

 West Mercia POLICE		POLICY
Security Classification	OFFICIAL	
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes	

POLICY TITLE	Child Rescue Alert
REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP010e
Version	1.0

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	CRIME & VULNERABILITY
BUSINESS AREA	VULNERABILITY & SAFEGUARDING

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	April 2022
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	April 2025
RISK RATING	LOW
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW

West Mercia Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy.
Please e-mail policiesandprocedures@westmercia.police.uk

1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

This document sets out the West Mercia police policy regarding the launch of a Child Rescue Alert (CRA) in the event of the report of a child having been abducted. Statistics show that the early hours after a child is abducted are crucial. CRA is intended to:

- alert members of the public to abduction or other high risk disappearance quickly
- to provide a mechanism for handling a high volume of calls, and
- act as a central and trusted point of reference for enquirers.

CRA has been operating as a nationally co-ordinated system in the UK since 2010 when the CRA Activation Protocol was published.

It is a partnership between the police, the media and the public that seeks the assistance of the public where it is feared that a child may be at risk of serious harm.

The safety of the child is paramount and the arrest of the offender is an ancillary benefit.

2.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

The aim of the CRA is to quickly engage the entire community via media (TV and radio) and social media in the search for the child, offender or any specified vehicle through reports of relevant information to the police.

There are three activation criteria for launching a CRA and **all three must be met**:

1. the child is apparently under 18 years old
AND
2. there is a perception that the child is in imminent danger of serious harm or death
AND
3. there is sufficient information to enable the public to assist with locating the child

The aim of this policy is to:

- provide a framework to ensure staff are aware of the procedure to launch a CRA
- provide direction to staff and identify role specific responsibilities

The policy applies to all police officers, police staff, special constables and volunteer staff who may be involved in the report and investigation of child abduction.

This policy reflects the content of the NCA CHILD RESCUE ALERT Operational Guidance 2020 and updates all previous policies.

The policy has direct links to the following guidance and policies:

APP – Major Investigation and Public Protection, Critical Incident Management and National Decision Making Model. <https://www.app.college.police.uk/>

POLICY – Critical Incident, Investigation of Missing Persons, Kidnap and Extortion and Threat to life.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS of the POLICY

The following implication have been considered:

- Code of Practice on the Management of Police Information
- Risks / Health and Safety considerations – template attached
- Human Rights / Equality / Data Protection / Freedom of Information - Article 2 (right to life) and Article 8 (right to respect for a private and family life) have been considered
- Legal considerations – the actions are required to ensure public safety, preventing crime, protecting health and the rights and freedoms of others
- Financial Implications
- Implementation requirements – minimal as this is an amendment to the existing CRA policy.
- Staffing / Training – minimal as this is an amendment to an existing policy and procedure
- Impact on Partners – minimal as this is an amendment to an existing policy and procedure
- Bureaucracy – NCA initiative

4.0 PROCEDURE

In the event a CRA is to be utilised West Mercia Police will adopt the NCA CHILD RESCUE ALERT Operational Guidance 2020 [J:\Shared Document Management\Vulnerability and Safeguarding\Child Rescue Alert\Child Rescue Alert guidance v2 20200610.pdf.pdf](#)

No separate procedure is in existence.

HOLMES managers, OCC Supervisors and Corporate Communications hold separate working practices relating to individual elements of the process.

5.0 CONSULTATION

<i>Business Lead Consulted</i>	<i>Date Consulted</i>
T/Supt V&S	April 2022

6.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

The history and rationale for change to policy will be recorded using the below chart:

Date	Author / Reviewer	Amendment(s) & Rationale	Date of Approval / Adoption
		Previously approved at JNCC meeting	30/07/2014
11/01/2022	S Orr	Removal of CRA Procedure as this is duplication. Replaced with link to NCA Child Rescue Alert 'Operational Guidance' 2020 and direction to individual departments working practices, removal of Warwickshire text v1.0	April 2022

7.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The Equality Analysis (EA), Health & Safety Assessment (H&S) and Risk Assessment (RA) associated with this document are available on request.

8.0 MONITORING / EVALUATION

The monitoring and review of this policy is the responsibility of the policy owner.