

# Documentaries

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In making decisions to support participation in the filming of documentaries, senior operational and communications leaders should consider:

- whether any existing access agreements are in place
- whether the filming or recording fits a clear policing purpose
- whether the broadcast would affect current or future police operations
- whether the broadcast would cause unjustifiable distress or harassment to victims of crime or their families, or those featured
- whether the broadcast could potentially prejudice a trial
- the views and wishes of any victims or their families
- whether the broadcast could interfere with an individual's human rights, including the right to privacy, or data protection law
- whether the broadcast will have an impact on, or will need to involve, partner organisations
- any protection for undercover police officers, covert police activity, police tactics and equipment
- the status of the production company and the quality of its previous broadcasts
- the capacity and availability of internal resource requirements to facilitate this request – for example, corporate communications department (CCD) and legal to support the access agreement, operational resource to manage the release of police-held information and media and/or contact with victims and families
- potential copyright issues and permissions required from third parties to provide any of the material requested

All documentary requests and approaches for participation should be agreed with CCD. The CCD is responsible for coordinating appropriate documentation by the documentary company if an agreement to make a programme is given. This includes:

- an access agreement signed by the media company and on behalf of the chief constable
- a data-sharing agreement
- a health and safety risk assessment

- a contractual agreement that the media have full responsibility for anything published or aired

Forces should consider whether to charge for this service and refer to the [NPCC National policing guidelines on charging for police services](#).

## Protecting police tactics

For any media access that could have an impact on operational security, the force operation security adviser (OpSy) should be brought in at the earliest opportunity to provide advice and guidance.

To protect police tactics, appropriate safeguards should be included in any indemnity or access agreement.

For documentaries, a minimum, mandatory requirement is for a nominated chief officer to have the right to invoke editorial rights regarding the inclusion of any such tactics. This must be recorded in a formal, signed contract that outlines the agreed terms and any practical points. This includes the sign-off processes of any tactics before filming commences.

## Tags

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