



# Missing you already

## A guide to the investigation of missing persons

*Charlie Hedges*



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## **Police research group**

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## Foreword

Almost every time I read a report about those that go missing, I know that somewhere in the text I will find statistics that show that the overwhelming majority of those that go missing will return safely. It is meant to be reassuring. In reality, the fact that it is done is an index of the anxiety felt by every family over the well-being of their partner, brother, sister or child in a world that is perceived to be increasingly unsafe.

For police officers the statistics are equally problematic. How do you know which is the important case to focus upon? How do you guard against the complacency that the statistics inevitably imbue? The answer is to understand more. To understand the circumstances in which people go missing and to understand the processes that enable these cases to be handled effectively.

This report by Sergeant Charlie Hedges from Thames Valley Police contributes to our understanding. It explores the concept of risk as a means of making sense of how the police service should respond to missing person cases. It applies some basic investigative principles and makes some practical recommendations about how things might be improved. Accompanied by a simple 'Guide for Officers', this research helps in a practical way to improve the police response to missing persons.

Anybody involved in a case of a person going missing is deeply touched by the experience. We owe it to them to learn from that trauma and to use that knowledge to reduce the risks to others. As the officer charged with taking the lead for the police service in the development of missing person policy, I shall learn from the lessons that the report offers and I shall seek to incorporate them into the way we work.

**Commander Richard Bryan**

*Association of Chief Police Officers' lead on Missing Persons*

## Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are given to those police forces, which co-operated in the data gathering process and in particular to individuals within those forces who gave their time in helping to guide me towards the sources of information I needed. Chuck Burton, the manager of the CATCHEM database, gave me an early insight into what could be achieved and some of the difficulties. I am also most grateful to Geoff Newiss formerly of the Police and Reducing Crime Unit at the Home Office with his common sense approach to research that was of great assistance to a novice researcher like myself.

Without the assistance of the staff who administer the award scheme, I would have had difficulty in bringing this research to a satisfactory conclusion and delivering it in a proper form.

Particular thanks are owed to Thames Valley Police for allowing me the time and giving me the flexibility to undertake this project.

I should like to express my gratitude to those families, with whom I had personal contact, whose pain and suffering in coming to terms with a loved one going missing and sometimes not returning, was the catalyst for this research. Hopefully their suffering can in some way be mitigated if this work helps to improve procedures for the future.

Charlie Hedges.

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Missing Persons enquiries are a feature of policing activity that occur many times in every day. The vast majority of people return after a reasonably short period of time and, on the surface, do not appear to have suffered any great harm. There are some who suffer dreadful harm whilst they are missing and some of these are headline news for a time.

There is no national uniform method of dealing with these enquiries: police forces have different policies, responses, recording methods etc. This leads to a varied level and style of response throughout the country. Currently there is a drive to achieve a more consistent, standardised approach to Missing Persons nationally. Various pieces of research are underway and some reports have been published, including the ACPO Manual of Guidance.

With greater demands for efficiency and measurability, performance indicators are now commonplace. Missing Persons do not feature in these and therefore the time taken to investigate them detracts from the time available to tackle problems which do attract performance indicators. This can be seen as detrimental to a police forces performance.

It is imperative that the least possible number of mistakes are made when investigating reports of missing persons and this research seeks to help that process.

## Method

This research has looked at Missing Person reports from a variety of forces throughout the UK to gather information about the individuals who go missing, the circumstances in which they go and those of their return. The forces from which data were gathered were selected to give a representative sample of demographic areas and geographic location. The methods used to carry out investigations, how they are recorded, what has gone well and what has gone badly have also been examined.

## Problems with Recording of Information

The research quickly revealed the diversity of formats used to record information relating to missing person investigations. They ranged from a single sheet of paper to comprehensive booklets and a variety of IT based solutions. The quality of the information recorded was also as varied as the formats. In many cases it was impossible to gather the data required such was their varying quality. A national standard is required.

## **Risk Assessment**

With the large number of missing person reports that have to be dealt with a risk assessment process is needed:

- a. To identify those that demand a higher level of response
- b. Through prioritisation to manage the missing persons cases workload effectively

It was hoped that the data collection would validate a numerical weighting applied to risk factors but the problems experienced precluded this. However it has been possible to draw up guidance based on good practice which should assist with improving performance. There is more scope for research into the factors relative to assessing risk.

## **Missing Person Investigations**

The way in which investigations are conducted varies throughout the UK and there are areas that are clearly important and should be reflected in policies and procedures:

- Raising the level of importance given to missing persons.
- Reviewing the amount of training given, based on the premise that every missing person report is the first notification of a major crime.
- Ensuring adequate levels of supervision by Sergeants and Inspectors to direct the investigation.
- More clarity as to who 'owns' the investigation.
- Having a properly structured review process.
- Giving more attention to family liaison and support.
- Ensuring that any search is properly managed and recorded.
- Treating sightings of missing persons with caution so as not to generate false leads in the investigation.

## **Prostitution**

Prostitution involving young people is a particular area of concern. This can come to light through effective management of the intelligence that can be gleaned from missing person's reports and the interviews conducted upon their return. A case history is used to illustrate this point, which makes use of working in partnership with other agencies and police tactics that disrupt criminal activity and thereby make it more difficult for the perpetrators to commit the offences.

## Issues Relating to those in Care

### Protocols

These were recommended by the report 'Lost in Care'<sup>1</sup> which followed the investigation into institutionalised abuse in care homes. Many protocols have been set up but this research has identified improvements that could be made to make them more effective:

<sup>1</sup> Waterhouse R, Clough M, LeFleming M (1999) *Lost in Care*. House of Commons Paper 201

- They should not be a management document created to fulfil a requirement of the report.
- They need to be written so that they become a practitioners guide to correct procedure.
- They should define responsibilities.
- Early risk assessment should be promoted.
- A strategy for dealing with those who go missing frequently should be provided.
- Joint agency training should support the protocol.
- There must be good liaison between the relevant agencies.

### A sub-culture in society

With the increasing number of young people who have been in care and attained the age of 16 years, who are then housed within the community, a sub-culture has been formed. These young people make informal networks amongst themselves and often provide a safe haven for young runaways. It is possible to move around these 'networks', finding shelter when away from home. This gives an explanation as to how young people can disappear for long periods at a time and survive.

### Conclusion

The investigation of missing persons is a difficult area of police work and potentially one that can cause significant problems for those who are left behind and for the police if they do not conduct the enquiry in a satisfactory manner. Clearly there is a greater awareness of the need to get it right first time and much work in being done on the subject. However, awareness of the potential risks must be highlighted and proper procedures remain to be implemented.

Apart from this report, there are two products of this research. The first being an officer's guide to dealing with missing persons, giving pointers towards good practice. This will be a complementary document to the ACPO Manual of Guidance appendix that deals with management of the investigation. The second is a pocket size memo card containing key points.



## Recommendations

- There is a need for a more standardised approach to missing persons nationally in terms of:
  - A national reporting form.
  - Information Technology that is compatible across different forces.
  - Greater reporting to the Police National Missing Persons Bureau.
  - Standardisation of risk assessments.
- This research identified a problem with the standard of information recording in relation to these investigations and this should be improved.
- There is a need for a review of training as this will not only provide greater skills but will heighten awareness of the importance of the subject.
- Forces should review the protocols that they have in place with other agencies and determine if they are a working document or if they are there solely to satisfy a management need.
- This subject needs fully integrated joint agency working to be fully effective to deal with the following issues:
  - Respond to and try to prevent repeat missing behaviour.
  - Identify where there is abuse, prostitution etc. and work together to deal with the problem.
  - Manage interviews of those returning to develop understanding of the underlying problems.
  - To make a proper assessment of the risk to the missing person.
- Forces should ensure that they have correct procedures in place in relation to:
  - Ownership of missing person investigations.
  - A structured management and review process.
  - Gathering of intelligence from missing reports and interviews.
  - Proper management and recording of search activities.
  - How to give support to families of those that have gone missing.
- There is scope for further research to understand the behaviour of missing persons and to examine the potential for guiding investigations.
- Research is also needed to develop a risk assessment model that is statistically based.

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## 1. Introduction

### Background

The performance of the modern police service is subject to scrutiny more than ever before. Government sets objectives and each force is expected to meet its targets, which are open to public scrutiny. Chief officer's are measured on their performance and how well they meet these targets. As missing person enquiries do not feature in these performance indicators, any time spent investigating them and resources used for the purpose, detract from the ability to be successful in terms of performance expectations. It must be recognised that the considerable amount of time spent investigating missing persons is valuable but not measurable under the current system.

Reports of missing persons made to police officers is an activity which occurs many times every day and, in the vast majority of cases, the investigations are successfully resolved in that the missing person is found. The large number of these reports presents a difficulty for the police, in that they consume a considerable amount of time when there are many other competing demands. This can easily lead to a state of mind in which missing persons are of low importance and do not need to be taken seriously. When a young child, or some other person who displays obvious vulnerability, goes missing, police offices will immediately throw their considerable energies into finding that person.

One of the difficulties in getting the correct response to a missing person report is that there are cases where the individual is at great risk but this is not obvious from the information obtained when taking the initial report. This problem is compounded by lack of guidance to police officers on what is good practice in dealing with these cases. Learning is largely 'on the job' and there are no manuals to which to refer.

It is all too easy to fall into the trap of dismissing missing persons as a time consuming, low priority area of policing. This, however, ignores the fact that every missing person report is potentially the first notification of a murder, abduction or other serious offence. It also ignores the human suffering that is caused by a loved one's unexplained absence or the personal traumas that have caused the individual to go missing.

Missing persons span all age ranges, sexes, social classes and geographical areas. Every year several thousand people are reported as missing, the vast majority of whom return, apparently unharmed. Whilst this is sometimes done for selfish reasons, missing behaviour is often indicative of other underlying problems that are not always immediately obvious. This type of behaviour can lead to a variety of consequences both for the missing person and those left behind.

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The degree of harm that missing persons suffer varies enormously. It can range from simple difficulties of reintegration into the family and social scene, to exposure to drugs, prostitution, serious injury and death. The harm and distress to friends and relatives is also something that should not be overlooked.

This indicates that there is a need to look beneath the surface and determine the degree of risk to that individual. In some cases, it is obvious because, for example, the individual's behaviour prior to going missing has been clearly unusual, or they have taken a quantity of tablets and left a suicide note. At the other extreme, they disappear without explanation and there is no one who can give any indication of what has led up to this moment. How 'at risk' are juveniles who regularly go missing? By their age and emotional state resulting from family circumstances, it is likely that they are an extremely high risk, but proportionally, for the many times they go missing, how many suffer actual harm? The majority of cases come and go regularly with no apparent signs of having suffered harm. What is hard to quantify is the long-term psychological harm they may suffer as a result of being adrift without normal parental guidance and protection.

The term 'streetwise' is often applied to young persons and in the context of those who regularly go missing and can be a misleading description. Certain young persons give the impression of being capable of looking after themselves as well as an adult could and, clearly, some are more mature than others. It is unlikely, however, that they will possess all of the life skills necessary to be as capable of looking after themselves as well as they and others perceive them to be able to do.

Dealing with these reports requires input in a variety of different areas from the initial enquiries through family liaison, investigation and search. When there is a successful outcome and the person is found, work is still required to try to ensure that there is no repetition of the same behaviour. There is a great need for a partnership approach with all agencies to seek solutions to this behaviour and to try to prevent its recurrence, especially in the case of those who go missing regularly.

It cannot be stated too strongly that there is a need to conduct the initial investigation properly. It is hard to make up lost ground when things have gone wrong and recognition of the fact that the individual is in danger has come late in the day.

It is the awareness of all these factors that has led to this research being undertaken. There are important lessons to be learnt in the investigation of missing persons and great strides are being taken towards this and it is hoped that this report will help in this process by providing a guide to best practice.

## **Aims and Intentions**

The above factors were the driving force behind this research and have led to the belief that the two most important areas of missing person investigation are:

1. How to identify those that are most at risk.

If it is possible to identify high-risk cases, then police resources can be used in the most effective and efficient manner. It is not making the best use of time and resources to treat every case as high priority as there are simply too many missing person reports to be able to do this. Some form of filter is required to prioritise the reports.

2. How to define patterns of behaviour to assist in guiding investigations.

This is based on a belief that as there are so many instances of persons going missing, there must be some common factors in what they do, where they go etc. If these commonalities can be established, they can then be used to help guide future investigations.

Other issues to be looked at in the course of the research originally conceived as being:

- Good practice already in place.
- Methods of recording.
- Use of Information Technology.

As the research progressed a variety of other relevant matters arose and the report has been expanded to include those subject areas.

## **Methodology**

A number of forces were asked to send a sample of routine cases, plus up to three where the outcome indicated some harm had befallen the missing person. This was not done with any set criteria to obtain a controlled sample, as the information was not to be analysed. The purpose of this exercise was to gain an insight into some of the recording styles and principals applied to investigation in different forces.

The next stage was to do some detailed research against set criteria. A standard set of questions (Appendix I) was devised covering personal details of the missing person, circumstances of going missing, circumstances of return and information about any harm they suffered whilst away. A grid of dates (Appendix J) was drawn



## INTRODUCTION

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up representing an even spread over the days of the week and weeks of a year. The sample year selected was 1999, as this was the last complete year available. The intention was to gather data from 500 missing person reports made during that year.

These grids were then taken to police forces in the UK and the questions posed for all missing person reports in those forces on the dates on the grid. The forces were selected<sup>1</sup> to give a good demographic range and a balanced variety of force size. Although a grid was drawn up to give some constancy in the data gathered, the gathering was still of a random nature with no set criteria. This data was to be used to determine risk factors and to establish trends and patterns of behaviour.

<sup>1</sup> Forces selected were Thames Valley, Sussex, Metropolitan Police service, Greater Manchester, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Bedfordshire and Devon and Cornwall

Whilst conducting this data collection, attention was also paid to the style of recording information in relation to what questions the forms posed and how well they were completed. Consideration was also given to how the investigations were conducted, especially those that became more significant. This information has been used to establish the areas of good practice. The research has meant that contact has been made with many other people who have an interest and expertise in missing person's cases and their knowledge has been drawn upon to assist in the compilation of this report.

Another source of material for this report was data gathered by other organisations, which are reproduced here to illustrate various points, with grateful thanks to those people who contributed. Those whose contributions have been used are acknowledged where those data are reproduced in this report.

### **Difficulties with the Methodology**

Although the objectives were clear, there were a number of difficulties in achieving them due to the following factors:

Information not available due to

- i. Poor completion of missing person forms
- ii. Design of the forms and type of information requested; and

Quality of information not being of an adequate standard upon which to base statistical research.

As will be shown in this report, the way in which some of the missing person report forms are designed does not help to direct the investigation. They seem to have been designed with the intention of gathering basic information about the missing

person without any clear thought about the needs of the investigation. Chapter 2 looks at the data which were gathered and illustrates some places where requests for more information would give assistance to the direction of the investigation. What became clear was the need for a national form or reporting standard.

### **Outcomes**

It will now be apparent that some of the original objectives of this research could not be achieved, nevertheless, much was accomplished in consequence of doing this work.

What then are the outcomes of this work?

- Identification of some of the problems, resulting in suggestions as to how to resolve them.
- An officer's guide to investigating missing person reports.
- Attempting to create a greater awareness of the problems associated with missing persons.
- An analysis of risk assessment and suggestions about how best to use them.

Full recommendations are made in the appropriate sections of the report.



## 2. Missing Person Data

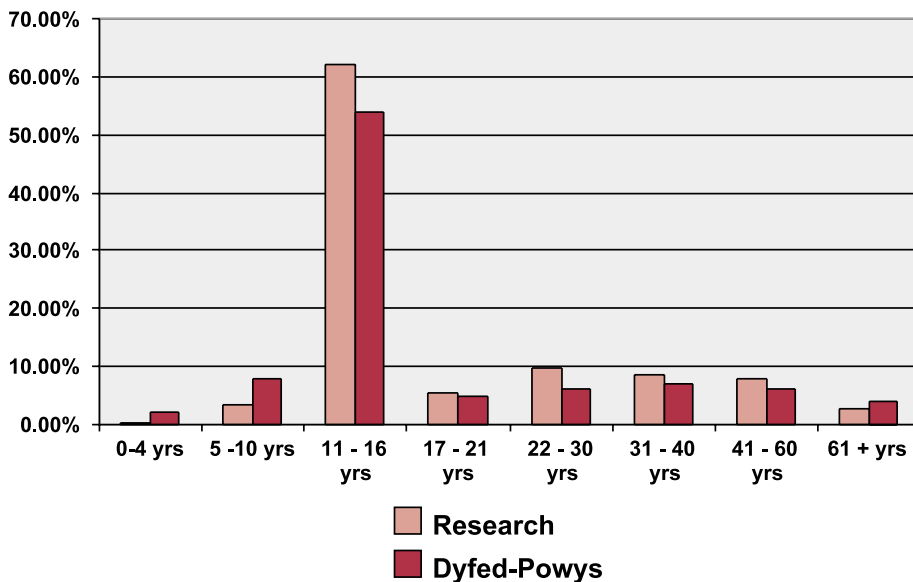
### Considerations About Comparison of Data

Despite the difficulties outlined in the Introduction some of the data gathered are reproduced here as they are considered sufficiently relevant and useful. It gives a useful insight into missing persons that can be considered by those who are charged with conducting the investigations. It must be emphasised that it would be wrong to be prescriptive in directing enquiries based upon these data.

This set of data is based on 255 reports, which it is accepted is not a large sample for analysis. But it can be used as an indication of behaviour. It is compared with a much larger data set (1680 cases) gathered by Dyfed-Powys Police. The purpose of this comparison is to indicate the close similarities between that data set and the much smaller one gathered for this project. It is hoped that this will add greater validity to the smaller set and justify its worth. The graph below compares the data collected from this research against that collected by Dyfed-Powys.

The data are shown in table format below, then the individual categories are explored in more depth on subsequent pages.

**Figure 1:**  
**Comparison of research data and that from Dyfed-Powys**



## MISSING PERSON DATA

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### Age Data Relating to this Project

Age Categories	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
0-4 Years Old	1	0	1	0.4 %
5-10 Years Old	2	7	9	3.5 %
11-16 Years Old	73	84	157	62 %
17-21 Years Old	7	7	14	5.5 %
22-30 Years Old	13	12	25	9.8 %
31-40 Years Old	14	8	22	8.6 %
41-60 Years Old	10	10	20	7.8 %
61+ Years Old	5	2	7	2.7 %

### Dyfed-Powys

This police force carried out some research on missing persons over a two year period and came up with the results below.

- From January 1997 to December 1999 there were 1680 missing person cases in Dyfed-Powys.
- 46% of missing persons in the Force area were female and 54% were male.
- The largest age group that went missing each year were the 11 to 16 year olds.
- More males go missing in every age group apart from this group, where 53% missing persons in this category are female.

### Breakdown Of Age Categories Force Wide (Dyfed-Powys):

Age Categories	Number	Percentage
0-4 Years Old:	33	2%
5-10 Years Old	129	8%
11-16 Years Old	904	54%
17-21 Years Old	86	5%
22-30 Years Old	93	6%
31-40 Years Old	114	7%
41-60 Years Old	105	6%
61+ Years Old	64	4%
Not Known	152	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1680</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Data From Missing Person Reports

n = 255

<b>Sex</b>			<b>Location of last sighting</b>		
Male	125	49%	Home	86	34%
Female	130	51%	School	10	4%
<b>Ethnic Origin</b>			Care Establishment	67	26%
Not known	13	5%	Hospital	31	12%
White European	206	81%	Other	38	15%
Afro-Caribbean	20	8%	Unknown	23	9%
Asian	10	4%	<b>Transportation</b>		
Other	6	2%	Pedestrian	64	25%
<b>Marital Status</b>			Pedal cycle	4	2%
Married/Co-habit	26	10%	Bus	4	2%
Single	185	73%	Train	3	1%
Divorce/separated	5	2%	Taxi	2	1%
Unknown	39	15%	Own transport, not pedal cycle	12	4%
<b>Occupation</b>			Given lift	8	3%
School	103	41%	Unknown	158	62%
Truanted/Excluded	19	7%	<b>Activity at last sighting*</b>		
Employed	20	8%	Working	0	n/a
Unemployed	56	22%	Journey	72	n/a
Unknown	57	22%	School	18	n/a
<b>Reportee relationship</b>			Playing	3	n/a
Parent	80	31%	Entertainment	8	n/a
Carer	126	49%	Holiday	2	n/a
Spouse	16	5%	Visiting friend	9	n/a
Other friend/relative	27	10%	Unknown	82	n/a
Unknown	16	22%	<b>Circumstances of leaving</b>		
<b>Accommodation</b>			Indication of premeditation	13	5%
Home	119	47%	Went with other misper	33	12%
Care Establishment	92	36%	Went out with other person	27	11%
Hospital	34	13%	Argument/dispute	55	22%
Other	8	3%	Note left	9	3%
Unknown	2	1%	Went out by arrangement	50	20%
Other	2	1%	Unknown	66	26%

\* Total does not total 255 as more than one category was relevant in some cases

MISSING PERSON DATA

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**Data From Missing Person Reports cont'd**

<b>Came to harm</b>			<b>Circumstances whilst away*</b>		
Suicide	1	1%	Stayed with friend		74
Injured	2	1%	Slept rough		16
Murder/rape/abduction	0	0	Stayed in Hotel		4
Other crime	1	1%	With person/at location known from original information		32
Other	5	2%	Went to location – no known connections		13
No harm recorded	246	95%	Went to place previously lived/frequented		5
<b>How returned</b>			Met up with other misper		6
Own accord	129	51%	Met up with friend/acquaintance		11
Found by family	18	7%	Involved in prostitution		1
Found by police	64	25%	Other		13
Arrested	11	4%	Unknown		95
Other	11	4%			
Unknown	22	9%			

\* Total exceeds 255 as more than one category was relevant to some cases

## **Discussions of Individual Data Categories**

Most of the information in the preceding tables is self explanatory. Some of the categories are discussed below to highlight some of the issues.

### **Age**

The sample taken divides almost equally into 49% male and 51% female. Analysis of the age ranges shows that the largest number (62%) of missing persons fall within the 11-16 age range.

### **Marital Status**

The vast majority, 185, were single; this mainly being relevant to the age of the missing persons. 26 were married or co-habiting and in 39 cases the marital status was not known. The 'not known' figure was mainly due to those persons being reported by the staff of a hospital, although they were in long-term care rather than Accident and Emergency or day care. Hospitals included those catering for mental problems which is where the vast majority of reports in this category came from.

### **Occupation**

103 reports were of schoolchildren with occasional mention of them being excluded or truanting. It was hoped that more information about truanting and exclusion would be available to give some useful behavioural indicators. 20 people were employed, 55 unemployed and it was not possible to ascertain what the occupational status of 58 of the sample was.

### **Previous Incidents of Going Missing**

It was hoped that this would provide some useful information, but it is impossible to determine with any accuracy just how many times each person has been missing before. I have not included any data about this in the report.

### **Accommodation**

The majority of persons reported were living at home (119) with 92 in care and 34 in hospital. When cross-referencing the figures relating to the relationship of the person reporting someone missing from their home address with those mentioned above, there appears to be a discrepancy. This is caused by missing from home reports being made by friends and relatives.



### **Circumstances of Going Missing**

Looking at just the main categories, 55 left after having an argument or dispute, 50 went by arrangement and failed to return at the expected time and 60 went with another person.

### **Activity at Last Sighting**

This relates to what the person was doing immediately prior to going missing. The recorded information was rather sketchy in this regard and again in the majority of cases (82) no information was recorded and in 67 cases the widely defined category of 'domestic activities' was the closest but there was no more definition of what they were actually doing. The number recorded as being on a journey (72) appears to conflict with the information above about the means of transport, but this is explained by a mixture of transport being used on some occasions.

### **Circumstances of Return**

One half returned of their own accord, with the remainder being found by police (25%), arrested (4%), found by family (7%), or other circumstances. This tends to support the general impression of many people, that missing persons will go and return as they see fit, coming to little harm on the way. However, there is an argument that this is not the case.

From the information gathered in this research some conclusions can be drawn with regard to the exposure harm whilst missing. Apart from the direct question about suffering harm (9), the following categories suggest that some harm did befall a number of other cases. 11 were arrested, one became involved in prostitution and slept rough. In 95 cases there was no information as to whether the circumstances surrounding their being missing were potentially harmful. If these 95 are excluded in order to deal with those with a known outcome, this leaves 23% that suffered harm.

These figures tend to negate the argument that missing persons will go and return and do not require any particular concern. They also call into question the perceived wisdom that only an extremely small number suffer any harm. It should also be considered that the very fact of being away from home having run away may also be harmful.

## The Missing Information

The omissions that have been discovered in this research relate to information about:

- Illness
- Marital status
- Occupation
- Occupation
- Truancy from school
- Previous occasions reported missing
- Circumstances of going missing
- Transportation used by or available to the misper
- Activity at time of last sighting
- Circumstances whilst away

## Summary

Despite the stated concerns about the low number of reports sampled, it seemed worthwhile to report the data as it illustrates a number of areas of concern.

- It indicates that the perceived wisdom of assuming that missing behaviour is not harmful is incorrect.
- The number of examples above of there being no information recorded is alarming, as this type of information is fundamental to any investigation.
- The way in which the report form is designed will help or hinder the taking of information.
- The right questions should be posed on any reporting form, also being an aide memoir to guide the investigation and questioning.

## MISSING PERSON DATA

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### Reports of Found Bodies made to the Police National Missing Persons Bureau. January 1998 – June 1999

The following data were provided by the Bureau and gives an interesting comparison between the cause of death for males and females. It indicates a greater likelihood of males who have disappeared being found dead. These are the reports of unidentified bodies.

Category	Male	Female
Jumped/fell in front of trains	66	12
Jumped/fell from bridges	4	0
Jumped/fell from buildings	3	0
Jumped/fell other	12	1
Hanging	11	2
Traffic Accident	13	1
Found in sea or beach/drowning	62	17
Murdered	12	2
Babies found dead	1	0
Other	60	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>42</b>

### 3. Risk Assessment

#### What is Risk Assessment?

Risk assessment is the means of providing a standardised method of determining the degree of risk to which a missing person is likely to be exposed whilst they are missing. It should contain information specific to the circumstances of going missing and that of their normal lives that may be a contributory factor.

Many thousands of persons are reported missing every year and only a very small percentage of these come to any significant harm, e.g., murder, rape, abduction etc. It could then be argued that that the investigation of these cases wastes a large amount of police time. However, the chance that any one of these could come to harm means that care must be taken over the initial report and investigation to evaluate the seriousness of the report. This 'cry wolf' situation makes it hard to sustain the required level of commitment, especially when dealing with similar circumstances on a daily basis. It is all too easy to miss those that are at immediate risk of harm.

What is needed is a form of risk assessment that allows the person taking the report to make an evaluation of the risk to which the individual is exposed. Furthermore, the assessment standard should be uniform across the UK, thus enabling everyone to immediately understand the significance of each report. This is particularly important when dealing with cases that cross police boundaries.

Apart from assessing the risk to which a person is exposed, an assessment will indicate which priority grading response the police should give to the enquiry. Not only will this ensure that those at risk will be investigated quickly and thoroughly but it will also reduce the chances of excessive resources and effort being committed to an enquiry that does not warrant it.

#### Categorisation of Missing Persons

Traditionally, missing persons have been graded as vulnerable or non-vulnerable. This system only placed individuals into broad groups and did not cater for the individual circumstances that would make one person more vulnerable than another, this fine-tuning being left to an officer's judgement. As there have not been any guidelines upon which to make this judgement, it could be coloured by prejudice, other commitments, time available, level of experience of the officer and many other factors.

### **Factors that Determine the Assessment of Risk**

When commencing an investigation there are three elements that need to be considered when determining the degree of harm the person is likely to experience.

- Those relating to the missing person.
- The circumstances surrounding the person reporting the disappearance.
- Factors relative to any third party.

Clearly the personal circumstances of the missing person are relevant and directly relate to the reason for their going missing. These reasons may be obvious, an argument (this research indicates 55 % of the sample had an argument before leaving), subject of crime, lost, etc. The circumstances may also be a complete mystery because the behaviour is out of character (in a very high proportion of cases where the person has suffered harm, this has been identified at the initial reporting stage), it could also be that there has been a misunderstanding and the missing person is unaware of the concern being expressed for them.

The person reporting may choose not to reveal all of the relevant information or distort the facts as they are involved in the person's disappearance. There have been many instances of the reporting person being responsible for the death of the person they are reporting missing. It is important then to keep an open mind at this stage and look for corroborating evidence to support the circumstances as they are related.

It cannot be emphasised enough that one of the most significant factors in determining risk is when the behaviour is out of character. This can sometimes be a double-edged sword as the person reporting may consider the behaviour out of character as there is a part of the person's life they do not know about. What is being described out of character must be looked at very carefully and an understanding gained of why it is so described. Numerous reports where the circumstances have resulted in serious harm or death of the missing person have not been recognised at an early stage due to a failure to take the concerns seriously.

Bullying is currently a significant factor in young people committing suicide and when taking reports of people of that age going missing this is an important question to ask. Any indication that this may be the case should be treated with due concern and further enquiries made of school friends etc.

### **Difficulties with Some Current Risk Assessment Formats**

One of the leaders in the field of risk assessment has been the Metropolitan Police Service who, in response to concern over an enquiry that failed to properly identify a missing person who was at risk and was in fact a murder victim, determined to find a method of assessing risk.

There not being any other means readily available, a group of people with relevant experience and interest came together to pool their experiences and identify some factors that would indicate risk. This resulted in a matrix, which lists a number of factors, each of which has a numerical grading according to its perceived value. The person completing then totals the numbers which then indicates a high, medium or low risk by numerical value within set bands.

This was introduced across the Metropolitan Police Area and used for a number of years. Many other forces also adopted it across the country as they have also recognised the need for a means of assessing risk. There was however a flaw in the system, in that it was not grounded in any research and was simply the opinion of people, albeit with a great deal of relevant experience. It must be said that the system, whilst not perfect, was an extremely good response to a problem that needed a solution. In its favour, the matrix has a tendency to show too many false positives, i.e., too many high risk. However, the risk of a failing to assess a case properly and miss a high risk, bearing in mind the prescriptive nature of a numerical system, was determined to be too great.

Recognising this problem, the Metropolitan Police asked for an independent evaluation of the matrix, the result of which confirmed the concerns about its validity. It was also stated in the evaluation that there was no means of obtaining the relevant statistics upon which to base a new matrix. It was just before the independent evaluation of the matrix system that the research for this project was started with one of the main aims being to develop a risk assessment system.

These difficulties mean that the matrix with numeric grading can no longer be regarded as satisfactory or safe for the purpose. ACPO has recommended that the system should not be used. There is still a need for a system of assessing risk and it is the recommendation of this report and ACPO that a suitable measure is to have a 'decision making guide'. The ACPO Manual of Guidance lists a number of headings (APPENDIX A) that are considered relevant for evaluation when determining risk. The format in which these are used is to be left a matter for individual users to decide. Further discussion about the most appropriate format to be used is contained in the latter part of this chapter.

### **Revised Risk Grading Categories**

The national missing persons committee that has been responsible for producing the ACPO Manual of Guidance has also suggested that a more appropriate grading system is that of low, medium and high risk. This system is defined thus:

#### **Low Risk**

There is no apparent threat of danger to either the subject or the public.

Other than initial checks with local hospitals, it will not require any level of proactive involvement by police.

#### **Medium Risk**

The risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others.

It requires some level of pro-activity by police and other agencies.

#### **High Risk**

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through their own vulnerability or mental state OR

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger through the subject's mental state.

It will require the immediate deployment of police resources and a member of the BCU senior management team or similar command level to be involved in press/media strategy and/or close contact with outside agencies.

## The Development of a New Risk Assessment Format

This report will propose a format for the use of the headings contained within the ACPO Manual of Guidance. In order for the guide to be effective, some questions need to be answered:

- Who will be making the evaluation?
- At what point of the investigation will it be used?
- How will it be done?

In any case where there is risk to the individual, speed is of the essence in getting the investigation under way. When a child is abducted and killed, this is most likely to be done within 6 hours of being taken<sup>1</sup>. This then indicates that there is a need to make an assessment at the earliest stage.

<sup>1</sup> Information from the 'CATCHEM' database, developed in Derbyshire Constabulary for the analysis of child murders

- Where will the initial report be made?

In the vast majority of cases this report will be made by telephone to a police station, either by public line or the '999' system.

- Who will take the call?

In all probability it will be taken in a control room or call-handling centre, most probably by a civilian employee or possibly by a police officer. The points for consideration here are:

- i. The report will not be made face to face.
  - ii. There will not be the time for an in depth investigation of all the circumstances.
  - iii. The call taker may or may not have the skills and experience to uncover the pertinent facts.
- The next stage of the investigation will almost certainly entail an officer visiting the informant and competing relevant details for a missing person report. Again, points for consideration are:
    - i. This time, the report will be taken face to face.
    - ii. How experienced is the officer?
    - iii. More information will be available to enable an evaluation of the situation.
    - iv. More time will be available to make that evaluation.



### **Considerations in Relation to Risk Assessing Those in Care**

References in this section to 'being in care', 'care homes' etc should be read in the broadest sense and include children's homes, hospitals for residential care, facilities for the elderly and disabled (physical and mental) and placements with carers in their own homes.

It is now common practice in many areas when reporting missing persons from care for staff to complete a report and fax it to the police station. This has its attendant risks but can be managed to become an effective means of reporting. The considerations are:

- i. Experience shows that details on the report are often scant.
- ii. The person completing the report is unlikely to have had any training.
- iii. Who receives the report at the police station?
- iv. Is a proper search made of the premises?
- v. What clues are being overlooked?
- vi. What systems are in place to ensure that any child abuse is detected?
- vii. Is this reporting method being abused as means of reducing an officer's workload?

The relationship between the police and the staff of care homes is an important one and can be a very effective tool in the safeguarding of those who are in their care and for whom they have a responsibility. Assessment of risk is very relevant in this case and similar principles apply to care staff as to police when assessing risk.

Individuals in care generally have greater vulnerabilities that cause them to go missing than the rest of the population, as evidenced by the high proportion of reports from these locations. This higher risk of needing to make a report to police suggests the need for some evaluation of the individual to be carried out as soon as they are admitted to care. This can then provide the basis for an assessment of risk if they do go missing. It is likely that careful preliminary work can make any investigation into the subsequent whereabouts of the person easier and quicker to resolve.

It follows therefore that the initial assessment should rest with the staff of the care establishment, then reassessed on receipt at the police station. Consideration must be given to the reasons for the person going missing and historic instances of child abuse etc must not be forgotten. It is all too easy to label those who go missing from such places as time wasters and at low risk.

On arrival at an establishment, each person should be assessed and that assessment recorded as a reference document in case they go missing.

There are also other issues about the relationship as mentioned above and these will be dealt with in Chapter 7.

### **The Process**

All of the preceding points indicate that a two-stage assessment process is needed. Firstly, a simple set of questions with yes/no answers that will quickly give an indication of risk and which can be asked over the telephone. Secondly, a more comprehensive and in depth questionnaire to be used in a face to face interview at the time that the missing person report is completed. Both formats provide a guide to the questions to be asked and reminds the investigator of the relevant points.

### **The First Stage Assessment**

This consists of simple questions that can be asked by anyone regardless of role and experience. They can be asked over the telephone and there is no need to train the user in order to get the appropriate results. It will also provide a means of ensuring that important questions are not overlooked. Any questions with a 'yes' answer will indicate a high risk and demand a speedy response from the police. A suggested format containing the relevant questions is at Appendix B. Non-police bodies that have a responsibility for persons who may go missing can also use this format.

### **The Second Stage Assessment**

This is for the officer taking the missing person report to complete as a more comprehensive assessment. There will be more time to do this, more information will be available and it is essential that it be done personally with the informant. This will give structure to the questioning of the informant, will be an aide memoir to experienced officers and give guidance to those who are less experienced. It must be kept in mind that sources other than the initial informant, e.g. friends, relatives neighbours etc, must be considered when completing the assessment. Also, the evaluation of risk is a dynamic process and must be reviewed throughout the progress of the investigation and risk may increase or decrease. It is important that

the format is different between the two assessments, as the second stage is a re-evaluation of the circumstances in more depth. An example of a second stage format can be found at Appendix C.

Currently, there is no recognised form of training in risk assessing missing persons and it is recommended that there should be training in this area to ensure that assessments are done correctly and uniformly. As part of this research, an officer's guide to the investigation of missing persons will be published and this includes a section on the interpretation of risk assessment criteria in the recommended format. If the same standard were adopted across the country, there would be an immediate recognition of the degree of risk, knowing that the same tests had been applied.

With greater use of IT systems to record missing person enquiries there is now the potential to gather accurate data upon which to base a sound numerical matrix. It is a simple matter to write the programme in such a way that it captures the relevant data. Appendix D contains a résumé of some of the software that is currently available and that which is in the development stage.

### **Urgency Analysis**

Another form of risk assessment that is used is the 'urgency analysis'. This has been used for many years by Mountain Rescue Teams in order to assist them in determining how urgent the need is for them to respond to a lost person. It is more focussed on the individual and their ability to survive in the conditions than the broader assessment to be used when taking a missing person report. An example is given at APPENDIX E.

## 4. Investigations: Problems and Solutions

Missing persons enquiries are not always dealt with as effectively as they might be and are not given the degree of importance that they deserve. There are a number of reasons for this and the purpose of this chapter is to examine these and to consider the underlying causes.

### Attitudes

There is a perception that missing persons are of low importance in the overall scheme of policing problems and there may be some justification for this. A report of someone going missing does not grab the attention in the same way as a robbery, a burglary or some other crime in progress. The evidence does tend to support this, in that the victims of these attention-grabbing crimes inevitably suffer some form of quantifiable harm that is obvious to all. In the vast majority of missing person enquiries there is no indication of any harm being suffered. That is not to say that the individuals do not suffer harm and distress but it is less easily observed and not often expressed by the victims. The sheer number of these reports, where the person goes missing and returns some time later having caused an amount of time and effort to be expended in trying to locate them, supports the theory that the whole business is a waste of time. This is compounded by the large number of young people who go missing from institutions on a regular basis, some of them doing this many times during any given week.

All of these factors combine to create an attitude of mind that impedes the recognition of the risk of harm that is attached to this type of enquiry. This then means that there is a greater risk of a low priority being attached to the incident and a lack of investigation into the circumstances.

There are a number of factors that can help in improving attitudes. This involves the correct messages being sent out at the highest level. Officers taking missing persons reports need to be reassured that these investigations are of high importance. Policies must be written to convey the proper procedures and ensure that a structured approach is applied. Training and the use of risk assessments, which are dealt with elsewhere, also play an important part in ensuring that the reports receive the correct level of attention.

### **Training**

There is only a relatively small training input given to Probationary Constables in a busy training programme. This is currently being reassessed and progress is being made towards evaluating training needs, with consideration of the content of the developing ACPO Manual of Guidance on Missing Persons. It is important that the link is made between a missing person enquiry and its potential evolution into a major crime investigation.

Training also needs to be focussed on supervisors, especially at the time when they are, or are about to be promoted. This should reinforce the initial training given during probation and update knowledge with the latest advances.

A low emphasis on training lowers the expectations of it being a subject of any great significance or importance in the workplace.

There are shortly to be published two documents that will assist the investigators. One is part of this project and is intended as an easy reference guide for operational officers. The second will be the investigator's guide published as an appendix to the ACPO Manual of Guidance and will be more strategic. It must be emphasised that the two publications are complementary and have the same basis in fact.

### **Documentation**

The quality of reporting forms across the country spans a wide range. The simplest being a single A4 sheet, with others extending to a comprehensive booklet. IT systems are becoming more widespread. There are certain basic details that are recorded in all cases i.e. name, age, description of missing person, there then tends to be disparity in the other details. The quality of the information varies greatly and how well the form is completed seems to depend upon the importance that the officer affords the enquiry. I would suggest that greater use could be made of tick box options to remind officers of which questions to ask and to cut down on the amount of free text that they have to complete. This would also aid the gathering of statistical data. It is hoped that there will be a standard format throughout the UK but at this time it does seem to be a long way off.

Should the enquiry be more serious than a standard enquiry, the basic information form is inadequate. There needs to be much more background detail, personal history and circumstances. This is important when considering the factors that have caused the person to go missing and information upon which to base a search. This information would have to be obtained from a more detailed interview of the informant and any other persons who are in possession of relevant information.

Included at Appendix 'F' is a format that is an amalgam of forms used around the UK, incorporating the best features of all.

What is fairly consistent is the continuing enquiries log, which usually comprises a series of columns on an A4 sheet, or page of a booklet for the officer to list actions, enquiries and the results. Policy decisions and case reviews are also mixed with these enquiries. Unfortunately this style makes reviewing the case unnecessarily difficult. It is hard to follow the progress of the enquiry and to elicit the relevant information. It is also hard to keep track of which enquiries are complete and those that are outstanding.

I would suggest that the most effective way of maintaining an accurate record of the enquiries would be one based on a booklet with one page per action, similar to the action log used in most major incident rooms. Attached at Appendix 'G' is a sample page from such a book as used in Milton Keynes. This allows space for each action and its result. Case reviews and policy decisions can also be recorded here. If combined with an index sheet, it is a simple matter to find each action and identify which have not been completed.

### **Management of the Investigation**

If the investigation is not properly managed there is little chance of it being investigated thoroughly. Chapter 5 deals with the stages of an investigation in some detail.



## 5. Management of the Investigation

### Some Basic Concepts

The initial assessment of the seriousness of the missing person report is crucial and determines the quality of the investigation. The 'golden hour' in a murder investigation is recognised as being of vital importance and this must not be forgotten, bearing in mind that many murder investigations are first received as missing person reports.

Equally important is the quality of the supervision. Sergeants and Inspectors must recognise the importance of missing persons and give adequate support to their officers. Also, where necessary, they must intervene to upgrade the importance it is being given. The supervisor is the quality controller of the report, supporting or changing the importance as necessary.

Continual case reviews are essential and should take place at least daily. It is recommended that a structured review system be implemented for all cases, with regular, scheduled review meetings for high profile cases as per major crime investigations. It will generally be the duty Inspector who has responsibility for missing persons and should actively seek to ensure that all appropriate measures are taken.

### Structure

It is essential that there is a proper structure in place to manage missing person investigations and it should be constructed in such a way as to be applicable to all types of enquiry and levels of risk but with the ability to take on a higher or lower level of investigation and ownership according to the seriousness of the case.

### Method of Recording

Traditionally this has been done on paper but there is a growing trend towards the use of computers. There is information about some of the computer systems in use and under development in this country contained in Appendix D. In whatever form the information is recorded, it must be done in a logical, easy to read format that prompts the investigator to ask the appropriate questions and present the information in such a way as to make it easy to extract (see other references to this subject elsewhere in this report).

### Assessment of Risk

It is essential that the initial assessment of the circumstances is correct and a suggested format to guide this can be found in chapter 3 of this report.



### Supervision and Ownership

This is most important to ensure that all of the necessary actions are being undertaken throughout the enquiry. Active supervision will ensure that nothing is missed and appropriate resources are applied at the correct level. This supervision should be applied in accordance with the seriousness of the case in order that the organisation takes the right level of responsibility.

Some of the problems found when scrutinising missing person reports during the research are as follows:

- Current missing person enquiry reports can be hard to find, having been left on desks or elsewhere around the police station. This makes it very difficult to action new enquiries or respond to calls from relatives etc.
- Reports not being checked by a supervisor, sometimes for a number of days.
- Lack of clarity among supervisors as to whose responsibility it is to oversee the enquiry.
- Difficulty in getting assistance from CID, when the enquiry is of a more serious nature.
- No one person owning the enquiry leading to duplication of some enquiries and others not being done.

Ownership is linked to supervision and all investigations should have ownership. This can take various forms and currently is done in different ways around the country. The most basic forms of ownership revolve around the taking of the initial report and it is incumbent on those doing so to start the enquiry effectively by taking the correct information and assessing the risk factors. Having passed through this stage, with proper supervision from the Sergeant and/or Inspector, a medium term ownership strategy is required.

Some forces have a help desk or similar facility and they have ownership or an oversight of the reports. In other areas the ownership rests with the duty Inspector or Sergeant. There is considerable merit in a crossover of responsibilities between these two positions. If the reports are kept within the help desk but ownership is with the duty Inspector this can give the best level of input. The Inspector will be responsible for the enquiry and have an interest in ensuring that all appropriate action is being taken. The help desk will retain the report and carry out such work as can be done by telephone and requesting other resources to carry out those

enquiries that need to be done personally. This will also reduce some of the workload of the patrolling officers. What must be avoided is any tendency for the ownership to slip between the two, resulting in nobody taking responsibility.

Some forces have missing person co-ordinators or individuals tasked to oversee the missing persons investigations. This imposes another layer of checks above the help desk and duty Inspector to ensure that nothing is missed. There is also a benefit in having someone who sees the majority of reports as it is then easy to pick up trends and patterns, as in any other form of intelligence led policing.

### **Reviews**

The review process varies, ranging from being very structured with high-ranking supervisory input to a minimal structure. What this report seeks to portray is basic level of review procedures that can be adapted to local needs.

The review process is an ongoing one and is essential to quality assure the work that is being done, identify what is required and to place the responsibility for the investigation where it belongs. It must be recognised that senior management within the police service have to take the appropriate level of responsibility in missing person enquiries. The need for supervisor reviews is well documented already in this report. The next stage is for a CID supervisor, preferably a detective inspector, to review the enquiry giving the benefit of their investigative expertise. Various time limits are set upon this, but 48 hours after the first report is a good benchmark, thus allowing initial enquiries to be carried out without the report getting too old. This does not preclude the need for an immediate review if the case is thought to be a serious one. Further review periods should be set as appropriate. The National Intelligence Model provides for a daily and weekly forum, which is ideal for reviewing high risk missing persons. These meetings can also allocate resources to the investigation as appropriate.

The next level of review is with a Superintendent. It is the recommendation of this report, that in serious cases it is essential that daily reviews be carried out. These should be chaired by a Superintendent and attended by appropriate representatives, e.g. CID, search manager, etc. This is a similar format to that of a major incident room and is an appropriate forum for reviewing progress and setting actions.

### **Family Liaison**

This research has shown that regular contact with the family is not a feature of many missing person enquiries. It is not recognised that this is an important activity and is neglected.

As has been outlined in other reports, particularly the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, it is imperative that adequate family liaison is provided in relevant cases. The distress caused by a loved one going missing and the uncertainty of not knowing what has happened to them cannot be underestimated. Clearly it is not possible to provide a trained family liaison officer for every missing person case but the basic principles should be followed. Regular, preferably daily, contact should be maintained with relatives etc, even if it is by telephone. They should also be provided with the relevant information about how to make contact at the police station, either with an individual or by having a computer reference number for any officer to access the details. Some police forces are now producing a card or sheet of paper containing contact details, information about how the police will conduct the enquiry and other agencies that are able to give support.

Another benefit of regular contact is that it will often bring to light information about the missing person not previously mentioned, often assisting with the enquiry.

### **Return Interviews**

These can reveal valuable information about the reasons for going missing, where the missing person has been, with whom they have been and what they have been doing. However, this is not to say that the process is an easy one as in many cases the missing person will refuse to cooperate.

It has been shown in some police forces that an effective return interview process considerably reduces the incidence of repeat missing behaviour. As a simple guide, where an individual or group go missing on a regular basis, it will be of benefit to use the same one or two officers to conduct all the return interviews and thereby build a relationship and hopefully trust. This should be linked to the recommendations in the section on care institutions below.

It is likely to be of benefit to use non-police organisations to conduct these interviews as this will overcome the mistrust of police that may exist. If there is any suggestion of sexual offences etc, child protection officers should be involved in the interviews.

It must also be borne in mind that sometimes the reason for running away is to escape abuse by a family member or carer. If the interview is conducted in their presence, the aggrieved in the offence is unlikely to reveal this and we will simply have returned him/her to the place of abuse.

### Search

Problems encountered in this area usually relate to:

- Not starting the search early enough – the later it is started, the further the person can have travelled.
- No proper management or planning of the search.
- Failure to document which areas have been searched.
- No evaluation of the effectiveness of the search in a particular area.
- Incorrect use and reliance on specialist resources – a helicopter search can be useful but will not solve all problems.
- Overlooking the need to search some areas more than once, as the person could be moving around.
- Reliance on other people saying that they have searched somewhere without verifying the integrity of that search.

Search can often be an integral part of a missing person investigation and must be properly managed and documented. The search needs to be overseen by someone with adequate qualifications, either a Police Search Advisor (PoSA) or a search manager. There must also be an exchange of information between the search and investigation elements of the enquiry. The daily briefing forum is an ideal tool for this purpose, but can be done less formally with smaller scale enquiries.

There is a role here for volunteer search teams. Teams that are properly trained and organised can search an area efficiently and effectively, reducing the impact on police resources. The existence of Mountain Rescue Teams is well known and is complemented by Lowland Search Teams that operate on identical principles. These groups are affiliated to the Mountain Rescue Council (MRC) and the Association of Lowland Search and Rescue (ALSAR) respectively.

The use of members of the public for searching must be done with the greatest caution. It is very tempting to make a media appeal for assistance in a search for a high profile missing person. However, the following factors must be considered:

**Health and Safety** – this becomes the responsibility of the police. It is likely that people will arrive without proper equipment or training.

**Management** – a large number of people will require a large number of resources to supervise and guide them. Large numbers of people arriving at a search base has caused severe problems for the professionals involved trying to get to the scene, thus hampering their work. Thought must be given to how to manage a large number of people and their vehicles.

**Safeguarding evidence** – untrained individuals may not recognise the significance of articles that are in the search area and may damage or destroy vital evidence.

**Trauma** – it is possible that searchers will come across things that are unpleasant and this may cause distress and this is another potential problem.

More detailed guidance on how searches should be managed can be found in the ‘Officers Guide to Missing Persons Investigations’ (published in conjunction with this report).

### Sightings

The investigation is likely to generate sightings of the missing person. These may come from reports in the media or as a result of an appeal for witnesses. Any such sightings should be treated with the greatest caution bearing in mind the problems related to identification. Any sightings should be correctly evaluated and ideally a statement should be obtained from the witness. The principals of the stated case, *R-v-Turnbull*<sup>1</sup> (relating to lighting, distance away from the witness, if known to the witness etc), should be applied in order to validate the information being given.

It is unwise to issue any statement to the media indicating that there has been a confirmed sighting of the individual unless that sighting is incontrovertible. In one particular case the investigators received over 100 sightings of a missing person including one after he was dead and the offender was in custody but not charged. This caused considerable difficulties for the investigators.

It is important to remember that some people will have their own reasons for wanting to make a report of a sighting to police and these people may appear to be totally genuine. Some people genuinely want to help and are over zealous, others do it for their own self-importance and some are honestly mistaken.

When a number of sighting reports are received, it is sensible to plot these on a map, and then clusters of sightings may provide corroboration and a starting point for a search or further enquiries.

<sup>1</sup> *R-v-Turnbull & Camel*.  
House of Lords [1976]  
63CRAppR132

### **DNA**

In any case of a high risk missing person it may be prudent to obtain and preserve an item that could be analysed for a DNA sample should it be needed for any later identification. Clearly this should be obtained with some tact, as the implication is that the investigators do not hold out much hope of finding the person alive, when in fact it is a sensible precaution against any such occurrence.

### **Personal Computers**

Another line of enquiry that should not be overlooked is that relating to any information that may be on the missing person's computer. With the increasing use of the Internet, it is possible that contact had been made with other persons, which may have some bearing on the person's disappearance. It is not suggested that the computer should be seized in every case, but it is a possibility that should be borne in mind. In any case where this is to be done, it should be done in accordance with correct forensic principles, in order to preserve any evidence should this be necessary.

### **Police National Missing Persons Bureau**

Based at New Scotland Yard, this is intended to be the definitive database of missing persons and unidentified bodies. Under reporting by police nationally means that this does not meet its intentions. Forces should report all missing persons to the Bureau after they have been missing for 14 days or sooner if there is a particular cause for concern.

### **National Missing Persons Helpline**

This charitable organisation can be a great asset in the investigation. They have contacts with groups that can be hard to reach by the police and often receive information that may not otherwise come to light. This information is used in the strictest confidence and only for the benefit of the missing person. They have advertising sources that can get very wide ranging publicity. A support service to relatives is available that can be of help when someone is missing with all of the attendant uncertainties.

The 'message home' telephone service offers missing persons the opportunity to contact the helpline, who will in turn inform the family that the person is alive and well. The person's whereabouts will not be disclosed against their wishes. A three way conferencing facility is also available to re-establish contact between the parties.

Further facilities that are available are:

- A large database of missing person records nationally.
- Age progression experts who can show what a person probably looks like after a number of years have elapsed.
- Research projects relating to missing persons.
- Pilot projects to evaluate support systems.
- Investigation of missing persons that do not fall within the remit of the police to investigate.

This is an invaluable organisation that is of great benefit to the police, missing persons and their relatives.

## 6. Prostitution

### Introduction

Prostitution is a name that, in most people, is likely to generate ideas of 'tarts', 'pimps' and street vice. It should be borne in mind however that what occurs is wider than this stereotypical definition. It is probably better to consider the problem as that of sexual exploitation; taking advantage of vulnerable individuals for these purposes. It is apparent from the stories of those involved that they do not recognise what they are becoming involved in as prostitution.

This Chapter is not intended to be a definitive guide to dealing with prostitution. There are a number of other documents, based upon research and good practice, which are available. The subject arose as an incidental issue to the main research and it was considered too important to omit. What is discussed in this report is a fairly simplistic view of the subject, but nonetheless effective as an interim measure.

### The Problem

It is clear that throughout this country young men and women are being lured into prostitution and a number of these are reported as missing. Initially, these young people are often lured into the company of older men and sometimes women by being offered a lifestyle that they would not normally be able to aspire to at their age. The 'boyfriend' who has all the trappings of a standard of living that boys of their own age could not aspire to and the maturity that they crave at that age becomes an attractive figure. Initial sexual adventures, 'swapping' sex for lifts in cars or material goods then favours for friends, followed by full-scale prostitution. It is very hard to persuade these young people of the dangers of such relationships and divert them away from unsuitable liaisons before it is too late. It is, however, essential those efforts are made to make them aware as the consequences can have a ruinous effect on the individual's life and future prospects.

### Intelligence

Monitoring of missing person reports in order to gather intelligence is an essential task. As can be seen from the research results in this document, information about the activities of persons whilst they are missing is often sparse. It is often the case that they will not reveal to police where they have been and what they have been doing. If the reports are monitored, it is possible to detect trends and patterns. Many of the references in this chapter relate to prostitution but can equally apply to other criminal activity.



### **Good Practice Example**

A good example of this is illustrated by events that happened in Milton Keynes. Here the reports were monitored and the same names and addresses were repeatedly found in the course of enquiries into missing persons, particularly teenage girls. This was identified by police officers who then made contact with the local children's services department of social services and it was apparent that they were aware of a similar pattern. All of the relevant agencies met, the information was pooled and a more complete picture was compiled. This showed that about 95% of all teenage girls reported missing in that area and at that time were linked to prostitution. Further enquiries were made and finally a central figure was identified as being the 'pimp' or organiser of these activities. It was then possible to take action to deal with the situation.

The enquiry was considered a success, as there were no subsequent indications of this type of activity continuing. The measures used are described below and may be of use to others. They do not tackle the problem in terms of gaining convictions against the instigators but this is notoriously difficult to do. In this instance the activity was brought to a halt fairly quickly and thus reduced the potential for further risk to young girls.

### **SOLUTIONS USED**

#### **Social Services**

Good links were forged with children's services through the regular meetings that were held. It was determined that two systems were needed. Firstly, there should be a defined point of contact within the local police station where information could be passed. Often snippets of information will come to light and without a designated point of contact, the information will seem too trivial to pass on. It is especially beneficial if the individuals know each other and can talk about the issues informally. Secondly, more formal meetings are required to discuss the latest information and determine joint strategies.

#### **Schools**

Useful information can be gleaned from schools, and teachers should be alerted to the warning signs, e.g. older boys or men collecting from the school gates, patterns of absence, etc. Again, what may seem to be a trivial piece of information can be an important part of a bigger picture and a recognised point of contact is useful. It is useful to have a forum for sharing information amongst relevant individuals within schools in an area.

## Education

This is an important part of prevention and attempts should be made to make vulnerable groups aware of the potential dangers. This is not an easy course to take, but should be pursued. Unfortunately the target age group have a tendency to think that they are sufficiently worldly wise to deal with anything and do not welcome advice from adults. Also the methodology employed by those who entice them into prostitution is to offer presents for being their 'friend'. It can seem very glamorous to have the attentions of an older person who may have a car and money to burn. Once they are caught in this friendship other people are introduced for sexual favours and a downward spiral starts. It is also the case that young people who have got involved in this type of activity are used to recruit their friends and acquaintances.

## Return interviews

Normally a police officer will conduct the interview when the missing person returns and more often than not will be a complete stranger. This is obviously not conducive to the person revealing information that may be very personal to them. It is important that where this type of activity is suspected a different type of interview should take place. It is vital to build trust and it may be better that this is done by employing both police and social services to form a joint interview team by using trained family protection officers. Other ways may be found including restorative methods.

## Disruption

It is sometimes important to look beyond the obvious solutions to this sort of problem and seek to disrupt the activity. Securing prosecutions for prostitution can sometimes be difficult bearing in mind the need to persuade the victims to give evidence. The use of threats and actual violence are common and make it very hard to persuade the victims to give evidence. These problems are not insurmountable and there are established methods of overcoming them in the larger metropolitan forces in this country, e.g. The Clubs and Vice Unit in the Metropolitan Police.

What is described here is not particularly sophisticated but it did work. Clearly there is a need for a range of agencies to be involved in combating problems of this type and further guidance can be found in the publication, "Sexual Exploitation of Children", by the City of Nottingham Child Protection Committee.



## 7. Issues Relating to those in Care

### 7.1 Protocols

#### Background

*Lost in Care* – the report of the Waterhouse Tribunal of Inquiry into the abuse of children in care in the former county council areas of Clwyd and Gwynedd made 72 recommendations relating to measures to be taken to prevent the occurrence of similar incidents. The Government's response to this, *Learning the Lessons*, gave strong advice on the implementation of these recommendations. Recommendations 15, 16 and 17 specifically relate to the police and were discussed and agreed by ACPO. The advice on recommendations 16 and 17 reiterates the guidance contained in *Missing from Care: Procedures and Practices in Caring for Missing Children, ACPO/LGA (1998)*. This suggests that police forces and social services develop locally agreed joint protocols for responding to a child's absence.

As a result of this recommendation, a variety of different styles of Protocols or Service Level Agreements as they are sometimes known, have been drawn up. In the course of this research it has become obvious that it is easy to comply with the spirit of the recommendations, there is sometimes more to be considered to get the full practical effect.

For protocols to be fully effective, they have to be working documents that are relevant to the practitioners and useable by them. The wording and layout must be done in such a way as to be a practical guide to the requirements of the protocol as well as a record of agreement between the two organisations. If it is a working document that lives in the practitioner's offices and is regarded as a useful reference tool, its precepts are more likely to be adhered to. It should also be supported by other measures which are good working practices for the benefit of the cared for person. Let us first consider the reasons for having the agreements.

#### Reasons for Having A Protocol

Various reports, including those mentioned above, have identified the need for agencies to work together for the benefit of the child. It is particularly important that the front line strategies of the police and social services come together to achieve an effective response to problems. I would like to pull these ideas together and restate the recommendations in a format that can be applied to missing person policy.

The three relevant recommendations are repeated here in full:

- (15) A log of all incidents, disturbances, reports, complaints and absconsions at a children's home should be kept at an appropriate nearby police station and made accessible, when required, to officers of the Social Services Department.*
  
- (16) Police officers should be reminded periodically that an absconder from a residential care or foster home may have been motivated to abscond by abuse in the home. They should be advised that, when apprehended, an absconder should be encouraged to explain his reasons for absconding and that the absconder should not automatically be returned to the home from which he absconded without consultation with his field social worker.*
  
- (17) It should be a rule of practice that any absconsion should be reported as soon as possible to the absconder's field social worker and that the absconder should be seen on his return by that social worker or by another appropriate person who is independent of the home.*

It is extremely difficult to obtain a proper balance between taking adequate steps to safeguard those absent from care and not wasting large amounts of time in pursuing unnecessary enquiries. This difficulty was recognised and acknowledged in the 1993 Home Office review of Police Core and Ancillary Tasks. It was stated that it would always be a responsibility of the police to pursue cases of missing persons where the circumstances were suspicious or the person vulnerable. However, reporting procedures meant that nearly all of those that did not return by a specified time were reported missing to the police.

It is essential that both sides recognise the difficulties of the situation and come together to ensure that proper procedures are in place to ensure that as far as possible all sides of the problem are properly addressed. Carers must assess each situation correctly and take due responsibility for the situation. It is not right that they should simply 'pass the buck' by reporting the person missing. Nor is it right that the police should ignore or give low importance to reports of persons in care on the basis that they are 'always going missing' a nuisance or not at risk because they are 'streetwise'. By working together, the needs of the missing person can be catered for whilst not creating unnecessary work.

## The Protocol

This forms the basis of proper working practices and should be written in such a way as to be easily read and understood by all. There is no real value in having a lengthy document written in an official or legalistic style that nobody can understand. It should be user friendly to permit quick reference to relevant points for help and guidance. Practitioners should find it easy to understand, practical and relevant.

The agreement should define responsibilities and provide for an effective means of risk assessment in order that when the report of a missing person is delivered to the police, they will immediately understand the importance of each report.

Clearly when someone is in care they are unlikely to react to situations in the same way as if they were living in a normal, stable environment, for example with their family around them (not to say that families always provide such an environment). They tend to be less communicative about their true feelings, less co-operative and potentially less well understood by virtue of the time they have known their carers. All of these factors need to be catered for in any agreement relating to how they are dealt with if they go missing.

When talking to police officers across the country, they have a universal concern over the impact of individuals who repeatedly go missing from care and take up a lot of their time with paperwork and enquiries. It is appropriate to have another category of reporting to the police for these short-term absences and this is 'unauthorised absence'. This can be used when the individual has overstayed the appointed time to return and there are no additional indicators of concern for their welfare. The police are notified and apart from recording the information about the absence, no further action is taken. On many occasions, the person will be found and returned by the police if they are spotted on the streets. It must be remembered that if the absence continues for a longer time or there is information that the risk factor has risen, a full missing person procedure must be started immediately.

The section in Chapter 3, Risk Assessments, should also be read in conjunction with this Chapter to ensure that other factors are fully addressed.

In 'Missing from Care', there is an example of a Protocol originally used in Gloucestershire and is reproduced in a slightly altered form at Appendix H as an example of a suitable document.

### **Training**

For the agreement to work, all parties should be familiar with it and should be appropriately trained. What is also important is that all those who are party to a Service Level Agreement should have an understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. A training input in the format of an interagency forum would be beneficial, allowing each party to talk about their perspective of a missing person situation. A common understanding would then be gained of all the problems and hopefully solutions could be developed. The use of the agreement should be discussed and a full understanding of its use and each party's responsibilities gained.

### **Liaison**

It is most important that there is good liaison between the police and those who care for people in care and in other institutions. There are many benefits to this for the care of the individuals and for better working practices. Good liaison supports and complements the training input and furthers the working relationship thus advancing good practice. It is suggested that this is done by Community Beat Officers or those engaged in similar roles, in order to provide a regular point of contact. If there is more than one such officer, the role will not fail due to the absence of one individual. Not only should this improve relations with the staff but it should also mean that there is a recognised point of contact for the residents and hopefully an improved relationship with them.

### **Warwickshire Liaison Officer**

In 1994 Warwickshire Constabulary in Coventry introduced the use of an officer dedicated to liaising with children's homes by making regular visits and being a point of contact with returning missing persons. The return interviews were done informally and usually away from the home at a place where the child would feel comfortable. In the first year the number of missing person reports dropped by 39%. The following year a small group of young persons who did not respond to this method meant that the improvement was only 28%. In the third year the reduction over years prior to 1994 was 53%, partly assisted by the introduction of a two-tier system of reporting missing persons from local authority homes. The other benefit was that it created a flow of information about crime and prostitution.

Having the same officers as the point of contact also enables a relationship to be built up between them and those that go missing, also not forgetting those who might go missing in the future. Hopefully this should mean that trust is developed on both sides, thus enabling a better exchange of information and an opportunity to do some problem solving.

It is by no means essential and not always desirable, that the person or organisation charged with the responsibility of conducting the return interviews is always the police. They must however be independent of those directly responsible for the person's care, to avoid any difficulties if the carer is the reason for them going missing.

### **7.2 A Sub-Culture in Society**

As a result of investigations carried out in the Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire areas, what could be described as a 'sub-culture' of adolescents was revealed. It is now common practice that there are many young people who have reached the age of 16, having been in care, who are then accommodated in flats and houses on residential estates. What was uncovered by an investigation into a particular missing girl was that many of these young people have established informal links and are willing to provide accommodation to young runaways.

This means that missing persons can effectively disappear for long periods, sometimes not being found for weeks or months. They would stay at one location, or more usually move around different addresses using these informal links. An examination of the information gleaned about the individuals involved also showed that in a large urban area there could be several of these informal links all of which were independent from the others. The missing person would move between addresses by introduction to another part of the link or somehow move to an unrelated link and start again. It was not possible to definitely establish if or how accommodation, food etc was acquired and paid for but it is suspected that criminal activity of one sort or another is involved.

Research around the addresses involved, in most cases revealed the presence of older (typically 25 years+) male, who would be a regular visitor. No allegations were received about the conduct of the male and the general story was that he was just someone who preferred the company of younger girls. However, it is again suspected that criminal activity is linked to these associations.

There is no immediate supervision of these addresses and there is an obvious risk of inappropriate or illegal activity being conducted there.





## 8. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusion

The investigation of missing persons is a difficult area of police work and potentially one that can cause significant problems for those who are left behind and for the police if they do not conduct the enquiry in a satisfactory manner. Clearly there is a greater awareness of the need to get it right first time and much work in being done on the subject. However, awareness of the potential risks must be highlighted and proper procedures remain to be implemented. Some significant short falls have been identified during the course of this research and it is hoped that by doing this further improvements will be made.

Apart from this report, there are two other products from this research. The first is an officer's guide to dealing with missing persons that it is hoped that this will be available to all ranks which have daily issues with missing persons and is intended to give pointers towards good practice. This will be a complementary document to the ACPO Manual of Guidance appendix that deals with management of the investigation. Also available, are pocket size cards that contain key points to remember in the early stages of an investigation.

### Recommendations

- There is a need for a more standardised approach to missing persons nationally in terms of:
  - A national reporting form.
  - Information Technology that is compatible across different forces.
  - Greater reporting to the Police National Missing Persons Bureau.
  - Standardisation of risk assessments.
- This research identified a problem with the standard of information recording in relation to these investigations and this should be improved.
- There is a need for a review of training as this will not only provide greater skills but will heighten awareness of the importance of the subject.
- Forces should review the protocols that they have in place with other agencies and determine if they are a working document or if they are there solely to satisfy a management need.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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- This subject needs fully integrated joint agency working to be fully effective to deal with the following issues:
  - Respond to and try to prevent repeat missing behaviour.
  - Identify where there is abuse, prostitution etc. and work together to deal with the problem.
  - Manage interviews of those returning to develop understanding of the underlying problems.
  - To make a proper assessment of the risk to the missing person.
  
- Forces should ensure that they have correct procedures in place in relation to:
  - Ownership of missing person investigations.
  - A structured management and review process.
  - Gathering of intelligence from missing reports and interviews.
  - Proper management and recording of search activities.
  - How to give support to families of those that have gone missing.
  
- There is scope for further research to understand the behaviour of missing persons and to examine the potential for guiding investigations.
  
- Research is also needed to develop a risk assessment model that is statistically based.

## Acronyms Used In This Report

PolSA	Police Search Advisor
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
MRC	Mountain Rescue Council
ALSAR	Association of Lowland Search and Rescue
CATCHEM	Database of child murders that gives statistical data about these offences and can inform an enquiry
PNMPB	Police National Missing Persons Bureau
BCU	Basic Command Unit
CID	Criminal Investigation Department

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## ACPO Risk Assessment Headings

### Factors that should be considered

#### Part 1: Personal Circumstances

- Age of the person
- On the Child Protection Register
- Needs essential medication or treatment not readily available to them, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, etc.
- Belief that a person may not have the physical ability to interact safely with others or an unknown environment, e.g. amnesia, visually impaired, Down's syndrome etc.
- Mental illness or psychological disorder that may increase risk of harm to themselves or others
- Drug dependency
- Alcohol dependency

#### Part 2: Circumstances of disappearance

- Suspicion of murder
- Suspicion of abduction
- Suspected suicide or self harm
- Involved in violent and/or racial incident or confrontation prior to disappearance
- Out of character e.g. unusual behaviour prior to disappearance, disappeared with no prior indication, etc.
- Inclement weather conditions
- Family/relationship problems or recent/history or family conflict/abuse
- Employment problems
- Financial problems
- School or College problems
- Ongoing victim of bullying or harassment, e.g. racial, sexual, homophobic, etc. or local community concerns
- Previously disappeared AND suffered or was exposed to harm whilst missing
- Other unlisted factor(s) which the officer or supervisor feels should influence the risk assessment
- The person is normally resident in the UK and is believed to have travelled abroad
- The person is normally resident abroad and is believed to have gone missing whilst within the UK
- The person reporting or the family, believe that there are other special factors to be considered
- The validity of the information provided by the person reporting

## Risk Assessment

This checklist is intended to act as a guide to decision making when determining the level of response that is required for each missing person. **If the answer to any of the questions is ‘yes’, the initial risk assessment is HIGH and an immediate response may be required.**

Factor	Yes	No
1. Is there any information that the person is likely to cause self-harm or attempt suicide?		
2. Is the person suspected to be subject of a crime in progress, e.g. abduction?		
3. Is the person under 16 or, if aged between 16 and 18, vulnerable due to other factors, or an elderly or infirm person?		
4. Are there inclement weather conditions that would seriously increase risk to health, especially where the missing person is a child or elderly person?		
5. Does the missing person need essential medication or treatment not readily available to them?		
6. Is the person suffering from any mental or physical illness or psychological disorder?		
7. Do you believe that the person may not have the physical ability to interact safely with others or in an unknown environment e.g. visually impaired, Downs Syndrome?		
8. Has the person been involved in a violent, homophobic and/or racist incident or confrontation immediately prior to disappearance?		
9. Has the person been the subject of bullying?		
10. Previously disappeared AND suffered or was exposed to harm?		
11. Is the behaviour out of character and likely to be an indicator of their being exposed to harm?		

## Risk Assessment

This checklist is intended to act as a guide to decision making when determining the level of response that is required for each missing person. **If the answer to any of the questions in Section 1 is ‘yes’, the initial risk assessment is HIGH and an immediate response may be required.** Any answer ‘yes’ in Section 2 may indicate a medium or low response. It is essential to record details and reasons.

Section One			
Factor	Circumstances -		Include Full Details Of Risk
	Yes	No	
1. Is there any information that the person is likely to cause self-harm or attempt suicide?			Details: Method/weapon
2. Is the person suspected to be subject of a crime in progress, e.g. abduction?			Details including those of suspect/vehicle/time/date of incident
3. Is the person under 16 or, if aged between 16 and 18, vulnerable due to other factors.			Age/Factors
4. Is the person elderly or infirm?			Age /factors
5. Are there inclement weather conditions that would seriously increase risk to health, especially where the missing person is a child or elderly person?			Conditions:



APPENDIX C

Section One (cont.)			
Factor	Yes	No	Circumstances -
6. Does the missing person need essential medication or treatment not readily available to them?			Medication:  GP details:
7. Is the person suffering from any mental or physical illness or psychological disorder?			GP details:  Hospital details:  Details of illness:
None			
Physical injury			
Physical disability			
Depressed			
Alzheimer's			
Other mental illness			
Not known			
8. Do you believe that the person may not have the physical ability to interact safely with others or in an unknown environment e.g. visually impaired, Downs Syndrome?			Details:
9. Has the person been involved in a violent, homophobic and/or racist incident or confrontation immediately prior to disappearance?			Details:
10. Has the person been the subject of bullying?			Details/location:

Section Two		
11. Previously disappeared AND suffered or was exposed to harm?		Details/location:
12. Is the behaviour is out of character and is likely to be an indicator of their being exposed to harm?		Details:
13. Is the person suffering from drug or alcohol dependency?		Details:
14. Are there family/relationship problems?		Details:
15. Employment problems?		Details:
16. Financial problems?		Details:
17. School or College problems?		Details:
18. Is the person normally resident in UK and believed to have gone abroad?		Details:
19. Is the person normally resident abroad and gone missing in the UK?		Details:
20. Are there any other unlisted factors which the officer, the family or the person reporting feels should influence the level at which the risk assessment is weighted?		Details:

**After consideration of all factors, what do you consider that the risk assessment level should be?**

LOW RISK     MEDIUM RISK     HIGH RISK

**Officer completing**

Signed:..... Rank:..... Number:.....

Surname:..... Date:..... Time:.....

*What level of risk does the supervising officer consider appropriate?*

LOW RISK     MEDIUM RISK     HIGH RISK

**Supervising officer**

Signed:..... Rank:..... Number:.....

Surname:..... Date:..... Time:.....

**Risk Assessment is an ongoing process and should be repeated throughout the investigation.**

The levels of risk are defined as follows:

**Low Risk:** - There is no apparent threat of danger to either the subject or the public.

**Medium Risk:** - The risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others. It requires some level of pro-activity by police and other agencies, to clarify the circumstances of disappearance.

**High Risk:** - The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through their own vulnerability or mental state, or there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger through the subject's mental state.

## IT Systems

With the current trend towards the development of software to run missing person enquiry management systems, it seemed appropriate to include brief details of those that came to notice during this research. The list is not exhaustive and does not give a full specification of the systems described. It is merely intended to give the reader an indication of what is being done at present.

It is unfortunate that there is such a diversity of systems, as this once again reduces the potential for having a joined up approach nationally and increases the potential for simple management errors between police forces.

### DEVON AND CORNWALL

- Integral part of the force command and control system
- Classification of an incident as a missing person opens further pages in the system
- Asks questions relevant to this type of incident
- Tasks and subsequent information are recorded within the incident log
- All entries are time and date stamped

### DYFED-POWYS

- Custom-built system developed by the force IT department
- The system won a Beacon Award
- Linked to the force 'STORM' command and control system
- Manages the enquiry as a 'stand alone' system
- Incorporates a risk assessment
- Transfers information to PNC
- Is a searchable database

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE

- Existing system now being replaced by a new commercially developed system
- Stand alone, Intranet based system that fully manages missing person investigations
- Incorporates a risk assessment
- Creates a log of actions and enquiries
- Transfers information to PNC
- Transfers information to National Missing Persons Helpline
- Is a searchable database

## **METROPOLITAN POLICE**

- Existing 'Access' database used for some years in a few Boroughs
- Replacement system 'Merlin', ready in late 2002
- Full management system for the investigation
- Transfers information to PNC
- Searchable database
- Forms part of a wider system for management of:
  - Young persons index
  - Prostitutes caution index

## **SUSSEX**

- Database for recording missing persons
- Searchable
- Transfers information to PNC
- Not an investigation management system, this is paper-based

## **THAMES VALLEY**

- Still under development, ready late 2002
- Stand alone system but linked to Command and Control
- Full investigation management system
- Transfers information to PNC
- Transfers information to Police National Missing Persons Bureau
- Two stage risk assessment process
- Searchable database
- Supervision and review structure built in with timed reminders
- Linked to 'reference database' giving policies and procedures

## **WEST MIDLANDS**

- Using the same system as Gloucestershire

## Search Urgency

**Remember the lower the number the more urgent the response**

Item	Conditions	Value	Score
Age	Very young	1	
	Very old	1	
	Other	2-3	
Health	Known or suspected injury or illness	1-2	
	Healthy	3	
	Known fatality	3	
Number of subjects	One alone	1	
	More than one (unless separation is suspected)	2-3	
Weather	Existing weather hazardous	1	
	Predicted hazardous weather (8 hrs or less)	1-2	
	Predicted hazardous weather (more than 8 hrs)	2	
	No hazardous weather predicted	3	
Equipment	Inadequate for environment	1	
	Questionable for environment	1-2	
	Adequate for environment	3	
Experience	Not experienced, not familiar with area	1	
	Not experienced, knows the area	1-2	
	Experienced, not familiar with area	2	
	Experienced, knows the area	3	
Terrain and hazards	Known hazardous terrain or other hazards	1	
	Few or no hazards	2-3	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	

**If any of the seven categories above are rated as a one (1), regardless of the total, the search could require an emergency response.**

**THE TOTAL SHOULD RANGE FROM 7 TO 21 WITH 7 BEING THE MOST URGENT**

*8-11 Emergency Response    12-16 Measured Response    17-21 Evaluate & Investigate*

## Lost Person Questionnaire

**This information is required for search management purposes. Please answer ALL questions if possible**

Officer ..... Station .....  
Date ..... Time ..... REF NO .....

---

### A. Source(s) of information for Questionnaire

Name .....  
Address .....  
..... Tel. No. .... Relationship.....  
Where/how to contact now .....  
Where/how to contact later .....  
What does the informant believe happened? .....  
.....

---

### B. Missing Person

Name..... Sex ..... Nickname .....  
Age ..... DOB ..... Place of birth.....  
Home address .....  
.....  
Address missing from.....  
.....  
Telephone number ..... Mobile telephone .....  
Pager ..... Work/other number .....

---

### C. Description

Height ..... Weight ..... Build.....  
Hair: Colour ..... Length ..... Style .....  
Beard ..... Moustache ..... Sideburns .....  
Facial features/shape ..... Complexion .....  
Distinguishing marks .....  
Overall appearance .....  
Left/right handed/ambidextrous .....  
Photo available? Yes/No. Where .....  
Comments .....  
.....  
.....

**D. Vehicle**

Owned. Index ..... Make ..... Model ..... Colour .....

Current location .....

Other. Index ..... Make ..... Model ..... Colour .....

Current location .....

Other vehicles or means of transport used .....

.....

.....

**E. Clothing**

Style of dress ..... Size .....

Shirt/sweater .....

Trousers .....

Outerwear.....

Underwear .....

Headwear .....

Rainwear .....

Glasses ..... Gloves .....

Footwear..... Sole type/pattern.....

**F. Last seen**

Time ..... Where? ..... Reason .....

Seen by whom? ..... Location now .....

Details of last known conversation.....

.....

.....

Weather at time ..... Weather since.....

Seen going which way ..... When .....

Reason for leaving .....

Attitude.....

Comments .....

.....

.....



---

**G. Outdoor experience**

Familiar with area? ..... Favourite haunts .....  
.....  
Formal outdoor training? ..... Level .....  
Where? ..... When? .....  
Scouting experience? ..... When? ..... Where? .....  
Military experience? ..... What? ..... Where? .....  
When? ..... Rank ..... Other .....  
Hiking/camping experience? .....  
Athletic/other interests .....

---

**H. Habits/personality**

Smoke? Yes/No How often? ..... What ..... Brand .....  
Alcohol ..... How often? ..... What ..... Brand .....  
Recreational drugs ..... How often .....  
Sweets ..... Chocolate bars ..... Other .....  
Hobbies/interests .....  
Outgoing/quiet ..... Gregarious/loner .....  
Legal trouble (past/present) .....  
Hitch-hike? Yes/NO Accept lifts easily? .....  
Personal problems .....  
Religious? Yes/No Faith ..... Practising .....  
Personal character .....  
.....  
Person closest to .....  
Emotional history .....  
Comments .....  
.....  
.....

---

**I. Health/general condition**

Overall health .....  
Overall physical condition .....  
Known medical problems .....  
Knowledgeable doctor ..... Tel No. ....  
Handicaps .....  
Known psychological problems .....  
Knowledgeable person ..... Tel No. ....

---

Eyesight without glasses?..... Spares? Yes/No  
Comments .....  
.....  
.....

---

**J. Contacts person would make if deciding to return**

Name ..... Relationship .....  
Address .....  
.....  
Tel no ..... Anyone home now? .....  
Comments .....  
.....  
.....

---

**K. Children**

Afraid of dark? Yes/No Animals? ..... Afraid of.....  
Feelings towards adults ..... Strangers.....  
Reactions when hurt..... Cry .....  
Training when lost .....  
Active/lethargic/anti-social .....  
Comments .....  
.....  
.....

---

**L. Actions taken so far**

By family/friends .....  
Others.....  
Comments .....  
.....  
.....

---

**M. Any other information**

## Specific Information Re Alzheimer's/Suicidals

---

### N. Alzheimer's sufferers history

Known previous addresses .....

.....  
.....  
.....

Previous employment and places of work .....

.....  
.....  
.....

Old family members and friends (including deceased) .....

.....  
.....  
.....

Spouse's grave .....

---

### O. Suicidal/depressed

Reason for depression .....

.....  
.....  
.....

Evidence of domestic problems .....

.....  
.....  
.....

Details of any previous suicide attempts (include method and location) .....

.....  
.....  
.....

Location of relative's or spouse's/partner's grave .....

.....  
.....

Area first met or courted spouse/partner .....

Where did subject play as a child? .....

Garage/allotment owned .....

Caravan owned ..... Location .....

Previous/favourite holiday location .....

Children's school details .....

Favourite walks .....

Other favourite places/activities .....

---

**Any other useful information**

**Action Index**

Book Number .....

Book No.	Action No.	Nature Of Action	Date Completed
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		
	6		
	7		
	8		
	9		
	10		
	11		
	12		
	13		
	14		
	15		
	16		
	17		
	18		
	19		
	20		



## Protocol

**Between**

..... **Police Force**

**And**

..... **Children’s Services**

**Regarding**

**The Reporting of Children and Young People who are missing**

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## Introduction

Children who go missing from care invariably place themselves and others at risk. The reasons for their absence are often varied and complex and cannot be viewed in isolation from their home circumstances and their experiences of care. Every “missing” episode should attract proper attention from the professionals involved with the child and they must collaborate to ensure a consistent and coherent response is given to the child on his/her return.

Police are frequent partners of Children’s Services/Social Services and private/charitable concerns in managing “missing” episodes and it is important that staff in all agencies involved work together. This joint protocol has been developed to assist in this and combines aspects of Children’s Services/Social Services and Police procedures in relation to missing persons such that where they overlap or interface, respective actions and responsibilities are clear.

Channels of communication between the local authority and the relevant police area must be established and maintained in order to facilitate the partnership approach.

This protocol applies to all Looked after Children missing from Residential or Foster care who are the responsibility of local authorities in the relevant local authority area. It will also be relevant to other agencies concerned with Looked after Children.

(All references in this protocol to residential care or homes and staff include foster homes and foster carers).



## Definitions

Where this protocol refers to a “child” or “children”, these terms include young people under the age of 18 years.

### 1. Unauthorised Absence

- not subject of this protocol

Some children absent themselves for a short period and then return and their whereabouts are known. Sometimes children stay out longer than agreed, either on purpose or accidentally, and may be testing boundaries. This kind of boundary testing is well within the range of normal teenage behaviour and does not come within the definition of missing and therefore does not fall within this protocol.

In relation to younger children or those with special needs, consideration as to whether such behaviour falls within this definition or whether it should be treated more seriously and the child categorised as an absconder or as missing should be given. To assist in the use of this category, the risk assessment criteria should be considered.

### 2. Absconder

- subject of protocol

An absconder is a child who is missing and is also Looked After as a result of a Court Order.

Cases of absconding should be reported to the police immediately.

### 3. Missing

- subject of protocol

In some circumstances a child/young person will not meet the definition of Absconder but will be a cause for greater concern than that outlined in unauthorised absence above.

A child should be considered as “missing” if

- They are absent from their residence without authority and
- Staff do not know where he/she is or when he/she is likely to return and/or
- Circumstances give rise to concern for the child

These should be reported to the police immediately.

## **Risk Assessment**

In assessing the significance of a child's absence, all staff must apply the above definitions and take into consideration guidance already agreed and incorporated into the child's care plan including -

- 1) The age of the child
- 2) The legal status of the child
- 3) Previous behaviour and history
- 4) The state of mind of the child / Perceived risk
- 5) Group behaviour
- 6) Whether the child is perceived as running to/running from someone/something
- 7) The risk of offending
- 8) The risk of the child being targeted by organised groups e.g. abduction by paedophiles or abduction for prostitution

Staff in all organisations concerned should avoid dismissing the potential significance of repeated episodes of going missing. Often such children are immediately labelled as the problem and insufficient consideration is given to why they persistently go missing. Persistent going missing needs to be explored, particularly at the time of post return interviews.

A range of "push" and "pull" factors may be reasons for being absent -

### **Push factors -**

Conflict with carers, feeling powerless, bullying, being unhappy in care, physical or sexual abuse.

### **Pull factors -**

Wanting to be with family or friends, peer pressure re-established behaviour, attractions of street life, attractions of people who may present a risk to the child.

## **Responding to Children/Young People Going Missing**

### **Planning before the event**

Planning and assessment of children by carers must include a risk assessment of the child absents him/her self and this should be recorded in the child's care plan. This should include the following -

- 1) The likelihood of the child going missing
- 2) The child's view
- 3) The level of supervision/support offered to the child
- 4) The parents' responsibilities and their views on what action they feel should be taken if the child is absent
- 5) The risk of harm to the child and his/her vulnerability if he/she is absent
- 6) The legal implications of the child breaking any court order by going missing
- 7) Consideration of any external influences which may result in a child's removal without consent
- 8) The likelihood of the child being harboured

The child should have this protocol explained to him/her so that he/she understands what actions will be taken if he/she absents him/herself without permission.

### **Incidents of Specific Concern**

If the running away/going missing of a child or young person is causing specific concern, eg by its frequent repetition of indicators of particular risk such as contact with a Schedule One Offender, there should be a meeting to discuss the combined response to such incidents and concern.

This meeting should be attended by :-

- A representative of the Police,
- A representative of Children's Services
- And
- A representative of the Carers
- And
- The Child or Young Person

## Notification of Absence

Whoever discovers that a child is absent without permission from residential care, should consider whether the absence falls within this protocol and if so, within which category. Support and advice in making this decision will be available from the Children's Services Team responsible for the child or, out of hours, the Emergency Social Work Team.

If court conditions of residency have been breached, Children's Services must inform the appropriate court at the earliest opportunity.

If the absence is considered to fall within this protocol, Residential Staff and Foster Carers must without delay inform:

- 1) The police
- 2) The parents and those who have parental responsibility
- 3) The Social worker or the Emergency Social Work Team if out of hours
- 4) If the child/young person is subject to a criminal order or proceedings, the Youth Offending Team

If the absence is not considered to fall within this protocol, Residential Staff and Foster Carers (wherever possible in consultation with the Child/Young Person's Social Worker or the Emergency Social Work Team) should review the consideration regularly. In any case, if the period of absence continues for 6 hours, further consideration should be given as to whether the absence should fall within this protocol. 6 hours should be regarded as a maximum period before reconsideration and in many cases, a shorter period would be appropriate.

Any case of an absent child which causes significant concern, or where circumstances give rise to suspicion of harm should be brought to the attention of a Children's Services Team Manager and the duty Inspector for the police area as soon as possible. Out of Office hours, absences should be brought to the attention of the Emergency Social Work Team Duty Social Worker.

## Information

### Information to be made available

When reporting to the police, the following information is required -

- 1) A description of the child and their clothing
- 2) Details of when the child was last seen and with whom
- 3) A recent photograph
- 4) Family addresses
- 5) Known associates and addresses frequented Personal details of the child
- 6) Any previous history of running away/going missing, and circumstances of where found
- 7) The names and addresses of the child's G.P. and dentist
- 8) The circumstances under which the child is absent
- 9) Any factors which increase the risk to the child
- 10) Name of staff member/foster carer who has completed search of home for the child (n.b. police reserve the right to conduct further searches)

### Response

Police will investigate all cases falling within this protocol and will respond in accordance with Police missing persons policy. Children's Services staff will be expected to help the police in finding the child and to work co-operatively with police during any enquiry.

Even after reporting a child missing, Residential Staff should recognise that Children's Services are responsible for children in their care at all times and this responsibility is not absolved when they have reported a child missing to the police. Thames Valley Police have a responsibility to deal with such reports and investigate them fully.

### Informing the Media

The police have responsibility to advise the media regarding children missing from local authority care, however decisions to publicise will always be made in consultation with Children's Services who will consult the parents and/or carers.

### Recording

Throughout the process in this protocol, Residential Staff or Foster Carers must keep a full record of all actions taken and messages received and given. Police will likewise keep a record on the appropriate missing person report.

### **Planning for return**

If a child's absence falls within this protocol, the appropriate Children's Services (Team) Manager in consultation with Social workers, parents and police as appropriate should start contingency planning for when the child is found. The manager should consider -

- 1) Whether the child will return to the previous placement
- 2) How the child will be transported there
- 3) Whether the police wish to interview the child before he/she is returned to their placement
- 4) The need or otherwise for an appropriate "independent person" to talk to the child after his/her return

Children's Services are responsible for putting in place satisfactory arrangements for the return of children.

### **Police powers**

Police powers are limited and difficulties can arise when missing children are found but do not want to return to their homes.

Police can take children into Police protection under the Children Act 1989, when there is reasonable cause to believe that the child would otherwise be likely to suffer significant harm - police may remove the child to suitable accommodation and keep him/her there. Suitable accommodation could include the home from which the child originally went missing. The act does not however give police the ability to use force to take children into police protection.

There will be occasions when a child's absence does not fit the above act and therefore police cannot exercise police protection - in such cases prior discussion should take place between Children's Services and police regarding powers to enforce a return.

Any child unlawfully at large from a secure unit or penal establishment may be arrested and returned by police.

### **Child/Young Person on Remand**

If the remand is without conditions they should be returned to the designated placement. If there are conditions attached (eg curfew) they can be detained and brought before the court (who have limited power and will usually re-remand except if the young person has committed further offences whilst absconding when secure options might be available).

### **Communication**

Following a reported absence, Residential staff should inform all other staff and children within the home - this stops distressing rumours and additional information regarding the child's whereabouts may be obtained. Foster Carers should give similar consideration to sharing information with the rest of the household. Residential Staff/Foster Carers should also notify the child's school in case they have any relevant information. Any information should be reported to the police without delay.

## The Return

Every child's absence will be discussed with him/her on his/her return. The child should be given the opportunity by the person returning him/her to the home, to talk to someone independent of the home about their absence.

This independent person should have no line management with the home nor should they be related in any way to any member of staff - in most instances this person will be a police officer. The Police Officer will normally visit within 24 hours and no later than 72. It may be however that the child would prefer to speak to his/her primary carer or social worker. In some cases, neither the Police Officer, Carer or Social Worker will be sufficiently independent. Consideration should be given to who could visit the young person as an independent person. It is the responsibility of all concerned, Residential Staff, Foster Carer, Police Officer or Social Worker to ensure that the child or young person has had the opportunity to speak to an independent person. Where this does not seem to have happened it is the responsibility of the Residential Staff or Foster Carer to draw this to the attention of the Child's Social Worker or the Emergency Social Work Team.

It is the responsibility of senior staff at the residential home to ensure that, where requested, the child receives an interview with an independent person within 24 and no later than 72 hours of his/her return from absence. In the case of a child absent from foster care, the Social worker should visit or ensure a visit within 24 and no later than 72 hours of the child's return. For Children in Foster Care the same principle applies with a responsibility on the Foster Carer to remind their Family Placement Social Worker and the child's Social Worker of their responsibility to ensure that the interview takes place.

Where an allegation of physical or sexual abuse is made or becomes evident, child protection procedures must be implemented and contact made immediately with the police family protection unit.

If there is any suggestion that the child has been a victim or perpetrator of crime, consideration must be given to the securing of evidence including forensic examination - this should include securing clothing and delaying washing/bathing in relevant cases.

Parents, police, Social workers and any other persons informed of the child's absence, should be advised of the child's return without delay.

The Social worker and line manager should decide in consultation with Residential Staff/Foster Carers staff whether a care planning meeting is further required.



### **Missing outside the area**

If a child becomes absent outside the area, the carer in charge of the external activity or holiday will

- 1) Arrange a search in the area where the child became absent
- 2) Notify the local police for that area
- 3) Notify a senior manager at the home if relevant
- 4) Notify the child's Social worker
- 5) Notify the Youth Offending Team if the Child or Young Person is the subject of a criminal order or proceedings
- 6) Notify the Emergency Social Work Team if out of hours
- 7) Notify the child's parents or guardian

### **Children on the Child Protection Register**

For Children on the Child Protection Register, there is an additional process for posting them missing with all Local Authorities in England, Wales and Scotland.

## **Responsibility for Implementation of Protocol**

The senior manager of the residential home will be responsible for ensuring that the general principles of this protocol are followed.

The Family Placement Social Worker and Child's Social Worker will have the same responsibility in relation to Children/Young People in Foster Placements.

Head of Children's Services  
Children's Services  
Management Team

Superintendent of Police

APPENDIX I

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Number.....Force .....Station .....

Last Seen .....When Reported.....1.Elapsed Time .....

2.

01	AGE		
----	-----	--	--

3.

SEX	02	MALE	
	03	FEMALE	

4.

04	POSTCODE	
----	----------	--

**5. ETHNICITY**

05	0	
06	1	
07	2	
08	3	
09	4	
10	5	
11	6	

**6. ILLNESS**

12	NONE	
13	PHYSICAL INJURY	
14	PHYS. DISABILITY	
15	DEPRESSED	
16	ALZHEIMERS	
17	DEMENTIA	
18	OTHER MENTAL ILLNESS	
19	OTHER	
20	NOT KNOWN	

**7. MARITAL STATUS**

21	MARRIED	
22	COHAB	
23	SINGLE	
24	DIVORCED	
25	SEPARATED	
26	RECENT D/S	
27	NOT KNOWN	

**8. OCCUPATION**

28	SCHOOL	
29	TRUANTING	
30	EXCLUDED	
31	EMPLOYED	
32	UNEMPLOYED	
33	RECENT UNEMPLOYED	
34	NOT KNOWN	

**9. REPORTEE RELATIONSHIP**

35	PARENT	
36	CHILD	
37	SIBLING	
38	OTHER REL	
39	FRIEND	
40	SPOUSE	
41	CARER	
42	OTHER	
43	NOT KNOWN	

**10. PREVIOUS MISSING**

44	NO	
45	1	
46	2 - 5	
47	5 +	
48	NOT KNOWN	

**11. ACCOMMODATION**

49	HOME	
50	IN CARE	
51	STAYING AWAY	
52	HOLIDAY	
53	NOT KNOWN	
54	HOSPITAL	

**12. CIRCUMSTANCES OF LEAVING**

55	INDICATION OF PREMEDITATION	
56	WENT WITH OTHER MISPER	
57	WENT WITH OTHER PERSON	
58	KNOWN POSSESSION OF MONEY	
59	KNOWN POSSESSION OF CREDIT CARD/CHEQUE BOOK	
60	ARGUMENT/DISPUTE	
61	NOTE LEFT	
62	WENT OUT BY ARRANGEMENT	

**13. TRANSPORTATION**

63	PEDESTRIAN	
64	PEDAL CYCLE	
65	BUS	
66	TRAIN	
67	TAXI	
68	OWN TRANSPORT OTHER THAN P/CYCLE	
69	OTHER (NOT TRAVELLING BUT AT HOME)	
70	NOT KNOWN	
71	GIVEN LIFT	

**14. LOCATION OF MISPER AT TIME OF LAST SIGHTING  
(INCLUDE IF IN VICINITY OF)**

72	AT HOME	
73	AT SCHOOL	
74	CARE ESTABLISHMENT	
75	BUS/TRAIN STATION/TAXI RANK/BUS STOP	
76	FAIRGROUND/OPEN AIR PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT	
77	AMUSEMENT ARCADE	

APPENDIX I

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78	PARK/PLAYGROUND	
79	PUBLIC HOUSE	
80	DANCE/ NIGHTCLUB/CINEMA	
81	SHOP/CAFÉ/RESTAURANT	
82	KNOWN VICE AREA	
83	PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	
84	PRIVATE PREMISES NOT H/A	
85	PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE	
86	OPEN AREA NOT SPECIFIED ELSEWHERE	
87	HOSPITAL	
88	OTHER/NOT KNOWN	

**15. LOCATION OF ABOVE IS WITHIN**

89	CONURBATION MAINLY NON- RESIDENTIAL	
90	CONURBATION MAINLY RESIDENTIAL	
91	TOWN/CITY MAINLY NON-RESIDENTIAL	
92	TOWN/CITY MAINLY RESIDENTIAL	
93	VILLAGE/HAMLET	
94	RURAL	
95	COASTAL AREA	
96	TOURIST AREA	

**CONURBATION – Major Metropolitan Districts and Suburbs**  
**NON-RESIDENTIAL – Includes Commercial Industrial or Trading Area**

**16. ACTIVITY OF MISPER AT TIME OF LAST SIGHTING  
(INCLUDES TRAVELLING TO AND FROM)**

97	SHOPPING	
98	HOUSE TO HOUSE DELIVERIES	
99	SPORTING ACTIVITIES	
100	HITCHHIKING	
101	WORKING	
102	AT PLAY	
103	JOURNEY	
104	DOMESTIC ACTIVITES	
105	PARTICIPATING IN ENTERTAINMENT	
106	CAMPING	
107	HOLIDAY	
108	SCHOOL/EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT	
109	VISITING FRIEND	
110	OTHER/NOT KNOWN	

**17. ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES RELATIVE TO GOING  
MISSING**

## Return After Missing

Time/Date .....Elapsed Time .....

### 18. RETURNED UNHARMED

111	OWN ACCORD	
112	FOUND - FAMILY	
113	FOUND - POLICE	
114	ARRESTED	
115	OTHER	
116	NOT KNOWN	

### 19. SUFFERED HARM

117	MURDER	
118	ABDUCTION	
119	SEX OFFENCE	
120	OTHER CRIME	
121	SUICIDE	
122	PHYSICAL INJURY	
123	OTHER	

### 20. CIRCUMSTANCES WHILST AWAY

124	STAYED WITH A FRIEND	
125	SLEPT ROUGH	
126	HOTEL/OTHER COMMERCIAL PREMISES	
127	STAYED WITH PERSON MET WITH	
128	WITH PERSON/AT LOCATION KNOWN FROM ORIGINAL INFO	
129	WENT TO LOCATION – NO KNOWN CONNECTIONS	
130	WENT TO PLACE PREVIOUSLY LIVED LIVED/FREQUENTED	
131	MET UP WITH OTHER MISPER	
132	MET UP WITH FRIEND/AQUAINTANCE	
133	INVOLVED IN PROSTITUTION	
134	OTHER	
135	NOT KNOWN	

### 21. DISTANCE AWAY FROM POINT MISSING

136	0 – 5 miles	
137	6 – 10 miles	
138	11 – 20 miles	
139	21 – 40 miles	
140	41 – 80 miles	
141	over 81 miles	

### 22. OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES RELATIVE TO RETURN

**DATES USED IN DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

4/1	18/1	31/1
6/2	26/2	11/3
23/3	6/4	18/4
2/5	14/5	28/5
9/6	23/6	5/7
19/7	1/8	15/8
27/8	10/9	22/9
6/10	19/10	2/11
13/11	27/11	9/12
23/12		





