

# **WILTSHIRE POLICE FORCE PROCEDURE**



## **First Aid - Response to Acid Attacks Procedure**

Effective from: 26.04.18

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**Identification**

Procedure Title: Response to Acid Attacks Procedure  
Version: V1

**Ownership**

Department Responsible: Health and Safety, People Services  
Procedure Owner: Sarah Somers, Head of Health and Safety  
Dr Rachel Oaten, Consultant in Emergency Medicine /  
S/Inspector 4327 Rachel Oaten  
David James, Health and Safety Advisor

**Revision History**

Effective From 26.04.18  
Next Review Date: Annual or when significant changes in work activity,  
process or procedure occur.

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Previous Revision Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
25.04.19		

**Approvals**

This document requires the following approvals:

<b>Name &amp; Title</b>	<b>Date of Approval</b>	<b>Version</b>
Occupational Health and Safety Committee (CC chair)	26.04.18	V1
Chief Officer Group	Not required	

**Distribution**

This document has been distributed via:

<b>Name &amp; Title</b>	<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Version</b>
E-Brief	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Force control room Inspectors and Supervisors</li><li>Community Policing Teams</li><li>Special Constabulary</li><li>People Development</li></ul>	-	-

**Equality Impact Assessment**

Has an EIA been completed? Informal assessment conducted – result low risk. If no, please indicate the date by which it will be completed. If yes, please send a copy of the EIA with the procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>  <b>Date:</b> 26.04.18
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**Consultation**

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

<b>Name &amp; Title</b>	<b>Date Consulted</b>	<b>Version</b>
Occupational Health and Safety Committee	26.04.18	V1

**Implications of the Procedure**

**Training Requirements**

Any perceived training requirements needed to implement this procedure should be identified here.

**IT Infrastructure**

State here whether implementation of this procedure requires any input from IT, adaption and/or addition to any IT systems or packages?

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Meaning
HSE	Health and Safety Executive

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Force Priorities linked to this document are set out below.

Force Priorities Linked to this Policy
SP4 Developing Sustainable Policing

## RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES and OTHER DOCUMENTS

All other Wiltshire Police Health and Safety Policy's and Procedures

## 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 and reviewed every 6 months and/or in light of legislative change by the Force Clinical Governance Consultant in conjunction with the Head of Health and Safety. The Force Occupational Health and Safety Committee will be responsible for the approval and monitoring of the procedure document and its implementation on an annual basis.

## WHO TO CONTACT ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE

Doctor Rachel Oaten, Clinical Governance Consultant (S/Insp 4327 Rachel Oaten)  
Sarah Somers Head of Health and Safety  
David James Health and Safety Advisor

## **1. Legal Requirements**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 imposes a duty of care on the employer to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all staff and others affected by our undertakings. In addition, sections 7 and 8 of the Act state that staff must take appropriate steps to safeguard their own health and safety as well as that of others.

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 sets out the essential aspects of first aid that employers have to address including the requirement to:

- Regulation 3(1) : Provide or ensure that there are provided, such equipment and facilities as are adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for enabling first aid to be rendered to their employees if they are injured or become injured at work.
- Regulation 3(2) : Provide or ensure that there is provided, such numbers of suitable persons as is adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for rendering first aid to their employees if they become injured or ill at work. This person shall not be suitable unless they have undergone Health and Safety Executive approved training.
- Regulation 4 : An employer shall inform his employees of the arrangements that have been made in connection with the provision of first aid including location of equipment, facilities and personnel.

The Regulations do not oblige employers to provide first aid for anyone other than their own employees. Despite this, the Force has a duty of care to members of the public and others affected by our undertakings, therefore all police officers are trained to appointed person level. Specified police staff in operational roles, for example police community support officers also receive basic first aid training.

## **2. Procedure Overview**

It is recognised that our employees will frequently be called to emergency incidents where the immediate provision of first aid will save lives and minimise further harm and suffering. Thus, whilst the primary responsibility for emergency medical support rests with the ambulance service, some of our employees need to be able to administer first aid in emergency incidents. .

## **3. Purpose**

Wiltshire Police recognises the importance of supporting and enabling its workforce in being able to serve and protect our communities. As a Force we want to be seen responsive and adaptive to current threats to our community, bringing those responsible for such offences to justice whilst also protecting our staff. There has been recent concern raised nationally with regards to acid attacks and their increasing prevalence. This has led to the National Police Chief Council providing forces with advice with regards to officer safety. Wiltshire Police want to ensure that we have a robust response to any such

attack occurring in our force area and that every officer feels supported, equipped and competent in their response to initially manage such incidents

This policy provides a framework to ensure:

- Incidents involving acid and other noxious chemicals are adequately managed in the initial phase if Wiltshire Police are first on scene
- A consistent approach and appropriate equipment is available to staff through consultation with Wiltshire Police First Aid Working Group.

#### **4. Scope**

This policy applies to all members of Wiltshire Police staff who are public facing but predominantly to operational officers. All Wiltshire Police staff should have an awareness of acid attacks and the impact they can have on our staff and communities. Specifically all those who are frontline public facing will have additional input through People Development to allow them to manage the initial phase of an attack from a first aid and officer safety point of view and also where appropriate be equipped with supplies to assist a victim of such an attack.

#### **5. Definitions**

##### **5.1 Acid Attack**

An acid attack is a form of [violent assault](#) defined as the act of throwing [acid](#) or a similarly [corrosive substance](#) onto the body of another with the intention to [disfigure](#), [maim](#), [torture](#), or [kill](#). Perpetrators of these attacks throw corrosive liquids at their victims, usually at their faces, burning them, and damaging skin [tissue](#), often exposing and sometimes dissolving the bones.

The most common types of acid used in these attacks are [sulfuric](#) and [nitric acid](#). [Hydrochloric acid](#) is sometimes used, but is much less damaging. [Aqueous solutions](#) of strongly [alkaline](#) materials, such as [caustic soda](#) (sodium hydroxide), are used as well, particularly in areas where strong acids are controlled substances.

##### **5.2 Clinical Governance**

This is defined as a system through which Organisations such as Wiltshire Police are accountable for continuously improving the quality of their services and safeguarding high standards of care by creating an environment in which excellence in care delivered by officers and police staff will flourish.

The Force Clinical Governance Lead is Dr Rachel Oaten FRCEM BSc (Hons) Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Salisbury District Hospital. Other members of the governance group include members of staff from People Development, Operations, Health and Safety and a Paramedic who works locally with South Western Ambulance Service.

### **5.3 First Aid Working Group**

This is a newly formed working group within Wiltshire Police looking to ensure that we are meeting national requirements for first aid training, ensuring first and foremost our officers are as protected and skilled as they can be to serve the communities within our Force footprint. The group will review incidents, feedback, equipment and training with a view to becoming a Force that is viewed as carrying out best practice nationally.

## **6. Principles**

Given the increasing frequency nationally in which Police are dealing with the effects of acid attacks as well as some isolated cases starting to appear more locally it is vital there is robust guidance in place for staff to follow. In some cases Wiltshire Police officers may be first on scene it is now considered imperative that staff have awareness training into this and also are given the tools to be able to manage an initial incident in the absence of anyone more medically trained e.g. Ambulance Service being on scene. This awareness training will be developed by People Development in conjunction with the First Aid Working Group and delivered in a variety of settings.

Wiltshire Police will ensure that the relevant, risk assessments and equipment necessary to ensure staff safety and minimise harm to an individual subject to an acid attack are made available to staff including appropriate safety equipment and consumables. Recent NPCC guidance has been noted and incorporated into this procedure with regards to staff protection and first aid administration.

Safety equipment should be provided to anyone who is public facing. This will be clearly identified and carried in operational police vehicles.

Staff having access to the additional equipment must have the relevant skills and training to be able to ensure their own safety and that of any casualty. The exact level of competence required has been determined by People Development.

All front line, public facing staff should be in possession of a basic police first aid certificate. Officers who are more likely to attend acid related incidents will have increased awareness training around protecting themselves, others and the initial phase of managing casualties should there be no medical personnel on scene.

Staff that attend incidents and administer any treatment are expected to provide feedback on any incidents they attend through new feedback processes that are being developed in conjunction with Force Communications. This will allow us to gather a more realistic picture as to what staff encounter on a daily basis and help guide further training and equipment requirements.



There is no nationally recognised awareness training available at present and this training will be an internal Wiltshire Police developed training initiative and probably one of the first forces to do so in the Country.

Within this procedure it is recognised that some officers / staff may not wish to provide certain treatments as it is out of their remit and this should be accepted. However, staff who feel that by carrying out an intervention such as cutting off clothes or starting to reverse the burning process, that they are acting in the affected individuals best interest will be supported by Wiltshire Police and will be provided with feedback and an opportunity to discuss the incident with a member of the First Aid Working Group.

Any staff member who does feel empowered and compelled to treat a burnt patient above and beyond basic life support should follow the suggested guidelines in Appendix A.

Quarterly meetings will be held by the First Aid Working Group to ensure trends are reviewed both nationally and locally and also review any incidents where officers or staff have needed to use equipment supplied by Wiltshire Police. These meetings will be documented, written feedback will be provided to officers who submit incidents or near misses and will ultimately be fed back into Wiltshire Police Occupational Health and Safety Committee meetings chaired by the Chief Constable.

## **7. Training**

All police officers and police staff whose role is public facing will receive awareness training on: How to deal with an **Acid Attack** and the immediate first aid treatment. (see appendix A). Training will be delivered during their Initial First Aid Course by the Operational Training team within People Development. Refresher training on Acid Attacks will be reviewed by the First Aid Working Group annually.

## **8. Equipment**

Equipment will be initially decided and reviewed by the First Aid Working Group.

### [Protective Equipment](#)

Every frontline facing member of staff should have readily available to them equipment to be able to protect themselves from injury and bodily fluids when attending an incident.

This will include nitrile gloves for skin protection, eye protection for protection from any noxious chemicals and bodily fluids e.g. phlegm / blood, and face masks to minimise any inhalation injury.

First Aid Equipment: Each first aid kit on vehicles will contain equipment to manage the initial phase of an acid attack this will include fluid to pour over skin to stop the burning process and shears to remove clothing.

Equipment as and when used should be replaced as soon as practicable with replacement equipment being issued from Wiltshire Police Stores, Devizes.

## **9. Employee responsibilities**

Public facing employees must ensure they:

- Protect themselves at all times with personal protective equipment available to them. As a minimum gloves should be worn when approaching or treating a person suspected of being the victim of an acid attack.
- Inform Force Control Room as soon as practical to instigate appropriate response from other agencies relevant information where possible should include state of casualty, areas affected by burns and risk to other personnel entering area.
- Staff must have a basic first aid understanding of acid attacks and the initial phase of managing their own safety and that of affected casualties.
- Remain in-date and competent with first aid training
- Operate within the policies and protocols of Wiltshire Police at all times when operational; this should include completing any relevant paperwork relating to the injury / care delivered for the First Aid Working Group to review.

## **10. Policy Review and Clinical Governance**

Given the infancy of acid attack awareness across the County this whole policy will be reviewed in six months' time as it is expected incidents will have evolved and the Operational capability to respond to incidents of this nature may well have changed.

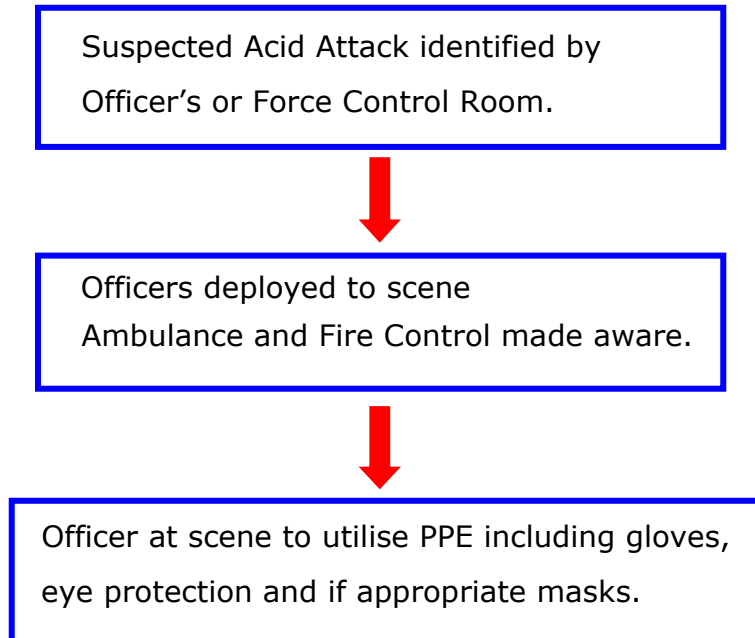
There will be quarterly meetings of members of the First Aid Working Group to ensure Compliance with Force Policy, Audit of incidents where first aid skills of officers have been utilised and a report prepared for the quarterly Health and Safety Meeting.

Any complaints / incidents relating to officers and their actions will be dealt with swiftly, robustly and in-line with Wiltshire Police Complaints Policy.

With the staffing structure we have in place one of our key aims is to be transparent, learn from any incidents and ensure compliance with local and national Policies / Requirements. Wiltshire Police have the added benefit of having a Consultant in Emergency Medicine who can review incidents and if necessary offer support and advice on incidents. With an effective governance structure in place Officers and staff should feel supported in making decisions and not in fear of retribution / disciplinary action.

## Appendix A

### Operational Response to Acid Attacks



#### Officers:

If NO medical presence:

PPE to be worn.

Clothing to be removed where appropriate.

**Do not peel** off any clothing cut off lose bits of clothing.

Where possible get the casualty to remove their own clothing.

Irrigation to be commenced this can include tap water / bottled water. It does not need to be sterile

#### Force Control Room:

Notify other emergency services as required.

Consider a TRIM tag.

Tag the incident for First Aid.