



MISSING PERSONS MANAGEMENT 2021



Missing Person – daily scrutiny

Duty Inspector - ownership of Missing person enquiries will always be held by the duty Inspector and that officer will be responsible for handing over enquiries to subsequent duty Inspectors on a shift by shift basis. This handover process must be documented within the Missing NICHE OEL and will cover:

1. Review the circumstances
2. Review the risk
3. Allocate OIC
4. Set priority lines of enquiry

Daily Management Meeting – all current and active missing persons will be considered by the DMM chair daily. Duty Superintendent must ensure that adequate arrangements exist to maintain the quality and progress of an investigation, and that the risk assessment is appropriate.

Missing Persons – review schedule

	High Risk	Medium Risk Over 18	Medium/Low Risk Under 18	Low Risk Over 18
24 Hours	D/Insp		D/Insp	
48 Hours		D/Insp		D/Insp
7 Days	D/Insp	Duty Insp	D/Insp	Duty Insp
14 Days	D/Insp	Duty Insp	D/Insp	Duty Insp
21 Days	D/Insp	Duty Insp	D/Insp	Duty Insp
28 Days	MCIT SIO	D/Insp	D/Insp	D/Insp
56 Days	D/Insp (MCIT if required)	D/Insp	D/Insp	D/Insp
3 months	D/Insp (MCIT if required)	D/Insp	D/Insp	D/Insp
6 months	D/Insp (MCIT if required)	D/Insp	D/Insp	D/Insp
9 months	D/Insp (MCIT if required)	D/Insp	D/Insp	D/Insp
12 months	D/Insp (MCIT if required)	MCIT SIO	MCIT SIO	MCIT SIO
Annually	D/Insp (MCIT if required)	MCIT SIO	MCIT SIO	MCIT SIO

The reviewing Inspector must:

- Review the level of risk;
- Check for any outstanding and incomplete actions;
- Quality assure actions already taken;
- Set new actions and enquiries in order to bring the investigation to a successful conclusion;
- Set future review date as and if appropriate.

The review must be recorded in the Niche OEL and the missing/absent TAB within the Niche record to re-date the review clock.

The next review date is based on the time/date reported.

Matters for consideration

Missing persons circulations - The internal circulation of missing persons, via email, should not be conducted as a tick box action and thought should be given to the necessity and benefits of a force wide circulation. While it is a legitimate action for some investigations, there have been times, recently, when we have been in danger of breaching Data Protection legislation. The force could then face enforcement action as it may have been assessed that personal data was not being managed appropriately, securely and in accordance with legislation. Inspectors authority should be obtained.

Ownership and transfer - When deciding where ownership of the investigation lies, the principal issue is to consider where most of the enquiries are and who has the greatest opportunity of locating the missing person. It is probable that the place where the person was last seen would generate most of the initial enquiries. Transfer should be agreed via the duty Inspector and Transfer form. If not agreed the escalation is to the duty Superintendent.

Move to long term - On occasion all reasonable lines of investigation into the whereabouts of a Missing Person may be exhausted without locating them. This may happen relatively quickly after the person is reported missing, but it is more likely after the passage time. Only after the matter has been thoroughly reviewed by both a Detective Inspector and MCIT SIO can it be re-categorised as Long Term Missing. The investigation must never be closed in these circumstances nor the person removed from PNC, and the family or persons with relevant interest in the case must be updated to this effect. Further review time should be set in accordance with the review timetable.

Wanted v Missing - Police should evaluate each case on an individual basis and respond appropriately, according to the priority that should be given in that case. For example, if a person is wanted for a minor matter but the missing persons risk assessment indicates a high risk, then it may be appropriate to deal with the case as a missing persons enquiry. Conversely a low risk missing person wanted for murder may be more appropriately dealt with as a wanted person and the correct investigative approach applied. The guiding principle is to adopt an approach that will bring both matters to the safest, most efficient conclusion. Forces should seek to avoid duplicating the investigation and record keeping. The investigating or supervisory officer will need to consider and decide which response and investigative approach to take based on a risk assessment and should be guided by the national decision model.

Missing from hospital - The police have a duty to find the person where they are at risk because of their injuries or illness and there is a possibility that they may suffer harm, or are likely to have a serious illness or injury that they do not know about. However, the hospital also has a duty to ensure the welfare of the individual and should be expected to undertake reasonable enquiries (e.g. attempting to contact them and conduct a search of the hospital grounds) to establish their whereabouts and wellbeing before reporting them missing to the police. Where there is immediate risk of harm, police should not delay action to find the missing person.