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Association of Chief Police Officer of England,
Wales & Northern Ireland

Guidance on the Relocation of Victims of Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence between Force Areas

Status: This Crime Business Area Guidance, which has been developed to introduce Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the notification of police forces / services within England, Wales and Northern Ireland of the transfer of a person from another force area who is at risk from forced Marriage and honour based violence. It has been agreed by ACPO Cabinet. It is disclosable under the FOIA 2000, has been registered and audited in line with ACPO requirements and is subject of Copyright.

Implementation

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SECTION 1 - PREFACE

- 1.1 This policy introduces Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the notification of police forces / services within England, Wales and Northern Ireland of the transfer of a person from another force area who is at risk from forced Marriage and honour based violence.
- 1.2 The policy further outlines the continuing responsibilities of the force that transfers the subject and the minimum levels of support that will be afforded by those forces receiving the subject into their force area.
- 1.3 ACPO defines forced marriage as,
 - "Is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties where duress is a factor" (*A Choice by Right June 2000*)
- 1.4 ACPO defines honour based violence as,
 - "Honour based violence is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community" (*ACPO Honour Based Violence Strategy 2008*)
- 1.5 In responding effectively to incidents of forced marriage and honour based violence it is on occasion necessary to relocate victims and potential victims away from their town or city of origin. The level of threat against a victim may in these circumstances be significant. Families and communities may attempt to trace and locate victims and have been know to abduct, assault and imprison victims in order to ensure compliance with their wishes.
- 1.6 The presence of victims within a force area who have not been identified to that force creates a risk both in terms of response / ownership of the victims protection and the reputation of the force. Equally the responsibility of the force who locates the victim into another force area does not cease because the victim is moved in order to protect them.
- 1.7 The needs of the victim also need to be considered. In escaping forced marriage and honour based violence victims almost invariably encounter hostility, rejection and isolation from their families and communities. The effect of a victim exercising their right to choice around marriage or to escape honour related violence can mean the loss of family, friends and whole communities of support. This could be likened to the sudden bereavement of all these groups of people at the same time. Thus relocation into another force area also makes the victim vulnerable in terms of their emotional support, cultural needs, educational needs and religious welfare. This policy aims to establish minimum standards of support to the victim by both the force moving and receiving the victim.

- 1.8 The issue of confidentiality is an important one for the management of victims of force marriage and honour based violence. For the police this means that officers and staff should restrict access to reports, risk assessments and other records, which could be used to trace the victim. Sharing information with other agencies and forces should be carefully considered and the victim should be consulted prior to the sharing of information. This policy aims to regulate that practice.

SECTION 2 - GUIDANCE, ADVICE AND PROCEDURES

2.1 Application

- 2.1.1 All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the relevant police authority must be aware of, and are required to comply with this policy.

However, this policy applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles:

- Police officers and police staff investigating domestic violence, forced marriage and honour based violence
- Police officers and police staff supervisors
- Neighbourhood policing staff
- Community Safety Unit or Hate Crime Officers
- Heads of Crime
- Senior Management Teams

Note: This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Effective from the date of publication.

2.2 Purpose

- 2.2.1 The British Police Service is committed to the prevention of and detection of crime and the protection of victims and potential victims from harm. The service works to fulfil these commitments by working in partnership with a range of statutory and non-governmental agencies.

- 2.2.2 The purpose of this policy and its associated standard operating procedures is to,

- To establish the principle that forces are informed of the movement of a high risk victim of forced marriage and honour based violence into their force area
- To establish a process for informing forces
- To identify the ongoing responsibilities of forces who relocate a victim / potential victim and,
- To establish minimum standards of support between the receiving force and the force relocating the victim / potential victim.

2.3 Scope

- 2.3.1 This policy applies to the management of risk relating to victims or potential victims of forced marriage and honour based violence, where a police force has been involved in assessing the risk, managing the risk or investigating offences against that victim.

2.4 Policy Statement

- 2.4.1 Forces will work co-operatively to identify victims of forced marriage and honour based violence who are transferred between localities in order to protect them.
- 2.4.2 Each force will identify and maintain a single point of contact for other forces in order to enable the referral of information regarding victims between forces and ensure proper management of that information / risk upon receipt.
- 2.4.3 Forces will carry out a risk assessment on victims of forced marriage and honour based violence. They will seek the authority of the victim / potential victim and share this information with the force into whose area the victim is relocated.
- 2.4.4 Forces relocating such victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence will retain the ownership of the investigation of offences committed in their force area.
- 2.4.5 Forces receiving such victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence will assess and assume the risk relating to that victim. The receiving force will assess the response to this risk in line with any existing force policies e.g. threat to life and review the overall protection plan for that victim in light of local circumstances.
- 2.4.6 Force receiving such victims will work in partnership with local statutory and non- statutory agencies to ensure the victim is supported in terms of their broad welfare needs e.g. cultural, educational and religious.

2.5 Benefits

- 2.5.1 The benefits of implementing this policy include,

- Better co-ordination of activity between forces
- Improved identification and management of risk within a force area
- Improved protection of vulnerable victims
- Improved inter agency working to protect victims

2.6 Responsibilities

- 2.6.1 Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that the contents of this policy are complied with and that a single point of contact is established for each police force / service.
- 2.6.2 Chief Officers will ensure that local policy supporting this national approach is implemented and communicated to relevant staff.

2.7 Associated Documents and References

- 2.7.1 Standard operating procedures to support this policy are attached at section 3. This section of the policy document is RESTRICTED.

2.8 Ownership and Feedback References

- 2.8.1 This policy is owned by Cmdr Steve Allen, ACPO lead for Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence. Contact details are shown below.

SECTION 3 – OPERATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

3.1 Force Structures and Policy

- 3.1.1 Forces will nominate a single point of contact for referrals. This will include an “office hours” contact point, which should be used whenever possible and an “out of hours” point of contact for urgent / high-risk cases.
- 3.1.2 Forces will as far as the effective management of risk to victims allows, only make referrals during office hours.
- 3.1.3 Forces will develop local policy that supports this overarching service policy and gives staff specific guidance with regard to,
- Recording incidents of forced marriage and honour based violence
 - Risk assessment process and standards to be applied
 - Supervision of the process
 - Office hours management of referrals received by the force
 - Out of hours management of referrals received by the force
 - Data protection and confidentiality of records held regarding such victims.
- 3.1.4 Forces will restrict access as a matter of policy to any command and control records, intelligence records and crime records relating to a victim of forced marriage and honour-based violence.
- 3.1.5 ACPO FM / HBV Portfolio staff will maintain a list of force contacts for the purpose of referrals. This list will be distinct from that currently maintained to identify force leads regarding this subject area.

3.2 Risk Assessment Processes and Protection Plans

- 3.2.1 Forces will utilise a formal risk assessment process for victims / potential victims of forced marriage and honour based violence. This risk assessment will be recorded in a format that is capable of electronic transfer via secure email. This risk assessment should include an assessment of the victims needs in terms of,
- Emotional support
 - Financial support
 - Cultural needs
 - Educational needs
 - Health needs

From this risk assessment a protection plan should be generated and documented.

- 3.2.2 Forces will restrict access to any risk assessment and will only share such records with third party organisations or other policing services with the knowledge of the victim. Here the aim is inform the victim of the necessity to inform another agency rather than to seek authority for disclosure. The legitimate aim of preventing crime and protecting the right to life should be stressed.
- 3.2.3 Forces will remind any third party organisation of their duty to maintain the security of the information contained within the risk assessment.

3.3 Referral Process

- 3.3.2 Where a force makes a decision alone or via a multi agency management process, to relocate a victim into another area or becomes aware that a community support group has arranged for the relocation of a victim the following procedure should be followed.
- 3.3.3 The officer in charge of the case should make contact with the receiving force single point of contact and explain the circumstances of the case, providing the victims details and current /intended location.
- 3.3.4 The officer in charge will arrange to supply the single point of contact with a copy of the risk assessment and protection plan.
- 3.3.5 The single point of contact within the receiving force will then undertake a review of the risk assessment in light of the removal of the victim to their area, the local intelligence picture and make up of the community in the area the victim is relocated to. Any immediate protection measures now necessary within the receiving force should be documented and implemented.
- 3.3.6 The single point of contact will ensure that appropriate force intelligence systems are updated as appropriate without delay.
- 3.3.7 The single point of contact will ensure that the original risk assessment, protection plan and review / immediate protection actions are then passed to an appropriate local unit, as dictated by local force policy. This may be a public protection unit, community safety unit, and domestic abuse unit or child protection team. They will then inform the OIC of the originating force of the unit who is now dealing with the victim and their contact details
- 3.3.8 The local unit assigned to manage the risk to the victim will assign an officer to undertake its own review of the circumstances and make contact with the victim to discuss their circumstances and offer a point of contact to the victim. This does not negate the responsibility of the original force in its ongoing responsibility to investigate offences against the victim.

- 3.3.9 The receiving forces officer in charge will with the victims consent refer the victim to relevant support agencies in order to manage unresolved welfare and support needs as described earlier.
- 3.3.10 In assessing and managing the risk to such victims the need to comply with pre-existing force policies regarding threat to life or child protection etc. is not negated by the existence of this standard operating procedure.
- 3.3.11 Any force that relocates a victim to another force area will undertake regular reviews of that victims circumstances and risk risk.
- 3.3.12 Where a relocating or receiving force becomes aware of a change in the circumstances of the victim which impacts upon the level of risk they will with the knowledge of the victim, share that information.
- 3.3.13 Where the victim voluntarily moves location to a third or further force area these referral processes will be replicated as if it was a first move of location. All information and history relevant to the victim's level of risk should be shared.

3.4 Cross Border Support and Assistance

- 3.4.1 The relocation of a victim is likely to involve considerable stress and uncertainty on the part of the victim. The area into which they are relocated is unlikely to be familiar to them, be far from their home town or city and is unlikely to contain a large population of the ethnic / national group to which they belong. As such the process of relocation itself may be a difficult one.
- 3.4.2 In relocating a victim however it should not be necessary for officers from the originating force to travel to the new location with the victim. On a significant number of occasions it is likely that police become aware of the arrangements to relocate after they have been put in place. Sometimes support and assistance will be rendered by non-governmental women's support groups or refuge staff in the new location. On other occasions forces face the dilemma of sending officers on an expensive and lengthy journey or requesting the assistance of the local force.
- 3.4.3 Assistance of this nature may include,
- Meeting the victim at a train or bus station and escorting them to a place of refuge or accommodation
 - Transport requests for other purposes and,
 - Making contact with the victim to facilitate where means of contact has been lost by a force investigating offences.
- 3.4.4 As far as possible forces should work to minimise the need for police to be involved in the physical process of relocating a victim through the engagement of support groups locally. Where no alternatives exist or there are associated risk issues for the

victim forces can request the involvement of another force in providing such assistance.

- 3.4.5 Forces receiving such requests should offer all the assistance they can, particularly where to do so would improve the care and risk management of the victim. This is particularly relevant where a failure to offer assistance may place an originating force in the situation of having to send officers on expensive journey's in terms of travel and overtime costs to another force.

3.5 Maintenance of Records

- 3.5.1 Forces should maintain a record of those persons it relocates to other areas for analysis purposes and to ensure proper review processes are in place
- 3.5.2 Forces should similarly maintain a record of those persons it receives from other forces.

SECTION 4 – LEARNING REQUIREMENT

Not applicable

**SECTION C - ACPO EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE
(DIVERSITY AUDIT) AS AGREED WITH THE CRE**

C1. Identify all aims of the guidance/advice

C.1.1 Identify the aims and projected outcomes of the guidance/advice:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better co-ordination of activity between forces • Improved identification and management of risk within a force area • Improved protection of vulnerable victims • Improved inter agency working to protect victims • Ensure that risk existing within force areas and known to other policing services is managed 	
C.1.2 Which individuals and organisations are likely to have an interest in or likely to be affected by the proposal?	
All chief Officer, public protection departments, head of crime, head of operations, Home Office / Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit and Non – Governmental Organisations working to support victims of forced marriage and honour based violence / domestic abuse.	

C2. Consider the evidence

C.2.1 What relevant quantitative data has been considered?	
Age	There is no national problem profile – HO – FCO FMU statistics considered – forced marriage impacts disproportionately on the 16-24 yr old age range
Disability	There is no national problem profile – instances of force marriage are know to have occurred in order to secure care relationships for people with physical or mental disability
Gender	There is no national problem profile – affects men and women but most victims are female because of male dominance
Race	There is no national problem profile – problem is know in majority community but tends to occur in middle eastern, south asian and Kurdish / Turkish communities.
Religion / Belief	There is no national problem profile – forced marriage is not supported by any major religion but its incidence appears to be more marked in muslim communities. There are examples of similar conduct in “plymouth breathern” and traveller communities.
Sexual Orientation	There is no national problem profile – however persons are know to be subject to forced marriage and honour based violence because they identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.
C.2.2 What relevant qualitative information has been considered?	
Age	There is no national problem profile
Disability	There is no national problem profile
Gender	There is no national problem profile
Race	There is no national problem profile
Religion / Belief	There is no national problem profile
Sexual Orientation	There is no national problem profile

C.2.3 What gaps in data/information were identified?	
Age	There is no national problem profile
Disability	There is no national problem profile
Gender	There is no national problem profile
Race	There is no national problem profile
Religion / Belief	There is no national problem profile
Sexual Orientation	There is no national problem profile
C.2.4 What consideration has been given to commissioning research?	
Age	Advice is being sought regarding the commissioning of a national problem profile
Disability	
Gender	
Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	

C3. Assess likely impact

C.3.1 From the analysis of data and information has any potential for differential/adverse impact been identified?	
Age	Improve protection of victims and go some way to removing differential impact for all diversity groupings
Disability	
Gender	
Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	
C.3.2 If yes explain any intentional impact:	
Age	As above – this proposal is aimed at supporting people from different diversity grouping and managing the risk they face from force marriage and honour based violence.
Disability	
Gender	
Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	
C.3.3 If yes explain what impact was discovered which you feel is justifiable in order to achieve the overall proposal aims. Please provide examples:	
Age	N/A
Disability	
Gender	
Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	
C.3.4 Are there any other factors that might help to explain differential /adverse impact?	
Age	N/A
Disability	
Gender	

Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	

C4. Consider alternatives

C.4.1 Summarise what changes have been made to the proposal to remove or reduce the potential for differential/adverse impact:
None
C.4.2 Summarise changes to the proposal to remove or reduce the potential for differential/adverse impact that were considered but not implemented and explain why this was the case:
None
C.4.3 If potential for differential/adverse impact remains explain why implementation is justifiable in order to meet the wider proposal aims:
N/A

C5. Consult formally

C.5.1 Has the proposal been subject to consultation? If no, please state why not. If yes, state which individuals and organisations were consulted and what form the consultation took:	
Age	HO – FCO FMU Unit – Non – Governmental Organisations – Karma Nirvana & Henna Foundation – Force Leads on FM / HBV 43 police forces
Disability	
Gender	
Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	
C.5.2 What was the outcome of the consultation?	
Age	N/A
Disability	
Gender	
Race	
Religion / Belief	
Sexual Orientation	
C.5.3 Has the proposal been reviewed and/or amended in light of the outcomes of consultation?	
C.5.4 Have the results of the consultation been fed back to the consultees?	
Yes	

C6. Decide whether to adopt the proposal

C.6.1 Provide a statement outlining the findings of the impact assessment process. If the proposal has been identified as having a possibility to adversely impact upon diverse communities, the statement should include justification for the implementation:
N/A

C7. Make Monitoring Arrangements

C.7.1 What consideration has been given to piloting the proposal?
C.7.2 What monitoring will be implemented at a national level by the proposal owning agency and/or other national agency?
Through review of this policy annually by ACPO FM / HBV lead Requirement to monitor the number of transfers between forces and impact
C.7.3 Is this proposal intended to be implemented by local agencies that have a statutory duty to impact assess policies? If so, what monitoring requirements are you placing on that agency?
No

C8. Publish Assessment Results

C.8.1 What form will the publication of the impact assessment take?
For publication on the ACPO website, the impact assessment be attached to the completed document as the first appendix. On the ACPO Intranet, the whole workbook will be attached to assist in the preparation of local audits.