

Record keeping

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A thorough and accessible audit trail is essential for accountability in any incident or event. This audit trail should be clear and complete, covering both activity and inactivity. During the response to an incident or event these records are important and should be referred to – for example, during command handovers.

Each level of command should maintain a separate record or log of their decision making in accordance with any force policies relating to such record keeping. In addition to this log, the use of body-worn video (BWV) should be considered for completeness. National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) [body-worn video guidance](#) can be accessed for further advice on its use.

Commanders should record what they:

- see
- hear
- say
- decide (including rationale)

Consider other recording mechanisms, such as:

- recordings of telephone or online meetings
- updates via Airwave or computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems
- BWV

Commanders should provide a timely account of these decisions and observations at the point of hand over or conclusion of the incident.

The audit trail should be used to support debriefing, organisational learning and potentially in [post-incident procedures](#) (PIPs), such as a case review, complaint or public inquiry.

All record keeping may be subject to rules of disclosure. Further information is available in the [Information sharing](#) section of the Information management APP.

Planning

Chief officers should ensure that a written plan is developed that sets out how to respond to specific individual incidents or emergencies. This plan should cover the roles, responsibilities and resources required to respond to the incident. Forces should adapt these to the specific demands of a given incident or event.

Plans, such as major incident plans, should:

- apply interoperability principles
- include, where relevant, action cards
- be regularly reviewed by people with sufficient training and experience

Version control arrangements should be in place and should:

- be clear and comprehensive
- use a standard approach throughout the force
- be electronically held

Guidance on the development of major incident plans and the testing and exercising of these plans is provided in the [Planning section](#) of the Civil contingencies APP.

Guidance on the development of a [working strategy](#) for incidents requiring deployment of an armed response is provided in the Armed policing APP.

Guidance for developing [policing plans](#) for any public order public safety (POPS) event or operation is provided in the POPS APP.

Tags

APP Critical incidents Major incidents