

Hostage and Crisis Negotiator Policy		
Security Classification	OFFICIAL	
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes	

POLICY	
REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP180
Version	1.2

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	CRIME & VULNERABILITY
BUSINESS AREA	VARIOUS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	November 2021
LATEST REVIEW DATE	June 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	June 2025
RISK RATING	HIGH
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 contactus@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Handling Instructions

This document must be handled and stored according to the Government Security Classifications guidance. Neither the document nor any of its contents may be disseminated further without the permission of the Information Asset Owner.

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1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

- 1.1 This policy explains how West Mercia Police will approach the deployment of Hostage and Crisis Negotiators.
- 1.2 The procedure is primarily aimed at all West Mercia Police officers and staff that are likely to be involved with critical incidents whereby a negotiator is likely to be deployed. This includes: Negotiators, Operational Control Centre Inspectors (OCCIs), Force Gold, Silver and Bronze Commanders, Senior Investigating Officers and Technical Support Unit personnel.
- 1.3 This document does not seek to replicate, in detail, guidance that is contained elsewhere in Authorised Professional Practice, or other guidance and contingency plans that remain current and approved by Chief Constables and relevant partners. Where relevant to this document, extracts from the above are included.

2.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

- 2.1 West Mercia is committed as part of its strategy of protecting people from harm to seeking the safe resolution of critical incidents where life is at risk.
- 2.2 The role of Hostage and Crisis Negotiator is recognised globally as an invaluable tactical option in achieving this in a variety of scenarios including, but not limited to crisis intervention (face to face or otherwise); single-person siege / barricade incidents; hostage taking, including sieges and terrorist incidents; investigations; crimes in action, including kidnap, extortion and blackmail; high risk missing persons with whom contact is possible or likely; and suspects at large. Commonly, incidents may be life threatening or display the potential for significant harm or damage to a person, the community or a commercial enterprise.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS of the POLICY

3.1 Financial Implications / Best Value

The introduction of this policy will have limited additional financial implications. However, as new Force negotiators are selected and appointed there will be costs associated with appropriate training and equipment. Broadly it will be the responsibility of the Learning & Development department to fund the appropriate initial and on-going training requirements of Force negotiators. The relevant Local Policing Area or department will have responsibility for budgeting for the equipment and expenses of those officers who are part of their establishment.

3.2 Staffing /Training

All staff should be aware of the existence of this policy and, where appropriate, be responsible for ensuring compliance. There are no specific training requirements involved in the adoption of this policy.

3.3 Bureaucracy

The implementation of this policy will promote better management of resources. The policy will also increase the knowledge of West Mercia Police staff ensuring that negotiators are appropriately deployed. The bureaucracy involved with the deployments will be kept to a minimum and regularly reviewed.

3.4 Publication/ Distribution/ Freedom of Information

This policy is suitable for public disclosure, however, the procedures associated with this policy will be subject to a 'confidential/restricted' Government Information Marker and for operational reasons will not be available to the public. The associated Procedure will be distributed to all West Mercia negotiators and signposted to other relevant stakeholders.

3.5 Human Rights

This policy may engage with any of the Articles of the Human Rights Act, however it is not possible to predict the exact nature or events that combine to create a “critical incident”. Everything within this policy and related procedure is drafted with the intention to improve police responses to the needs of the individual and / or our communities. Any negotiation strategy set will be within the parameters of the law and will give due consideration for the right to life of all persons (Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights).

3.6 Legal

The legal basis for this procedure comes from the common law duty of the police to protect life and property, preserve order, prevent the commission of offences and bring offenders to justice.

4.0 CONSULTATION

This policy has been shared with the Police Federation, Unison, Legal Services, Risk Management, Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity and Head of Specialist Operations. Specific sections have been consulted on with appropriate departments (e.g. Communications Data – CAB; FOI – Information Compliance; Data Protection) and the Critical Friends group.

<i>Business Lead/ Chief Officer Consulted</i>	<i>Date Consulted</i>
Ch Supt Mel Crowther/ T/ACC Damian Barratt	Sep 2021
<i>Chief Officer Consulted</i>	<i>Date Consulted</i>

5.0 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
June 2021	Insp 21154 Lee PAGE	Reviewed – amended in line with Procedure changes. Reverted to WMP Policy	JNCC Exec Board 09/11/2021

6.0 PROCEDURE

The Procedure is available on a separate document but is not for public disclosure.

7.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The Equality Analysis (EA), Health & Safety Assessment (HAS) 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.