



**Vulnerability Knowledge
& Practice Programme**



**College of
Policing**

NPCC
National Police Chiefs' Council

National Vulnerability and Public Protection Strategy

A common framework approach to vulnerability including public protection.

Pursue

February 2025

This aim of this document is to support forces to develop their understanding of capacity, capability, competence across vulnerability and Public Protection. This document takes its learning from the work of Operation Soteria, Violence Against Women and Girls and other areas of vulnerability and seeks to draw together positive indicators that should be seen. The combination of the pillars helps towards forces taking a Suspect Focus – Victim Centred – Context led approach.

These indicators have been shown through the College of Policing Perennial issues document to be areas of consistent challenge. Through good governance we should seek deep rooted behavioural change by understanding Capability / Opportunity / Motivators and how together these deliver sustainable improvements.

How to use this document

This document has been produced to help forces to establish positive indicators in respect of Suspect Focus. It looks at the positive indicators in the initial response, the wider investigation phase and the disruption of those who seek to cause harm.

There is no one size approach and forces will operate various models so the document can be adapted to fit the policing approach used, current and future data gathering to provide governance and oversight with information as to effectiveness.

The indicators below where possible should include reference to other areas and have been drawn from a range of sources including perennial issues of policing.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
<p>An investigative mindset is applied by call takers & first responders, to ensure the victims evidence is captured i.e. digital forensics, safeguarding & investigative strategies.</p>	<p>At the first point of contact evidence is gathered in the 'Golden Hour' identifying and collecting important evidence.</p>	<p>Supervisors have oversight of incidents attended and provide guidance to responders and conduct good quality reviews to have assurance about initial investigation actions.</p>	<p>Vulnerability is embedded and there is a whole force approach taken. Staff are given training and confidence to identify and act on risk.</p>
	<p>A trauma informed approach is taken, giving confidence to victims that they are believed and able to report their crime.</p>	<p>Supervisors are capable and have the appropriate training such as PiP1 supervisors (suspect focus)</p>	<p>Leaders understand the capability of individuals and teams to use investigation as a means of keeping people safe.</p>
	<p>The investigation develops an understanding of the vulnerability of victims & suspects, and their families to identify risk. Appropriate Safeguarding measures are taken.</p>	<p>Supervisors undertake debriefs with officers as to the initial response to incidents involving vulnerability. The aim is to inform learning and any service recovery.</p>	<p>Leaders develop a performance framework in relation to investigations and the impact on victims and suspects.</p>
	<p>Vulnerability Risk principles approach to identify risk is in place, with necessary action taken to keep people safe. This includes suspect history.</p>	<p>Supervisors have knowledge of the cases under investigation within their teams.</p>	
	<p>Priority given to the timeliness of enquiries and investigations, to minimise the risk posed to victims and suspects.</p>		

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Crimes are allocated to those best equipped to deal with them at the earliest opportunity, enabling good quality investigations & file preparation.	File quality is given priority and submissions consistently meet the required standards set by CPS.	Crimes are allocated in a timely way to the most appropriate staff to effectively gather evidence and investigate.	Demand is understood across teams and action taken to ensure that there is capacity for officers to meet strategic aims.
	Disclosure is effectively managed and does not lead to prosecution delays.		Force policies, such as crime allocation are effective and achievable. Force operating model also effective.
			Force is confident that its training programme equips officers and staff to respond and investigate.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Suspect focused, context & evidence led approach for investigations & interviews.	Investigators are able to identify key / reasonable lines of enquiry to drive forward investigations.	Provide regular reviews and oversight support to investigators in the development of investigative strategies.	Force priorities and direction drives a suspect focus.
	Investigators understand suspect motivation and vulnerability, identifying the risk they pose to themselves and others.	Supervisors use critical reflection as part of file reviews and discuss this with investigators.	The force performance framework drives quality of investigations.
	Use of appropriate language in investigations that accurately describes the context of the incident and investigation.		The force uses a variety of ways to capture learning such as scrutiny panels, VRR and feedback. This information is used to inform change.
	Investigations prioritise fair treatment, ensuring no bias against minoritised communities.		Charge rates and outcomes are clearly understood and there is no disparity across protected characteristics.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
<p>High risk, high harm & repeat offenders identified, & prevention and disruption opportunities are utilised, using partners where appropriate.</p>	<p>From the outset of a call or investigation the risk posed by the suspect is understood to identify the safeguarding risk they pose to themselves and others.</p>	<p>Supervisors have oversight of investigations and support officers to identify and use disruption methods.</p>	<p>The force understands the number of suspects, named or on bail and the threat they pose. There are systems in place to flag individuals. There should also be a tracker system to monitor changes in risk.</p>
	<p>During investigations disruption activity is proactively taken such as the uses of relevant referral or civil orders.</p>	<p>Supervisors themselves have awareness and capability to use orders and diversionary tactics.</p>	<p>Disruption options are made available that include multi-agency support where appropriate.</p>
			<p>The effectiveness of disruption tools used is understood.</p>
<p>A problem-solving approach used to tackle the causes of offending & reduce harm & demand</p>	<p>Prevention Orders and referrals are proactively used, working with partners where appropriate.</p>	<p>Supervisor’s reviews of investigations and problem solving ensure structure is given through a SARA approach.</p>	<p>Forces understand the level of ‘named suspects’ and the risk those individuals pose.</p>
	<p>Victims and witnesses are confidently and routinely given crime prevention advice that increases the safety of those at risk.</p>	<p>Prevention Strategies include engagement with diverse communities to address specific vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>Forces understand the effectiveness of problem-solving activity and what works / barriers that are present. Forces can show how problem-solving is prioritised.</p>
	<p>There is a focus on taking a problem-solving approach to prevent reoffending and root causes, not merely focusing on criminal justice outcomes.</p>		<p>Force systems enable the identification of repeat suspects and investigations, making this available to use to influence activity.</p>



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