 116 000 Helpline
3. Website details

Consider www.missingpeople.org.uk i.e.:

4. Text messaging 'TextSafe'
5. Assistance with publicity for the missing person

Determine whether FCR FIM should be informed that 'child alert' may be necessitated. OIC to consider using 'TextSafe'

Throughout process maintain thought for www.missingpeople.org.uk i.e.:

1. Request for family support
2. 116 000 Helpline
3. Website details
4. NB : Text messaging 'TextSafe'
5. Assistance with publicity for the missing person

Determine whether FCR FIM should be informed that 'child alert' may be necessitated. OIC to consider using 'TextSafe'

- Home
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- Staying Ahead
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- Fundraising



Missing Person Policy and Procedure

By *Peter Fourweather*
 – August 25, 2016 **Posted in:** Announcements, East LPA, FPOC, General Orders, Protective Services, West LPA
 2 Views

The Missing Person Policy and Procedure, (Ref: 225/1 a, issue 5) can be found on the Intranet Policies site, under the letter M.

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It is aimed at Police Officers and Police Staff having responsibility for the investigation of reports of Persons Missing and Found within Gwent Police. It demonstrates the commitment of Gwent Police to the *Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) (2010) Guidance on the Management, Recording and Investigation of Missing Persons, ACPO (2013) interim guidance and supporting documents (*ACPO has been replaced by the National Police Chiefs' Council – NPCC).

Gwent Police is committed to reducing and detecting crime, and bringing offenders to justice. The investigation and resolution of Missing Person enquiries has been recognised as an area of business that presents a significant impact upon our communities and as such, Gwent Police will work closely with our partners, including the charity 'Missing People', in order to safeguard missing persons.

The implementation of this Policy and Procedure and change of operating system from COMPACT to NICHE recognises the need to keep unnecessary bureaucracy to a minimum, in order to maximise the time available for investigation of the enquiry. At the same time it facilitates the secure and speedy management of information, intelligence, instruction and investigation. NICHE allows for the full integration of intelligence, crime reports, custody and missing people, ensuring a more seamless and integrated approach.

You Said... We Did. In the recent Staff Survey, some respondents commented that the Force has too many Policies and Procedures. Having received this feedback, we would like to reassure all Officers and Staff that the requirement for any new or reviewed Policy and Procedure is scrutinized.

However, we must strike a balance. Policies and Procedures provide the framework within which we operate. They define what we can and cannot do & how we do it and also support effective decision making & delegation, by providing guidelines on what decisions can be made and what activities are appropriate. A clear policy framework supports transparency and consistency in the way we operate as an organisation and means there will be fewer misunderstandings or debates about what to do in particular situations.

• Latest Stories

- Missing Person Policy and Procedure
- Neil Muirhead is retiring
- Invest in YOU!
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- No Hot Water at HQ – 26-28th August
- SRS – Self Service Day Thursday August 25th
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- New Deputy PCC for Gwent Appointed
- Vacancy Bulletin
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SRS - Self Service Day Thursday August 25th
POSTPONED SW Outage to Control Works 23rd Aug
South Wales Police ICT Issues
South Wales Citrix Issues
SRS Self Service August 12th, 10am till 11am

• This week's top reads

- Chief's Blog - 19th August 2016
- Public Misconduct Hearing Outcome
- PSD Times - August 2016
- Vacancy Bulletin

The full range of Policies and Procedures can be found on the intranet:
http://intranet/operational/cfp/corporate_services/policy/.

You are also offered the opportunity to suggest your own improvements through 'Ask the Chief', 'Room 101' and 'Dragons Den'.

PRINTED VERSIONS SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON. THE MOST UP TO DATE VERSION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTRANET POLICIES SITE

Last Modified: 25th August 9:46:am



No Comments

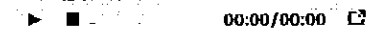
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- o Cath Bamford is leaving the building.
- o Fusion auction coming up!
- o New Deputy PCC for Gwent Appointed
- o Gazebo Gate
- o Changes to CARES OEL entry in Niche

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