
WILTSHIRE POLICE FORCE POLICY & PROCEDURE



Missing Persons

Date of Publication: November 2018
Version: 3.0
Next Review Date: November 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSING POLICY.....	4
INTRODUCTION	4
PROCEDURE OVERVIEW	4
PURPOSE	4
RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.....	4
AUTHORISED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AREAS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCEDURE ..	5
DATA PROTECTION.....	5
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000	5
MONITORING AND REVIEW	5
WHO TO CONTACT ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE	5
1. DEFINITION.....	6
1.1 MISSING PERSONS DEFINITION	6
2. ACTIONS ON RECEIPT OF FIRST CALL.....	6
2.1 WHAT CCC WILL DO.....	6
2.2 WHAT FIM/FORS WILL DO.....	7
MISSING PERSONS PROCESS CHART	9
3. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE.....	10
3.1 LEVEL OF RISK.....	10
3.2 REVIEW OF RISK	10
4. FIRST RESPONDER	10
4.1 REPORT RECORDED AS A MISSING PERSON	10
4.2 SEARCHING	11
5. INVESTIGATE	11
5.1 PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA.....	12
5.2 CHILD RESCUE ALERT	12
5.3 FAMILY SUPPORT	12
6. SUPERVISION AND REVIEW	12
6.1 SUPERVISION/OWNERSHIP.....	12
6.2 REVIEWS	13
6.3 SENIOR MANAGEMENT	14
6.4 WHEN THE INVESTIGATION BECOMES LONG TERM.....	14
7. MISSING FROM CARE	14
8. MISSING FROM HOSPITAL	15
9. MISSING FROM SCHOOL (TRUANT)	15
10. ROLE OF MISSING PERSONS CO-ORDINATORS.....	15
11. MANAGEMENT OF THE RETURN	15
11.1 WHEN MISSING PERSON RETURNS OR IS LOCATED	15
11.2 PREVENTION INTERVIEW.....	16
11.3 SUGGESTED PROMPTS FOR POLICE PREVENTION INTERVIEWS - IN PARTICULAR, MISSING CHILDREN.....	16
12. MANAGEMENT OF RETURN TO HOME INTERVIEWS (RHIS)	17

13. CHILD EXPLOITATION (INCLUDING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN)	17
13.1 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATIONS (CSE).....	17
13.2 CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.....	17
13.3 CHILD ABDUCTION WARNING NOTICE (CAWN)	17
14. RADICALISATION	18
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	19
DOCUMENT ADMINISTRATION	20

MISSING POLICY

Wiltshire Police will utilise the College of Policing Approved Professional Practice (APP) – [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons](#).

Introduction

Going missing should be treated as an indicator that the individual may be at risk of harm. The safeguarding of vulnerable people is paramount and a missing person report should be recognised as an opportunity to identify and address risks. The reasons for a person deciding to go missing may be complex and linked to a variety of social or family issues.

Three key factors should be considered in a missing person investigation:

- Protecting those at risk of harm;
- Minimising distress and ensuring high quality of service to the families and carers of Missing persons;
- Prosecuting those who perpetrate harm or pose a risk of harm when this is appropriate and supported by evidence.

Procedure Overview

Wiltshire Police is dedicated towards taking a multi-agency approach when receiving and investigating reports of missing and absent persons to evaluate and assess risk and to investigate all safeguarding and welfare concerns identified.

This may include the investigation of safeguarding or other criminal reasons as to why the person went missing in the first place and what safeguarding or criminal risk they may pose to themselves or others when missing.

The primary role for Wiltshire Police in Missing cases is to protect life and to prevent and detect crime by adequately resourcing staff to locate the Missing person. We cannot do this alone and will work with statutory and non-statutory agencies towards a successful conclusion. With regard to children under the age of 18 years and vulnerable adults we will share and discuss all Missing person incidents with partner agencies.

Prevention Interviews (previously Safe and Well check) will be conducted with returned children in order to build relationships with them and to identify, where possible, the reasons for their missing episode. Particular attention will be given to those who regularly go missing, with a view to reduce or eliminate future missing episodes, to identify those at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, and to provide additional support to them and their families.

Purpose

This procedure provides information and advice for officers and staff responding to reports of persons who are reported missing.

The procedure has been designed to support the application of APP. The [National Decision Making Model](#) and the [Risk Principles](#) must be considered when making decisions when dealing with missing persons and rationales must be recorded appropriately within NICHE.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES and OTHER DOCUMENTS

[Management of Missing Persons and Absent Without Leave \(Joint Protocol\)](#)

[Modern Slavery Policy and Procedure](#)

[Pan Wiltshire Missing From Home Protocol](#)

[Collection of Missing Persons Data](#)

AUTHORISED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AREAS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCEDURE

[Missing Persons](#) (*Part of APP Major Investigation and Public Protection*)

[Missing Persons Search](#) (*Part of APP Search*) **[Restricted]**

[National Decision Making Model](#)

[Child Protection](#) (*Part of APP Major Investigation and Public Protection*)

[Child Sexual Exploitation](#) (*Part of APP Major Investigation and Public Protection*)

DATA PROTECTION

Any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual recorded as a consequence of this procedure will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations and the [Force Data Protection Policy](#).

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

This document has been assessed as suitable for public release.

MONITORING and REVIEW

This Procedure will be monitored by the Detective Inspector responsible for Missing within Wiltshire Police and reviewed every two years.

WHO TO CONTACT ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE

The Head of PPD and Safeguarding and the Detective Inspector responsible for Missing are responsible for this procedure. All queries relating to this procedure should be directed to them.

Any reports of a crime in action, kidnap and extortion, child abduction or immediate child protection issue WILL NOT fall under this procedure. Such cases must be considered a crime in action and child protection procedures will apply and supersede this process.

1. DEFINITION

1.1 Missing Persons Definition

Missing - “Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and their well-being or otherwise confirmed.”

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > 2. Definition of Missing](#).

2. ACTIONS ON RECEIPT OF FIRST CALL

The Force has adopted and utilises THRIVE+. However, the nature of missing persons investigations requires the gathering of specific information and therefore the following question set **will be** utilised as an exception to the use of THRIVE+.

2.1 What CCC will do

- a) Create a STORM Log and record full details of the Missing person & reporting person/agency
- b) Complete Missing question set within STORM:
 1. When and where were they last seen? Where?
 2. Is the person a cared for or a looked after than by their family? In what way?
 3. What is the specific concern that has caused you to call the Police?
 4. What has been done so far to trace this individual?
 5. Is this significantly out of character (has there been a recent change in the person's behaviour)?
 6. Do they need urgent medical attention or essential medication that is not likely to be available to them?
 7. Are they likely to be subjected to any other crime?
 8. Are they likely to be the victim of any other form of abuse?
 9. If under 18, are they currently at risk of child abuse including child sexual exploitation?
 10. Are they likely to attempt suicide?
 11. Do they pose a danger to other people?
 12. Is there any other information relevant to their absence?
 13. Is the person detainable under any mental health legislation?
 14. Is the person vulnerable due to other factors?
 15. Is the person particularly at risk of harm due to physical disability, frailty, or memory loss?
 16. Does the person lack the ability to interact safely with others in an unknown environment (mental illness, learning disability, and/or sensory impairment)?
 17. Has the person been involved in any violent, homophobic, or racist incident immediately prior to their disappearance?
 18. Any child safeguarding concerns (subject to child protection plan, known to social care / PVP, and/or specific PNC warning flag triggered)?
 19. Is the person suffering from a drug and / or alcohol dependency?
 20. Any social concerns (family / relationship / employment / financial / school / college)?
 21. Are they active on any social media platforms? If so, which?
- c) Minimum intelligence checks – PNC, NICHE, Checks to be made with Social Services both child and adult to see if they hold information to assist in locating them.

-
- d) Confirmation and clarity around SOPs and addresses missing person is missing from
 - e) Decision – Are they Missing? See definition 1.1 above
 - f) Missing person placed on PNC
 - g) Consider sending TextSafe/SARLOC. Consider passing details to the charity missingpeople.org.uk for wider publicity, family support and consideration of sending a 'Textsafe' message.
 - h) Create Missing occurrence on NICHE

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Risk Assessment > 1. Gathering Information.](#)

Where a report relates to a person considered to be 'Missing', a STORM log will be created using the relevant question set (see [2.1](#) above). All Missing person reports will be given a priority grading as a minimum. An initial risk assessment must be completed within the NICHE Missing Module.

The FORS/FIM and relevant operational supervisor are to be informed of all Missing persons at the earliest opportunity. In High Risk cases the FIM and relevant operational duty Inspector or sergeant should be notified immediately and '[Golden Hour](#)' lines of investigation commenced.

All lines of enquiry, decisions, directions, ownership and reviews must be recorded within the NICHE OEL review tab and/or Action Management log for the Missing occurrence.

2.2 What FIM/FORS will do

- a) Risk assess (see [section 3](#) below) and record risk assessment on STORM log and NICHE record
- b) Direct appropriate initial Police response and assign ownership
- c) OWNERSHIP:
 - High Risk– Duty Inspector – Investigating Officer allocated whose sole or primary role is to investigate this incident (consider CID Support);
 - Medium Risk – Duty Inspector – an officer allocated from patrol duties and investigation handed over to subsequent shifts;
 - Low Risk – Duty Inspector – an officer allocated from patrol duties and investigation handed over to subsequent shifts;
- d) The FIM will retain command until agreed allocation to the relevant operational Inspector.
- e) For all cases a NICHE Missing Record must be created as soon as practicable and used to manage the investigation before it is passed to the relevant hub Inspector.

For High Risk cases the STORM log will remain open to ensure fast time Police response to situations where life is at risk; and actions are timely and accurately recorded and accessible to all.

For all missing investigations an Investigation strategy should be set. Consider is the Missing person:

- Intentionally missing?
- Unintentionally missing?
- At risk of harm from themselves or others?
- Possibly subject of crime?

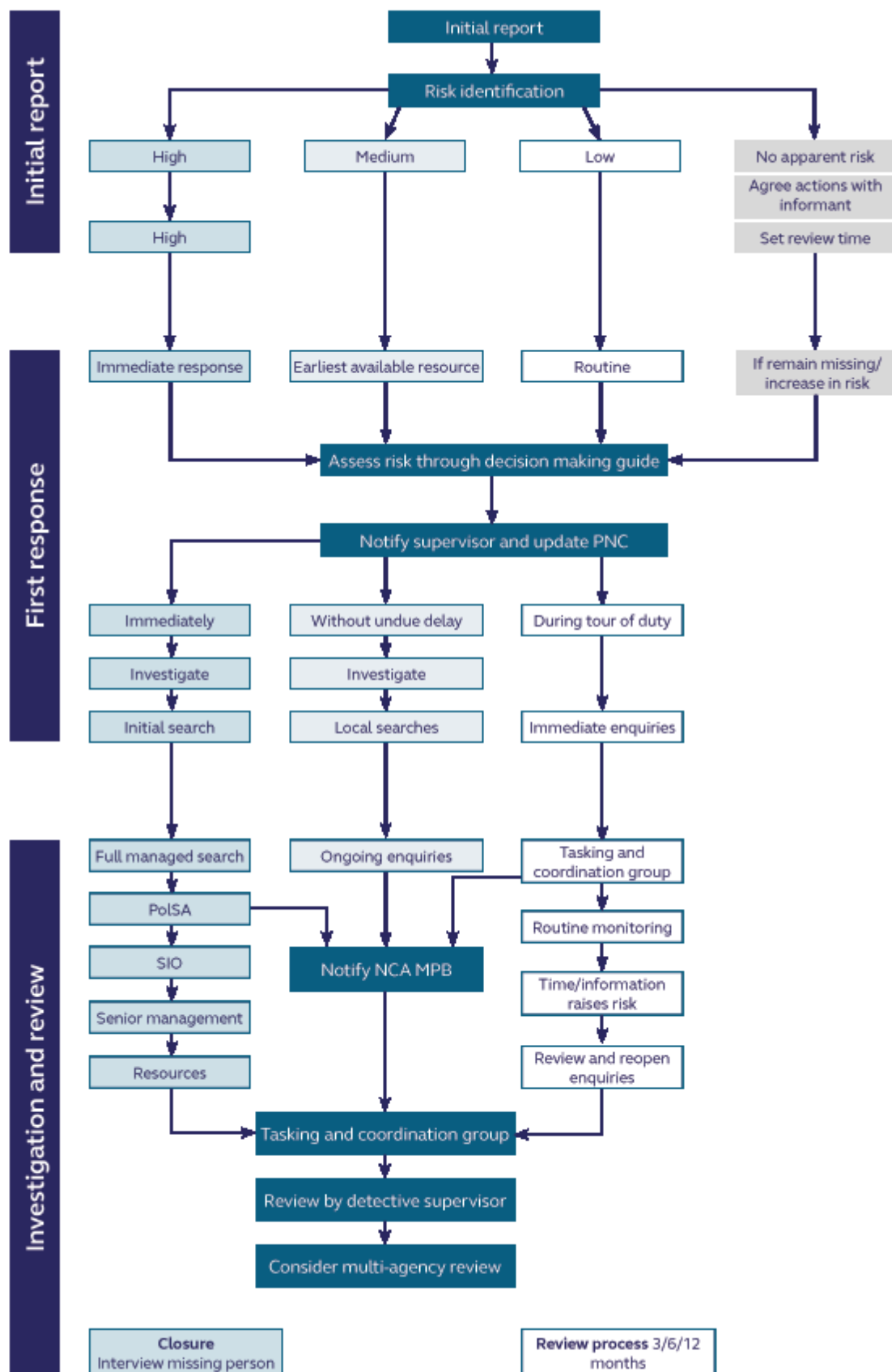
And:

- Appropriate allocation of resource identified.

-
- f) For longer term ownership of cases following D/Inspector reviews, recommendations may be made on a case by case basis, and, in consideration of the risk, that the investigation is moved to a single point OIC who will have overall responsibility and a bespoke review structure put in place.
 - g) Ownership should be retained by the relevant CPT teams until such time that all relevant lines of enquiry are exhausted. This will include actions identified through the missing persons D/Inspector reviews. The missing person DI may consider that this can be removed to long term missing where the case will be reviewed by an MCIT SIO to ratify the decision and then held by MCIT and reviewed on an annual basis.
 - h) For cases involving missing migrants or persons missing abroad, for example, should be negotiated locally between Inspectors to agree who has primacy for the investigation. For example, a case involving a person missing abroad may not have a lot of Wiltshire Police investigative activity, but may actually involve a significant amount of family contact to provide reassurance and updates. It may be more suitable for a nominated officer to do this and provide continuity. This should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

AT ANY POINT DURING THE PROCESS OF TAKING THE MISSING REPORT THE PERSON IS LOCATED, THE EPISODE MUST BE CLOSED TO NICHE FOR A WHITEBOARD TO BE CREATED, AND A RISK ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE RECORDED AND SIGNED BY THE DUTY FIM FOR DATA QUALITY PURPOSES

Missing Persons Process Chart



3. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE

3.1 Level of Risk

There are three levels of risk as set out in APP guidance:

- **Low** – The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as possible but minimal.
- **Medium** – The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as likely but not serious.
- **High** – The risk of serious harm to the subject or the public is assessed as very likely.

N.B. We have not adopted 'No Apparent Risk'

Serious harm is defined as:

'A risk which is life threatening and/or traumatic, and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, can be expected to be difficult or impossible.'

Where the risk cannot be accurately assessed without active investigation, appropriate lines of enquiry should be set to gather the required information to inform the risk assessment.

(Home Office 2002 and Offender Assessment System 2006)

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > 3. Risk Assessment and Response](#)

3.2 Review of Risk

The risk assessment is an ongoing process and may change throughout the life of the Missing person investigation.

There are numerous factors listed in the APP considered to be the main indicators that should guide officer judgement. **Note:** this is not an exhaustive list [[APP Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Risk Assessment > 1. Gathering Information](#)].

Upon receipt of an investigation in the hub an officer must be tasked to conduct initial enquiries. The attending officer is required to reconsider the initial risk assessment and if they assess that the risk has changed for whatever reason this must be discussed with their supervisor and the NICHE Risk Assessment tab updated and signed off by the supervisor.

The assessment of risk must be reviewed as a minimum at every point of handover **between Inspectors** and the OEL endorsed accordingly. This is dynamic (ongoing) throughout the life of the investigation and should the risk change then the NICHE Risk Assessment must be completed to reflect this – **with rationale**.

All current (excluding long term) Missing persons will be discussed and reviewed at daily Hub and Force DMM

4. FIRST RESPONDER

4.1 Report recorded as a Missing person

Sufficient information about the Missing person must be gathered to enable an effective and thorough investigation to be conducted. See [APP Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 2.1 Responsibilities](#)

Consideration must be given throughout the investigation to the risks to which that Missing person or the community are likely to be exposed – High, Medium or Low (see [section 3](#) above).

4.2 Searching

A record of full details of what and where was searched must be made, also full details of what was not searched together with the reasons for not doing so will be similarly recorded. This should be recorded in the Action Management spreadsheet in NICHE.

A Police Search Advisor (POLSA) should be consulted in High Risk cases and may be considered for lower risk cases via CCC.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 6. Search.](#)

(See also APP Secure Site [Missing Persons Search](#) for further guidance on planning, organising, and management of a Missing person search).

5. INVESTIGATE

Officers should maintain an investigative mind-set as per the core investigative doctrine to establish facts as to why a person has gone missing and consider whether any criminal offences have been committed. Golden Hour considerations should be made.

Golden hour considerations

Victims	identify, support and sensitively preserve evidence
Scenes	identify, preserve, assess and commence log
Suspects	identify, arrest and preserve
Witnesses	identify, support and sensitively preserve evidence
Log	decisions and rationale, circumstances, resources and conditions
Family/community	identify, inform, primary support (needs, concerns, expectations, sensitivity)
Physical evidence	preservation (CCTV, public transport, escape routes, ambulances, hospitals)
Intelligence	identify, prioritise, maximise, exploit, consider, community and open source
Prevent contamination	victims, scenes, witnesses, suspects
Lines of responsibility	identify, inform, brief, coordinate and review

Positive action in the period immediately after the report of a crime minimises the amount of material that could be lost to the investigation, and maximises the chance of securing the material that will be admissible in court

Conduct a thorough check of all available systems to understand any previous contact with the Missing person. This may include previous missing person reports, any recorded concerns around child exploitation (sexual and criminal), and history of abuse.

For immediate action considerations refer to the Missing Persons Action Log.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 2. First Officer to Attend.](#)

5.1 Press and Social Media

Consider a media appeal. Any decision to publicise the case should be made in consultation with the family. However, a case may be publicised without their consent if it is in the Missing person's best interests to do so. For 'Looked After Children' Parental Responsibility (PR) will need to be ascertained through Children's Social Care and the relevant consent obtained from them before any press release is made. All media contact must be actioned through the HQ Press Office.

Social networking sites can provide important evidential/intelligence opportunities and support wider media appeals. Ask family members or friends if they have access to the Missing person's social networking site(s), such as Facebook, Twitter etc. to see whether they have posted any relevant information. Contact your local DIU Team for advice.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 10. Media.](#)

5.2 Child Rescue Alert (CRA)

The decision to use the national [CRA](#) can be made by the FIM. If activated the process requires careful management due to the number of calls that could be received by the Force. In order to support the appeal, the services of the Casualty Bureau and HOLMES MIR should be utilised. These services are facilitated through the Force Lead for CRA, who is also the Force Lead for Missing. In order to support the investigation the Force Lead for CRA must be contacted to co-ordinate activity.

If CRA is activated following a decision by a nominated SIO for the investigation they too should also utilise the Force Lead for CRA to manage this tactic.

It is essential that CRA is considered as early as possible if the circumstances fit. SIOs/FIMs should not defer the decision to launch if there is a likelihood of increased harm coming to a child as a consequence.

5.3 Family Support

The provision of family support by the Police service in Missing cases is crucial to maintain their and public confidence in the investigation. See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 4. Family Support.](#)

Wherever practicable, contact should be made with the family on at least a daily basis to inform them of the progress of the investigation, even if that information is limited.

The charity [Missing People](#) can provide support 24/7/365 for families and their information should be shared wherever appropriate. Documents detailing support provided by Missing People can be found on [firstpoint](#).

Consider Family Liaison Co-ordinator consultation for Family Liaison Officer deployment for serious cases.

All family contact must be documented on the NICHE Action Management log.

6. SUPERVISION AND REVIEW

6.1 Supervision/Ownership

Officers not below the rank of Inspector must ensure that appropriate levels of action are taken to locate the Missing person based on the risk assessment. 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.

[Table of Contents](#)

The duty Inspector will ensure that an OIC is appointed for their tour of duty following handover. The duty Inspector will consider whether there should be any referral to a Detective Supervisor, POLSA or other specialist units with the support of the DMM process.

The ownership of a Missing investigation should rest with the Force area in which the majority of the enquiries sit. An investigation must not be delayed while discussions are held between Forces to agree primacy.

See APP cross border cases guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > Specific Investigations > 5. Cross Border Cases](#).

See further APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > Supervisor Responsibilities > 3. First Line Supervisor](#).

6.2 Reviews

The review process will:

- 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.

Reviews will be conducted as follows:

	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

Once a review has taken place the relevant NICHE Missing Person record shall be endorsed, and direction and management set and agreed.

The responsibilities for reviews sit with the nominated Missing Person Detective Inspector on any particular day. This Detective Inspector must dial in to Force DMM and where necessary discuss the case with the duty Superintendent.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > Supervisor Responsibilities > 5 The missing person case review process.](#)

6.3 Senior Management

All current and active missing persons will be considered by the DMM chair on a daily basis. Senior management must ensure that adequate arrangements exist to maintain the quality and progress of an investigation.

In all High Risk cases, the case will be interrogated at strategic manager level at daily DMM to ensure the risk assessment is correct and adequate staffing and investigation is taking place.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > Supervisor Responsibilities > 3.5 Senior Management Team.](#)

6.4 When the investigation becomes 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. It will often be appropriate that a Detective Inspector takes responsibility and ownership for the case to provide continuity and appropriate oversight for the investigation.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > The Missing Person Case Review Process > 5.1 Long-Term Case Reviews](#)

7. MISSING FROM CARE

Missing persons in the care of a statutory organisation, such as a care home or school, will be investigated by Police and assistance given to help locate the individual. The overall responsibility for the care and welfare of the individual remains the responsibility of the 'Corporate Parent' and they should, when able, make relevant enquiries to locate an individual. Early liaison with Social Services should be undertaken.

A proportion of missing persons are 'looked after' children. The fact they have suffered abuse or disruptive family support networks means they are more vulnerable and liable to being victims of offences and sexual/criminal exploitation. It is essential for Community Policing Teams to develop good relations with their local care homes.

Advice can be sought from the Gemstone team in relation to Child Sexual exploitation or the Missing Persons Operational Support Staff.

8. MISSING FROM HOSPITAL

Hospital staff will usually only report persons missing where they identify a risk to the patient or others. As such, it is important to investigate, risk assess and record these in line with this procedure. In most cases, a NICHE record should be commenced to ensure the necessary PNC checks are conducted and an auditable record of the report is created. Consideration should be given to conducting fast-time enquiries, such as site searches and checks of addresses provided by the hospital, before commencing the full investigation and completion of the NICHE record with medical/nursing staff.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > Specific Investigations > Missing Adults > 2.1 Missing from hospital emergency departments](#).

Guidance on the Police response to people with mental ill health or vulnerabilities can be found within APP for [Mental Health > AWOL Patients](#). Please refer to the local Wiltshire Police [Management of Missing Persons and Absent Without Leave \(Joint Protocol\)](#) protocol.

9. MISSING FROM SCHOOL (TRUANT)

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Expectations > Categories > 4.1 Truantiing](#).

10. ROLE OF MISSING PERSONS CO-ORDINATORS

Wiltshire Police Missing Person coordinators are based in their respective MASH at Swindon and Trowbridge.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Strategic Responsibilities > 1.1 The Missing Person Coordinator role](#).

11. MANAGEMENT OF THE RETURN

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 11 Management of return](#).

11.1 When Missing person returns or is located

When a Missing person returns or is located, a Prevention Interview (previously Safe and Well Check) must be completed. Attempts should be made to establish reasons for the disappearance and whether they were subject to any criminal offences and/or felt unsafe when they were missing, particularly children. Consideration should be made for the ongoing welfare and safeguarding of children, particularly looked after children, and where it is best to return them to, consulting with the local authority where necessary.

When an adult Missing person is located their whereabouts must not be disclosed to others if this is against their wishes. The person who reported them missing may be informed that they have been located and reassure them about their wellbeing.

There may be suitable circumstances where a Missing person returns of their own free will and is subsequently seen by a professional person from a relevant agency (such as Social Care, Health Service, Care Home employee etc.) and the circumstances are such that the Police attendance is not required. These occasions will generally be rare and when they occur the sighting by the other professional must be agreed by the FIM and documented on the NICHE OEL with rationale.

[Table of Contents](#)

A PPD1 should be completed (at the officer's discretion for children or vulnerable adults under strand 3) where they identify risk factors which may cause concern and require more details for Police and Partners than would ordinarily be available through the NICHE referral. For all other adults an intelligence report should be submitted.

11.2 Prevention Interview

When information has been received that a person has returned, they will not be cancelled as a Missing person until they have been seen and efforts made to establish the reason for the Missing episodes, and their wellbeing confirmed by a Police officer and with the authority of a supervisor. (For more guidance see [APP Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 12 Interviews](#)).

Listen to what the person says, look at their appearance, their clothing, any obvious injuries and the circumstances in which they were found or returned. Ensure any observations are fully documented in the NICHE occurrence. Do not make judgements or record unprofessional opinion as this will be shared with other agencies.

If you suspect the Missing person has been a victim of crime or suspected radicalisation, consult with your supervisor to ensure that appropriate action is taken and any crimes are recording appropriately on Niche, and ensuring you have secured/preserved all evidential opportunities.

In cases where there is evidence or information that the person is missing because of family pressures, the person should be fully de-briefed to ascertain what these issues are, before any attempt is made to return them home. This is particularly important when the Missing person is a child, or a possible victim of '[Honour Based Abuse](#)'. The person should not be returned home if any safety or welfare concerns are identified and alternative arrangements should be made in collaboration with Social Care.

Should circumstances dictate that there are safeguarding concerns then consideration should be made to use for children Police Protection Powers (PPO) under Section 46 of the Children Act 1989 or for all persons suffering apparent mental health issues Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983

11.3 Suggested prompts for Police prevention interviews - in particular, Missing children

- The demeanour of the person;
- Are there any changes in their behaviour?
- Is their appearance dishevelled?
- Are they wearing inappropriate clothing?
- Are there signs of any gifts including new clothing?
- Have they got more than one mobile phone?
- Do they smell of alcohol or appear to be under the influence of other substances?
- Who has the Missing person been with and did they feel safe?
- Where had the Missing person been and how did they get there?
- Did the Missing person return home of their own accord?
- Is there any indication that the Missing person has been involved in sexual relationships whilst missing?
- Where was the Missing person found/collected from? What type of place is this?
- Was a reason given for going missing?
- What help or support does the Missing person feel may prevent them going missing again in the future? Are they already involved with other agencies?

-
- What was the Missing person running to or from?
 - Has the Missing person been a victim of crime during period that they were reported missing?
 - Has the child been exploited to commit criminal offences on behalf of others?
 - Is there any indication that the Missing person was involved in committing crime(s) during the period they were reported missing?
 - Talk to the family or carers as well and record what they tell you.

12. MANAGEMENT OF RETURN TO HOME INTERVIEWS (RHIs)

The product of the RHI can be shared, with consent of the missing person, with Wiltshire Police, indexed by WIU and linked to the relevant Missing NICHE occurrence. This is a valuable source of intelligence for investigating officers should the child go missing again and should be referred to and help inform the investigative strategy.

See APP Guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Missing Persons Investigations > 12.3 Responsibility for return interviews](#).

13.CHILD EXPLOITATION (INCLUDING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN)

There is a nationally-recognised link between a child going missing and being either criminally or sexually exploited.

13.1 Child Sexual Exploitations (CSE)

The Wiltshire Police Gemstone team is the name given to our response to CSE, with the [Gemstone Firstpoint Site](#) providing important information on what to do if you suspect a child is a victim.

13.2 Criminal Exploitation of Children

Individuals and groups can target vulnerable children and encourage them to engage in anti-social behaviour and low-level criminality, which can lead to an increase in a child's missing episodes. More extreme cases can result in children being pulled into emerging gang culture, victim of [modern slavery](#) ([human trafficking](#)), and targeted and exploited by Dangerous Drug Networks (DDNs) that visit Swindon and Wiltshire from London and other large metropolitan areas. (See also Force [Modern Slavery Policy and Procedure](#)).

Officers with concerns for a child either being sexually or criminally exploited should take immediate steps to safeguard that child and refer via PPD1 to MASH.

13.3 Child Abduction Warning Notice (CAWN)

Child Abduction Warning Notices are issued to persons who are suspected of placing a child at risk of offences being committed against them under, in particular, contrary the following legislation:

If child is under 16 years of age – [Sec 2. Child Abduction Act 1984](#)

If child is under 18 years AND in local authority care - [Sec 31. Children Act 1989](#) – [Sec 49. Children Act 1989](#).

Full Guidance on the process to issue and record CAWNs can be found at:
http://firstpoint/deptinfo/acpo/ps/pubpro/pp_P_docs/CSE/CAWNs

See APP guidance: [Major Investigation and Public Protection > Missing Persons > Strategic Responsibilities > 1.4.5 Child Abduction Warning Notices](#).

14. RADICALISATION

The Counter Terrorism and security Act 2015 places a general duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The purpose of Prevent is at its heart to safeguard and support vulnerable people to stop them from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming vulnerable to radicalisation may include: peer pressure, influence from other people or via the internet, bullying, crime against them or their involvement in crime, anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.

If officers/staff believe or suspect that a person has gone missing (whether in this country or abroad) for purposes linked to terrorism and radicalisation they should report this directly to the Missing person SIO / duty Inspector without delay. SIO / duty Inspector will consider the level of risk and appropriate response (on a case by case basis). An appropriate intelligence submission should be made and the duty officer from CTPSW can be informed.

[See also [Prevent Policy documents 1, 2 and 3](#)].

Glossary of Terms

APP	Approved Professional Practice
CAWN	Child Abduction Warning Notice
CCC	Crime and Communications Centre
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CRA	Child Rescue Alert
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DDN	Dangerous Drug Network(s)
DMM	Daily Management Meeting
EDS	Emergency Duty Service
FIM	Force Incident Manager
FORS	Force Operations Room Supervisor
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NDM	National Decision Making Model
PNC	Police National Computer
PND	Police National Database
POLSA	Police Search Advisor
PR	Parental Responsibility
RHI	Return home interview
SIO	Senior Investigating Officer
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPOC	Single Point of Contact

Document Administration

Ownership

Department Responsible: PPD and Safeguarding
Procedure Owner/Author: D/Supt Deb SMITH / DI Mark KENT (Force Lead for Missing)
Technical Author: Angharad JONES (ASE/CSE Support & A/Missing Coordinator)
Senior Officer/Manager Sponsor: ACC Public Protection and Force Development

Revision History

Revision Date	Version	Summary of Changes
17.02.2017	1.0	Version 1.0 reviewed in line with new APP and NICHE module procedure. Published as v2.0
25.05.2018	2.0	Data Protection section amended to reflect implementation of GDPR and new DPA.
25.10.2018	3.0	Version 2.0 reviewed at 12 months and amended in line with updated APP guidance. New s14 Radicalisation added.

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Name & Title	Date of Approval	Version
Continuous Improvement Team	14.11.2018	3.0
ACC Craig HOLDEN	12.11.2018	3.0

Distribution

This document has been distributed via:

Name & Title	Date of Issue	Version
E-Brief		
Email to relevant affected Staff/Officers		
Other: <i>(state method here)</i>		

Diversity Impact Assessment

Has a DIA been completed? If no, please indicate the date by which it will be completed. If yes, please send a copy of the DIA with the procedure.	☐ Yes ☐ No Date:
--	---

Consultation

List below who you have consulted with on this procedure (incl. committees, groups, etc):

Name & Title	Date Consulted	Version
D/Insp Mark KENT	November 2018	3.0
D/Sgt. Ali MAWSON,	November 2018	3.0
Angharad JONES	November 2018	3.0

Implications of the Procedure

Training Requirements

No additional training requirements

IT Infrastructure

No additional IT infrastructure required

[Table of Contents](#)