

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 officers

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 the recording of the 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.

2. Practice advice regarding individual management reviews



Recording the victim/suspect's characteristics

- ✓ Have you clearly recorded all the known characteristics of the victim and suspect within the IMR, and identified where this information is not known?
- ✓ Have you considered how professional decision making has been influenced by the victim/suspect's characteristics?
- ✓ Have these characteristics, and how they intersect, been considered throughout the analysis?
- ✓ Have you taken these characteristics into account when considering the victim/suspect's interaction with services and the relevance of these characteristics to the incident?



The importance of appropriate language

- ✓ Is the language used to describe the victim and their actions neutral in tone, avoiding assumptions or judgements?
- ✓ Is the language used within the IMR clear to a range of audiences, with definitions provided where specialist terminology and acronyms are used?
- ✓ Have you considered how the language you use could be interpreted and received by the victim, or their friends and family, if included in the published statutory review?



IMR methodology

- ✓ Have you clearly recorded the steps taken to conduct the IMR, including identifying which systems have been accessed, and what interviews have been conducted?
- ✓ Have you identified the sources of information you have not been able to access, and the reasoning for this?
- ✓ If you have utilised a specific methodological approach when conducting the IMR, have you identified this within the report?

Overview of police contact



- ✓ Have you presented a clear overview of all relevant events of police contact concerning the victim/suspect within the timescale under review?
- ✓ Have you avoided repetition of the presentation of significant events, where possible?



Analysis of police practice

- ✓ Have you critically analysed all relevant police contact throughout the review period?
- ✓ Have you explicitly identified whether practice was consistent with policies/procedures at the time of the incident?
- ✓ Have you ensured that missed opportunities and evidence of good practice, where identified, are highlighted within the review?
- ✓ Have you addressed all points within the terms of reference?



Identification of learning points

- ✓ Are the learning points clearly defined and linked back to the significant incidents within the review?
- ✓ Have you identified where action has already been taken to address the identified learning points, where appropriate?



Recommendations

- ✓ Are the recommendation(s) clearly aligned to the learning identified within the review?
- ✓ Have you ensured that recommendation(s) are outcome-based and adhere to the SMART criteria, where this information is available to you?
- ✓ Have you completed the action plan template in full?



Getting learning back into the system

- ✓ Where this information is known, have you clearly identified who holds ownership for implementation of the recommendation(s)?
- ✓ Have you clearly recorded the IMR request and completion date, including providing a clear rationale for any delays in the process?
- ✓ Have you linked in with your force's vulnerability and public protection strategy?

3. Useful resources

The below resources may further support you in ensuring the IMRs you produce are of the highest quality:

1. An appropriate language guide, produced by the Hydrant Programme: [Appropriate-Language-Guide-Final-English.pdf](#)
2. An example IMR template included within the draft DHR statutory guidance (Annex D): [Draft domestic homicide review statutory guidance \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#)
3. Resources developed by Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse: [Resources - AAFDA](#)
4. 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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