

NCVPP

National Centre for
Violence Against
Women & Girls and
Public Protection

Practice Advice to Support the Writing of Individual Management Reviews

A summary for review leads

September 2025



1. Background

Individual management reviews (IMRs) were established within the statutory guidance for domestic homicide reviews (Home Office, 2011). Guidance notes that IMRs provide an opportunity for ‘agencies to look openly and critically at individual and organisational practice, and the context within which individuals were working, to see whether the homicide indicates that changes can and should be made’ (Home Office, 2011). Importantly, IMRs should build an understanding of what happened and why, and how future practice can be improved. Research has, however, identified concerns regarding the quality (Local Government Association, 2024) and depth of the reflective analysis within IMRs (Preston-Shoot, 2021). This limits the learning that can be taken from tragic incidents.

Present work by the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP), now working as part of the National Centre for VAWG and Public Protection (NCVPP), has involved analysis of the quality of a sample of 48 IMRs obtained from 11 police forces across England and Wales. This analysis identified variation in regard to:

- The clarity and focus of the review.
- The inclusion of critical analysis concerning the agency response and the impact of this on the incident.
- The completeness of recording victim and suspect characteristics.
- The identification of good practice and suggestions for improvement to future practice.
- The identification of clearly defined learning points and recommendations.

In light of a recognised gap in the provision of guidance for police IMR authors, and our present findings, we have produced practice advice to support those writing police IMRs. Clear advice is crucial to ensure that reviews are high-quality and extract valuable learning.

The below checklist summarises the suggestions from that practice advice, particularly considering your role in quality assuring and signing off completed IMR reports.

2. Practice advice regarding individual management reviews



Recording the victim and suspect's characteristics

- ✓ Are you content that the IMR clearly records all the known characteristics of the victim and suspect, and identifies where this information is not known?
- ✓ Are you content that the IMR gives appropriate consideration to how professional decision making has been influenced by the victim and suspect's characteristics?
- ✓ Are you content that these characteristics, and how they intersect, have been considered throughout the analysis?
- ✓ Are you assured these characteristics have been considered in terms of the victim and suspect's interaction with services and the relevance of these characteristics to the incident?



The importance of appropriate language

- ✓ Are you content that the language used within the IMR is appropriate, neutral in tone, and avoids assumptions or judgements?
- ✓ Are you assured that the language is clear to a range of audiences, with definitions provided where specialist terminology and acronyms are used?
- ✓ Are you content that the language used would be received well by the victim or their friends and family if published in the statutory review?



IMR methodology

- ✓ Are you assured that the IMR clearly records the steps taken to conduct the review, including identifying which systems have been accessed, and what interviews have been conducted?
- ✓ Does the IMR clearly identify the sources of information the author has not been able to access, and the reasoning for this?



Overview of police contact

- ✓ Are you content that the IMR presents a clear overview of all the relevant events of police contact concerning the victim and suspect within the timescale under review and avoids unnecessary repetition?



Analysis of police practice

- ✓ Are you assured that the IMR author has critically analysed all relevant police contact throughout the review period? Are you content with the critical assessment made by the author?
- ✓ Are you content that the IMR accurately identifies whether practice was consistent with policies/procedures at the time of the incident?
- ✓ Are you content that good practice and missed opportunities within the police response have been appropriately identified and highlighted within the IMR?
- ✓ Are you content that the IMR addresses all points within the terms of reference?



Identification of learning points

- ✓ Are you content that the learning points are clearly defined and are linked back to the significant incidents within the review?
- ✓ Does the IMR identify where action has already been taken to address the identified learning points? Are you content that this appropriately captures the force activity against this learning?



Recommendations

- ✓ Are you content with the recommendation(s) made within the IMR?
- ✓ Are you assured that the recommendation(s) are outcome-based and adhere to the SMART criteria?
- ✓ Is any associated action plan completed in full?



Getting learning back into the system

- ✓ Are you assured that the individuals with ownership for implementing the recommendation(s) are clearly identified?
- ✓ Are you content that the identified individuals are appropriate and have sufficient authority to hold ownership of the recommendation(s)?
- ✓ Are you content that the IMR identifies how the identified learning will be disseminated and communicated to relevant individuals/teams?
- ✓ Are you assured that the IMR clearly identifies the IMR request and completion date, and you have indicated the date the IMR was quality assured and signed off?
- ✓ Are you assured that recommendations and learning points are linked, where appropriate, to your force's vulnerability and protection strategy?

3. Useful resources

The below resources may further support you in quality assuring completed IMR reports:

1. An appropriate language guide, produced by the Hydrant Programme: [Appropriate-Language-Guide-Final-English.pdf](#)
2. Quality markers for SARs, produced by the Social Care Institute of Excellence: [List of 15 Safeguarding Adult Reviews Quality Markers - SCIE](#)
3. Resources published by the VKPP covering our previous work exploring statutory reviews, including our recently published 'A Brief Guide to Statutory Reviews': [Consolidating police learning from case reviews - VKKP](#)

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About the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection

We're a collaboration between the
College of Policing and the National
Police Chiefs' Council.

We work across law enforcement,
the third sector and government to
professionalise public protection and
strive for a whole systems approach to
prevent harm, give confidence to victims,
survivors and witnesses to come forward
and bring more offenders to justice.

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