

Operations and response – have your say

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We're consulting on updated guidance for operations and response

Consultation 3 mins read

We're seeking views on updated guidance that will help police forces across the country respond to emergencies and major incidents in the most effective way possible – working together seamlessly to keep people safe.

Operations and response guidance

Our operations and response authorised professional practice (APP) focuses on helping police respond to the most serious situations that can happen without warning – including those which are complex, large-scale, or likely to become major or critical incidents. This includes:

- terrorist attacks
- severe weather emergencies
- commercial or industrial accidents
- major public events where something has gone wrong

The guidance ensures that when these serious incidents occur, police forces have a clear, structured approach to managing the response. It can adapt to different types and scales of incident whilst supporting effective collaboration between all agencies involved. It also supports forces in their initial response to recognise and declare major or critical incidents, and explains how to set up proper command and control structures during the response.

Approach

Through our mission of Leadership, Standards and Performance, the College is ensuring that policing learns from major incidents like the Manchester Arena bombing and Grenfell Tower disaster. This approach to learning from major incidents supports our [Code of Ethics](#), which helps people in policing do the right things, in the right way, for the right reasons.

By developing comprehensive guidance, training commanders through courses like the [Multi Agency Gold Incident Command programme](#), and embedding structured debriefing processes that capture lessons and share them across the service, we're supporting policing so the public can have confidence that future responses to such incidents will be coordinated, efficient and delivered to the highest professional standards.

What's changed

We've strengthened the operations and response guidance to make it:

- easier to navigate
- less repetitive
- better targeted to officers at different ranks and roles

Who needs to know

Our operations and response guidance covers all stages of an incident, from when police first become aware of them right through to reviewing what was learned. It contains important information for:

- First responders?– such as response officers, 999 call handlers, and force incident managers – including what they need to do when they arrive at the scene and are working out how to respond.
- Operational and tactical leaders?– who work together to decide which tactics will be used in the initial stages of an incident and ensure the right resources are sent to the scene.
- Chief officers and strategic leaders?– who need to ensure their forces have plans, policies and procedures in place to provide an effective response to complex incidents and events.
- Emergency planning teams – who develop plans for responding to different types of major incidents within their force, working alongside other emergency services and partners.

Consultation closed

Our consultation closed at 11:59am on Tuesday 14 October 2025.

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback.

Consultation documents

- [Go to operations and response APP consultation](#)

Related resources

- [Civil contingencies APP](#)
- [First aid training updated](#)

Tags

Operations Response policing