



Call Grades and Deployment Policy (785/2020)

Abstract

This policy details the Sussex Police call grade criteria and how the deployment of resources.

Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 The Force Contact, Command and Control Department (FCCCD) is responsible for the deployment of resources to reported incidents. This policy applies to all police officers and police staff that receive and respond to calls from the public and sets in place guidance for the correct grading of an incident and for the deployment of appropriate resources. Adherence to this policy and subsequent procedures ensures the correct grading and appropriate response to incidents reported to police.

Any subsequent deployment of resources will be in accordance of the National Contact Management Strategy, the Response Deployment Plan and the Force Contact, Command and Control Deployment Memorandum of Understanding (FCCCD MoU)

2. Scope

2.1 This policy details the four levels of grading that can be assigned to contact for assistance received from the public together with the appropriate deployment of resources and the level of service the public should expect from the Force.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Sussex Police will ensure, to the best of its ability, that it will grade calls effectively, in line with the grading process outlined in this policy.

Compliance with this policy is mandatory.

Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 This document describes the different grading levels that can be associated with any call for police service and provides a guideline to influence and to assist the call handler and controller.

In the application of this policy staff are reminded of the need to comply with the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS), National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR) and standards and principles of the Code of Ethics.

1.2 The FCCCD own this policy and are responsible for the grading of calls, the risk management prior to deployment and the initial deployment of resources.

1.3 Divisional and departmental personnel are responsible for maximising their availability to respond to calls.

1.4 The determination of whether a contact is an emergency or non-emergency will be made from the information and intelligence available and not by the way in which police are contacted. In other words, the public's perception of an emergency is subjective and the police will not assume that the selection of a particular route of contact is determinate of the level of risk posed.

1.5 Any contact will only qualify as an 'emergency' where at least one of the criteria set out in section 6.1 is satisfied.

2. General Principles

2.1 First Contact

- 999 emergency calls are routed directly through to a national telephone exchange into FCCCD. All other calls are routed through to the force non telephony system.
- 101 Non-emergency calls are routed through to the Initial Triage Hub (ITH) who shall attempt to resolve the problem of the caller at the first point of contact where at all possible. This may be achieved by determining whether the person they wish to speak to is available, transfer to an appropriate department, providing advice or sign-posting the caller to another agency.
- If the ITH is unable to resolve the call, the call will be routed to the PCC.
- The PCC, upon receipt of a 999 or 101 call, will conduct a T.H.R.I.V.E risk assessment (See 3.2) and a decision will be made as to whether a STORM log needs to be created and whether the deployment of resources is required. If a STORM log is required it will be graded in accordance with the T.H.R.I.V.E risk assessment.

2.2 Non-Voice Contact

Non-voice contacts are routed directly to PCC. Upon receipt of Non-voice contact such as Web Forms, Emails or Text Messages, the PCC will create a STORM log and conduct a T.H.R.I.V.E risk assessment (See 3.2). A decision will then be made on grading and whether deployment is required.

3. Making Grading Decisions

3.1 The National Decision Model (NDM)

The NDM will be used in the application of this policy and provides a framework in which decisions can be examined and challenged, both at the time of the decision being made as the information develops. The aim of the NDM is to assist officers and staff in making operational decisions based upon national and organisation values and professional judgement. For further guidance staff should refer to NDM.

3.2 T.H.R.I.V.E. Principles

When using the NDM call takers must use the T.H.R.I.V.E. principles (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement) to ensure that they use the information available to make informed decisions. T.H.R.I.V.E. sits within the "Assess threat / risk and develop a working strategy" element within the NDM.

3.3 T.H.R.I.V.E. principles identify key considerations for evaluating any given situation:

- Threat – A threat is communicated or perceived intent to inflict harm or loss on another person
- Harm – is to do or cause harm
- Risk – is the likelihood of an event occurring
- Investigation – the act or process of examining a crime, problem or situation and considering what action is required
- Vulnerability – is defined for the purpose of the incident management as "a person is vulnerable if as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care or protect themselves, or others, from harm or exploitation".

- Engagement – is where organisations and individuals build a positive relationship for the benefit of all parties

- Prevention and Intervention – is identifying opportunities to prevent further incidents occurring or a worsening threat, risk or harm and allocating the most appropriate resource to intervene.

3.4 Where a STORM incident is created it will be graded in accordance with the level of Threat, Harm, Risk and/or Vulnerability and prioritised in conjunction response grades (See 5.1).

3.5 Every incident requires a T.H.R.I.V.E. update placed on to the STORM incident by the call handler.

3.6 The call handler will record any contact in accordance with NSIR and the NCRS.

4. Command and Control

4.1 FCCCD will take initial Command and Control of all incidents, unless, due to the severity, type or nature of the incident, it is necessary for the Force Incident Manager or other suitably placed unit to take initial command.

4.2 Passing of command to a Divisional specialist or better placed unit will only take place when deemed necessary and in accordance with the FCCCD MoU and Authorised Professional Practice (APP) Principles of Command.

4.3 Request by another Force or Emergency Service for Sussex Police attendance at an incident.

Where another force or emergency service passes a request for attendance to Sussex Police, the call handler will conduct a T.H.R.I.V.E assessment and make a grading decision based upon the principles contained within this policy. If the T.H.R.I.V.E and /or grading decision differs from that of the initiating force/emergency service then the PCC supervisor will make the overarching grading decision.

Decisions must be documented on STORM.

5. Call Grades

5.1 The national call grades and definitions are required to support consistency and comparability between forces. If a STORM incident is created, once a T.H.R.I.V.E. assessment has been conducted, it will be graded as either an emergency or a non-emergency as below:

5.2 There are four types of call grades:

Emergency Contact

- Grade 1 – Emergency Response. Immediate police attendance

Non-Emergency Contact

- Grade 2 – Priority Response. Earliest practicable attendance

- Grade 3 – Scheduled Response. Planned police response - By appointment either at a police station or by a police constable, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), or police investigator, attending at an agreed time or via Resolution Centre remote resolution.

- Grade 4 – Resolution without Deployment. No further police action, information only or duplicate call or police generated activity which does not require the controller to actively seek a unit for deployment.

6. Emergency Contact

6.1 Grade 1 – Emergency Response

An emergency contact will result in an immediate emergency police response.

A Grade 1 Emergency Response is where an incident is reported to the police which is taking place and there is, or is likely to be, a risk of:

- Danger to life.
- Use or immediate threat of use, of violence.
- Serious injury to a person and/or serious damage to property.
- A crime is, or is likely to be, serious and in progress.
- An offender for a crime has just been disturbed at the scene of the crime.
- An offender for a crime has been detained and poses, or is likely to pose, a risk to other people.
- A Road Traffic Collision (RTC) involves or is likely to involve serious personal injury, the road is blocked or there is a dangerous or excessive build-up of traffic.
- The circumstances are such that a police call handler, following a T.H.R.I.V.E. assessment, has strong and objective reasons for believing that the incident should be classified as requiring a Grade 1 Emergency Response.

7. Non-Emergency Contact

7.1 Grade 2 – Priority Response

This describes a priority response which acknowledges that there is a degree of importance or urgency associated with initial police action, but an emergency response is NOT required. These typically arise in the circumstances where:

- There is a genuine concern for somebody's safety.
- An offender has been detained.
- A witness may leave the scene or other evidence is likely to be lost.
- At a road collision, there are injuries or a serious obstruction.
- A person involved is suffering from distress or is otherwise deemed to be vulnerable or there is concern for the person's wellbeing.
- Local Force policy mandates a priority response at, for example, a report of domestic incident, sudden death or missing person where such local/Force priorities exist and affects grading.
- Hate crime or Anti-Social Behaviour where such a crime or incident is a local policing priority AND affects grading.

8. Grade 3 – Scheduled

8.1 In these circumstances it is accepted that the needs of the caller can be met through scheduling because:

- Using T.H.R.I.V.E the call handler is satisfied that a planned deployment is appropriate.
- The matter is service-orientated and a better quality of initial police action can be taken if it is dealt with by either a pre-arranged police response or by other appropriate resource or attendance at police premises or by the Resolution Centre.

9. Grade 4 - Resolution without Deployment

9.1 There is a Low T.H.R.I.V.E risk.

Resolution without deployment applies when the Force meets the needs of the caller by such means as telephone advice or Helpdesk, access to a database of frequently asked questions, the involvement of another or more appropriate agency or service or through any other relevant means, or a crime is fully investigated and filed at source without the need to deploy other resources.

This will include where the caller is a member of staff carrying out an activity which requires the creation of an Incident log but not one which requires a controller to actively seek a unit for deployment; In other words where the staff member has effectively assigned themselves. Typically, this will be where no other units are required to assist.

10. Resources

10.1 The FCCCD MoU emphasis is to deploy the nearest, most appropriate unit to an incident. It is recognised that often Response will be the most appropriate unit to attend, however based on skills required and their availability, the following departments may be required to attend incidents.

- Response (Grade 1 to 3)
- Prevention (Grade 1 to 3)
- Investigations (Grade 1 to 3)
- Operations Department (Grade 1 to 3)
- Safeguarding Investigation Unit (SIU) (Grade 2 & 3)
- Resolution Centre (Grade 3)
- PCC staff and Police Enquiry Officers (PEOs) (Grade 3 & 4)

11. Administration

11.1 Grade 1 and 2

- Talk group controllers.
- PCC who would link with the appropriate talk group controllers for action.
- For deployment/investigation will fall to the above units

11.2 Grade 3

- Talk Group controllers
- PCC who would transfer to the above units

11.3 Grade 4

- PCC staff and PEOs

12. Service Standards

12.1 Incidents will not be downgraded because we are unable to resource effectively in an appropriate time scale. The reason for the failure to resource appropriately, in a timely fashion will be noted on STORM.

12.2 Grade 1

- Primary call on 999 answered within 10 seconds (National Target).

- If immediate deployment is deemed appropriate, unit assignment will occur as soon as possible. Callers will be told this is an emergency incident and that police arrival will be as soon as possible.

12.3 Grade 2

- Callers will be told this is a priority incident and be informed that police arrival will be as soon as practicable.

12.4 Grade 3

- Callers will be told that this is a scheduled response incident. Wherever possible, they will be told the relevant department that will be managing the incident or the details of the Officer in the Case (OIC).
- Call takers will always seek to record 3 telephone numbers from callers; home, work, personal mobile and email.

12.5 Grade 4

- Are for information only. A police officer, Investigator or PCSO is not required to attend.

13. Driver Behaviour

13.1 Please refer to Force policies

- Driver Permit Groups and Driving of Police Vehicles (Surrey and Sussex) (616)
- Pursuit Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (617)
- Police Vehicles Detected by Enforcement Cameras (1076)

13.2 Police drivers will be entrusted to drive at the most appropriate speed, using the vehicle equipment (lights and audible warning) at their disposal to ensure an effective deployment based on T.H.R.I.V.E.

14. Performance Monitoring

14.1 The Force will no longer set target times for Grade 1 and 2 calls. Target times do not take in to account factors such as the T.H.R.I.V.E assessment, caller availability, geography, road conditions, time of day and specialist skills. Target times can also create unintended outcomes, for example, having a negative impact on service to the public or driver behaviour.

14.2 Attendance and assign performance will be monitored through FCCCD audit processes and FCCCD PEEL board. Force wide review and scrutiny will be through the Local Policing Accountability Board (LPAB) and the Response Working Group, response times will be monitored and action taken where performance moves outside of the agreed tolerances.

Team: Force Contact, Command and Control Department (FCCCD)