

# Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Impact Assessment Guidance **must** be used when completing this form:

[http://intranet.aware.mps/Corporate/Policy/Operational\\_Services/SOP/Equality\\_Impact\\_Assessment\\_SOPs.htm](http://intranet.aware.mps/Corporate/Policy/Operational_Services/SOP/Equality_Impact_Assessment_SOPs.htm)

Freedom of Information Act Document		
<b>Protective Marking:</b> Not protectively marked	<b>Publication (Y/N):</b> Y	
<b>Title:</b> Domestic Violence Policy		
<b>Summary:</b> Standard operating procedures for the investigation of domestic violence		
<b>Branch / OCU:</b> Territorial Policing Strategic Committee		
<b>Date created:</b> Apr 2009	<b>Review date:</b> July 2012	<b>Version:</b> 2
<b>Author:</b> TP Violent Crime Directorate		

## Directorate/Department/Borough/OCU:

**Name, type or title of proposal** (If a corporate policy, a policy workbook must also be completed):  
Domestic Violence (DV) Policy

### 1. Aims and Purpose of Proposal - see Step 1 of the Guidance

- The aim and purpose of this policy is to provide all staff engaged in the investigation of domestic violence with standard operating procedures to enable them to better protect victims of domestic violence and their children and hold abusers accountable for their actions
- Implementation and compliance will be monitored through the following;
  - Performance Indicators measures, e.g. arrests and sanction detections
  - Other statistical measures, computer aided despatch (CAD) to crime report information system (CRIS) conversion, reduction in homicide / seriousness, reduction in repeat victimisation, caution versus charge ratio
  - Violent Crime Directorate (VCD) daily management meeting reviews of critical incidents, serious and high profile cases.
  - Structured assessment process for high risk or high profile cases
  - Borough inspections and reviews of service delivery
  - Use of external reference groups (e.g. LDVF) provide governance
  - Comparison of MPS data and CPS data
  - Metropolitan Police Authority DV Scrutiny board recommendations
  - DV Homicide and Critical Incident reviews
  - National and MPS Performance indicators
  - Statistical data analysis
  - Customer / community survey
  - Community Safety Unit Managers meetings
  - Crime Control Strategy Meetings
  - Violent Crime Directorate (VCD) Liaison officer contact
  - Borough inspections
  - VCD central resource spreadsheet
  - Gold groups
  - Case Conferences

Managers of Community Safety Units (CSUs) will supervise and monitor investigations and quality of

service delivery to victims. Territorial Policing (TP) Crime, VCD, review high risk cases published daily by Metropolitan Intelligence Bureau (MIB) and dip sample investigations to monitor performance. Specific incidents of under performance are brought to the attention of the relevant borough.

As TP Crime VCD has the overview of all Community Safety Units (CSU) within the MPS they are able to identify issues of non-compliance/ lack of knowledge on a wider level and address these gaps through additional training or further guidance.

All borough CSUs have a TP Crime VCD liaison officer and in addition to continued day to day monitoring each borough is visited formally every 3 months and a standardised inspection takes place. These are then examined by the TP Crime Directorate VCD (CSU Service Delivery Team) Detective Inspector who identifies matters for action or monitoring.

Performance data is collated across the MPS on a fortnightly basis and published. This information is then used to identify and address areas of under performance.

- Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries in the first instance will be victims of domestic incidents. In partnership with our key stakeholders including the Greater London Authority, Home Office, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation, etc. we will ensure that the MPS delivers an effective response to victims and perpetrators in compliance with the standard operating procedures.
- Compliance with the policy is expected to reduce repeat victimisation, DV homicide and serious violence and increase prosecutions of perpetrators. This should in turn reduce the volume of domestic violence, which has huge resource impact on the MPS and other services.

## **2. Examination of Available Information – see Step 2 of the Guidance.**

- The MPS records statistical data in relation to all strands of diversity to ensure that the appropriate response and strategies are in place in relation to DV. The collection of required data is determined at a strategic level within the VCD. There is much quantitative and qualitative data available to the MPS both internally and externally. For example, Performance Information Bureau (PIB) collects and publishes data on DV reported incidents and crimes, from that we are able to extract information in relation to all diversity matters (e.g. disability, gender, same-sex, forced marriage). The British Crime Survey and other academic research have also assisted to determine DV strategies.
- The MPS has continued to work in close partnership with many DV support agencies and other key stakeholders to ensure that the 'victim's voice' is heard to develop standard operating procedures. Through Project Umbra and the London Domestic Violence Forum (LDVF) the MPS has ensured that formulation of the SOPs is consistent with the aims and objectives discussed and produced within those forums, specifically the Mayors DV strategy for London.
- This is the second version of the DV SOP's. During the life of the 1<sup>st</sup> version strategic multi-agency meetings, action plans, learnings from DV murder and serious case reviews, etc. have highlighted where changes were needed to the Sops and these were collated to prepare for the 3 year review. This has been an on-going consultation process with a final draft of the SOP forwarded to relevant key stakeholders including Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), London Domestic Violence Forum (LDVF), Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), etc.
- There are various mechanisms in place to examine the effect of the policy in relation to compliance, performance, disproportionality and other measures, including the Crime Control Strategy Meetings, MPA DV board, LDVF, Disability Independent Advisory Group.

### 3. Consultation/Involvement - see Step 3 of the Guidance

a. Who is responsible for managing this consultation/involvement?

The policyholder at TP Crime (VCD) is responsible for consultation and customer engagement.

b. Why is this consultation/involvement taking place?

To ensure that the SOP is effective, relevant and inclusive. To enable other interested parties to comment on the contents and suggest amendments or inclusion where appropriate. To ensure that the policy is fair to all strands of equality.

c. Who is included within the consultation/involvement, including which group(s)? Consider beneficiaries, stakeholders, service users or providers and those who may be affected.

Consultation has taken place both within the service and with external partners, particularly those who represent groups who might be reluctant to report, for example, disability, black, minority ethnic refugee and asylum seekers (BMER), lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT), older persons and men. Several practitioners and also those with expertise in the field have been consulted including Broken Rainbow, Southall Black Sisters, Ashiana, Refuge, Women's Aid, Respect, Men's Advice Line, Standing Together, Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP), Action against Elder Abuse, Disability Independent Advisory Group (DIAG).

d. What methods of consultation/involvement are employed to ensure full information sharing and participation, e.g. surveys, interviews, community meetings?

Consultation has been on-going throughout the life of the policy version 1 through various means, including Project Umbra whereby key multi-agency stakeholders, including victim's representatives, within the various strands of DV (children, homicide review, advocacy, etc.), meet to discuss service delivery across the relevant agencies to identify areas for improvement, regular meetings have ensured that the DV SOPs remain under review and have been included within this latest review. The London Domestic Violence Forum, DV homicide and Child Serious case reviews and the MPA DV board have the responsibility to ensure that the MPS are accountable in this area of business and all have made significant recommendations to ensure that the SOPs are fit for purpose through various meetings, seminars and e-mail contact. Drafts of the reviewed policy have been circulated to key stakeholders for comments.

e. What are the results of the consultation/involvement? How are these fed back into the process?

Comments are fed back either by e-mail using 'track changes' on the document, by hard copies being noted and returned to the policy writer or through meetings with interested parties i.e. CPS, DIAG. Action was then taken to ensure that the document was amended according to the suggestions.

### 4. Screening Process for relevance to Diversity or Equality issues - see Step 4 of the Guidance

(i) **Explain:** By their very nature the SOPs are likely to have a significant impact on certain groups, communities and individuals who are victims or perpetrators of domestic violence. The very nature of domestic violence and our own databases inform us that women are far more likely to be the victims of DV and men the perpetrators. The impact however is likely to be positive as the SOPs dictate an integrity driven and professional response of all members of the police service in dealings with reported incidents.

Cultural issues that impact on victims of domestic violence faced with forced marriage are also highlighted within these SOPs.

The SOPs re-enforce the need to recognise that certain groups, communities and individuals may have more lack of confidence in the police response than others and provide guidance on how to manage this.

**Will any part of the proposal be directly or indirectly discriminatory?** No, the SOP has been written to ensure that all victims of DV who report DV will be dealt with according to their needs and provides a standard response to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

- (ii) **Explain:** The SOPs are designed to ensure that all members of the public receive a service that is according to the individual. In particular that victims of domestic violence have equal access to justice and an enhanced level of police response and protection.

**Is the proposal likely to negatively affect equality of opportunity?** No

- (iii) **Explain:** It provides opportunity for us to positively engage all communities in London. The rationale is based on providing structure for effective investigation and procedures for joint working to restore confidence with the police response and the handling of any individual investigation. The SOP guidelines are designed to try to achieve this outcome wherever possible and to address victims needs even when criminal prosecutions are not an option. This therefore should increase the chances to impact on the provision of equality of opportunity.

**Is the proposal likely to adversely affect relations between any particular groups or between the MPS and those groups?** No

- (iv) **Explain:** The procedure will promote partner relations between groups and the MPS and these groups. The basis of these procedures should ensure that partner relations between groups and the MPS and these groups continue. We have ensured that our partners working together to prevent and respond to DV represent ALL generic and minority groups.

**Are there any other community concerns, opportunities or risks to communities arising from the proposal?** No

- (v) **Explain:** The SOP is designed to raise awareness amongst MPS staff dealing with DV to ensure that historical mistakes are not made and therefore aggravate the effective partnership working and joint investigative approach required for DV incidents. There is media interest and several monitoring groups who examine and evaluate the MPS response to DV and this SOP will ensure a corporate and effective response, which if fully compliant will satisfy those groups and ensure safety of victims and their children, building trust and confidence in communities to report to police.

**Is the proposal likely to harm positive attitudes towards others and discourage their participation in public life?** No

- (vi) **Explain:** The SOPs promote transparency, professionalism and inclusivity. They provide robust guidance in the recognition and early identification of DV. It places the individual at the centre of the investigation, encourages their participation wherever possible to ensure that the most effective arrangements can be put in place.

**Is the proposal a major one in terms of scale or significance? Yes**

(vii) **Explain:**

The MPS has been working to the ACPO guidance and the current MPS policy since 2004, with much success. This SOP takes heed of the learning and the sharing of good practice since 2004, which can only enhance our response and level of success. There are several statutory bodies that scrutinise the MPS response to DV. Many lessons have been learnt in the past that have steered the MPS response and this SOP is written with the purpose of ensuring that those opportunities for prevention are maximised.

From the answers supplied, you must decide if the proposal impacts upon diversity or equality issues. If yes, a full impact assessment is required. If no, complete the following box and enter a review date at the end of the form.

<b>Full Impact Assessment Required</b>	<b>YES</b>	<i>(delete as applicable)</i>
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Supervised:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	

**5. Full Impact Assessment – see Step 5 of the Guidance**

a)	Explain the likely differential impact (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) of the proposal on individual service users or citizens on account of:
	Age: older people, children and young people.
	<p>Details: The SOPs do have a direct positive effect on service users or citizens experiencing domestic violence.</p> <p>The SOPs reinforce the need for victims of DV to be dealt with according to their individual needs, the guidance is intended to give a positive approach. Whilst the SOP is generic we recognise that women are the predominant victims of DV and for some women there are barriers to reporting which is covered in the SOP and in mandatory training, for older women there may be additional barriers to engaging with the CJS, for example where the abuser is their child or sole carer, such cases should be mindful of the procedures contained within the Safeguarding Adults at Risk SOP which is linked to the DV SOP. The links between domestic abuse and child abuse, either directly or through neglect or other causes of 'significant harm' are evident and the SOP provides clear guidance on the protocols where DV impacts on children.</p> <p>In addition, it will be deduced from statistics that the predominant perpetrators of DV are male and this is recognised through many partner agencies. Again, the SOP is written to ensure a corporate approach to managing offenders.</p>
	Disability in line with the Social Model.
	<p>Details: The DCFD Diversity Strand has given specific advice on the terminology and approach used within the SOP to ensure that those affected by the remit of the procedures will have confidence in the MPS to effectively deal with DV incidents in an appropriate and professional manner. The SOP should have a positive impact on those within the certain groups affected by these SOP.</p>
	Faith, religion or belief: those with a recognised belief system or no belief.

	<p>Details: The SOP does not have any direct differential effect on service or citizens within the faith strand. The SOP raises issues around barriers to reporting and outlines investigative considerations to deal with these issues.</p>
	<p>Gender or marital status: women and men.</p>
	<p>Details: The SOP outlines the need for positive action in respect of DV cases regardless of gender or marital status and is reinforced in the ACPO definition of DV. This policy enhances joint working principles, plans and partnership support for citizens that may be affected within the gender strand.</p>
	<p>Race, ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins.</p>
	<p>Details: The SOP itself does not have any direct differential effect on service users or citizens within the race strand. Where there are specific needs for victims the DV SOP can be applied to positively manage the situation and assist with resolution, bespoke to the individuals needs. These procedures would apply to all DV incidents, whether in a specific group or not.</p>
	<p>Sexual orientation, transgender or transsexual issues.</p>
	<p>Details: The SOP itself does not have any direct differential effect on service users or citizens within the LGBT strand. Where there are specific needs for an individual SOP can be applied to positively manage the situation and assist with resolution. These procedures would apply to all DV incidents, whether in a specific group or not</p>
	<p>Other issues, e.g. public transportation users, homeless people, asylum seekers, the economically disadvantaged, or other community groups not covered above.</p>
	<p>Details: The SOPs may have a positive effect on service users within other community groups such as asylum seekers within abusive relationships and those rendered homeless due to domestic abuse. The MPS VCD constantly monitors trends and patterns in reported DV. This year has seen a significant rise in reporting. Work within communities continues to encourage reporting, better information sharing with our partners ensures that cases are coming to our attention and our own 'housekeeping' improvements ensure that we are capturing data. DV is essentially linked to dynamics of 'power and control'. Research has shown that whilst drugs and alcohol, finances, separation and other factors might be aggravating factors, there are no causal links.</p>
b)	<p>Is the proposal directly or indirectly discriminatory? Is there a genuine occupational requirement? No</p>
	<p>Details: This proposal is not directly or indirectly discriminatory.</p>
c)	<p>Explain how the proposal is intended to increase equality of opportunity by permitting positive action.</p>
	<p>Details: Positive action in domestic violence takes many forms in dealing when dealing with domestic incidents both in relation into the protection of victims and their children and holding abusers accountable. The DV SOP, through prompt identification of a relevant incident, allow the service user have a voice and express concerns over which the service can take action. Equality of opportunity will be achieved through appropriate police response, investigation, arrest of suspect, satisfactory resolution and effective safeguarding etc.</p>
d)	<p>Explain how the proposal is likely to promote good relations between different groups.</p>
	<p>Details: The many London agencies, both statutory and non-statutory, who provide a service in relation to domestic violence, look to the MPS to respond positively to victims of domestic violence and take appropriate action to challenge perpetrators. This SOP holds the MPS accountable to that positive action to respond effectively. This provides a clear message to our partners that we regard domestic violence as a serious matter and assures them that there are effective measures in place to ensure accountability and responsibility at all levels of</p>

investigation. The positive thinking and rationale of the DV SOPs will encourage further good relationships with community groups to work in partnership to prevent domestic violence.

- e) Explain how the proposal is likely to promote positive attitudes towards others and encourage their participation in public life.

Details: Domestic violence experienced as a child can have a devastating effect on that individual's ability to form healthy relationships later in life. Research amongst teenagers revealed that they felt it was okay to use violence against their partners if they were unfaithful. This acceptance of use of violence needs to be eradicated and the early, effective intervention by those responding to the DV problem can help to ensure that children are raised in safe, nurturing environments. The DV SOP recognises the need to work in a multi-agency context and to promote an intolerance towards violence amongst communities and partnerships.

- f) Explain how the proposal enables decisions and practices to adequately reflect the service users perspective.

Details: The SOPs are service, user focused with the main aim to 'safeguard' the victim and their children and hold abusers to account for their actions.. The term itself promotes the prevention of violence and indicates 'safeguards' will be put in place to assist service users. A significant issue for service users is confidence in the MPS procedures that their allegation will be taken seriously and they will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

## 6. Modifications – see Step 6 of the Guidance

**Could the proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any identified negative impacts, or create or increase positive impacts? What improvements have been made?**

The existence of the DV SOPs provides a positive impact as it supports MPS staff with a framework for the investigation of domestic violence and working within a multi-agency context. Since the introduction of the DV SOP in 2004 the MPS has recognised that diversity and other isolating factors can have a disproportionate effect on minority groups, therefore the review of the SOPs has included specific guidance for those minority groups i.e. BME, older persons, children.

## 7. Further Research - see Step 7 of the Guidance

Given the analysis so far, what additional research or consultation is required to investigate the impacts of the proposal on the diversity strands?

The MPS will continue to address under reporting amongst minority groups through publicity and engagement with specialist support groups. Learning continues through the review of serious cases including homicide and provides valuable information to identify gaps in service delivery and to address through the review of SOPs and other methods of dissemination.

## 8. Decision-making - see Step 8 of the Guidance

a. Name, rank or grade of decision maker

b. What is the Decision?

Reject the proposal

Yes / No *(delete as applicable)*

Introduce the proposal

Yes / No *(delete as applicable)*

Amend the proposal (an impact assessment should be made of any amendments)

Yes / No *(delete as applicable)*

c. Name, rank or grade of SMT/(B)OCU/Management Board endorsing decision

**9. Monitoring - see Step 9 of the Guidance**

**a. How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored and by whom?**

SOP compliance is a responsibility for all supervisors at all levels of investigation. Monitoring will take place through several channels including;

CRIS DV supervision page

Initial supervisors

BOCU DMMs

CSU supervision

CSU Service delivery team

CCSMs

MPA DV and sexual violence board

**b. How will the results of monitoring be used to develop this proposal and its practices?**

The feedback gathered will be used to inform local training and development of the SOP if gaps are identified. Amendments to the procedures will be considered and regular information provided via the CSU Service Delivery Team website.

**c. What is the timetable for monitoring, with dates?**

**10. Public Availability of Report/Results - see Step 10 of the Guidance**

What are the arrangements for publishing, where and by whom?

The policy will be published internally through Strategy Modernisation & Performance Directorate and available on the Intranet through the AWARE system.

The overarching policy will be published on the Internet.

<b>Person completing EIA:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Person supervising EIA:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Quality Assurance Approval:</b>	
<b>Name and Unit:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Date Review Due:</b>	