14.38 Priority Policing Process

POLICY

The Service recognises the inherently unpredictable nature of policing and the need to be able to identify a flexible response to calls for service. Where personal safety is threatened, the community expects a timely and effective response. To maximise the Service's ability to effectively respond, there is a need to employ appropriate demand management strategies which may include the allocation of tasks to officers who do not usually operate in a first response capacity.

This policy acknowledges and reaffirms that the safety of people and the security of property are the priority of all officers. This policy embodies a flexible operational resource allocation model which ensures that internal organisational and administrative structures do not impede the efficient and effective delivery of policing services.

The priority policing process establishes a method for determining whether to initiate an immediate response to a call for service or to implement an alternate expectation strategy based on the nature of the call for service and the availability of operational resources.

Receiving calls for service

POLICY

Members receiving calls for policing services are to ensure that:

> (i) the relevant information is recorded in accordance with s. 1.6.1: 'Recording initial demand' of this Manual; and

> (ii) the particulars of the call are referred to an officer for tasking (a tasking officer).

Tasking officers

POLICY

Officers in charge of regions and commands are to ensure:

> (i) suitable tasking officers are identified for all areas under their control. Local standing operating procedures are to nominate specific officers or holders of particular positions to fill the role of tasking officer. Tasking officers may be nominated to have responsibility for tasking within a geographical area or within an organisational unit depending on the requirements of the relevant region or command.
>
> Generally, a tasking officer will be an officer with responsibility for assigning priority codes in accordance with s. 14.24: 'Priority codes' of this chapter. The responsibility for tasking, and the authority to issue associated directions, in any particular case should be clearly defined to avoid the potential for confusion as to an officer's responsibility and authority as a tasking officer;
>
> (ii) appropriate arrangements are made with the officers in charge of neighbouring regions to establish processes by which operational resources may be assigned to calls

for service in neighbouring regions; and

(iii) procedures are established within their area of responsibility to resolve issues arising as a result of tasking decisions (e.g. the tasking of units previously allocated to a particular activity to other calls for service). In all circumstances, however, priority is to be given to responses to calls for service involving a threat to personal safety.

The role of a tasking officer is to:

(i) allocate priority codes to calls for service in accordance with s. 14.24: 'Priority codes' of this chapter; and

(ii) direct officers to attend calls for service in accordance with the priority policing process.

A tasking officer need not be a senior officer and for the purposes of directing officers to attend to calls for service has the authority to direct all officers subject to any limitations established in Service or regional policy.

Tasking decisions of a tasking officer are not to be disputed by members receiving the tasking. Members who wish to query a tasking decision are to attend the tasking as directed and may raise the issue in accordance with regional arrangements.

In cases where an officer or officers are tasked to attend a call for service in circumstances that would place the officer at unreasonable risk (e.g. officers who are not qualified in OST being directed to attend a violent incident), the officer should immediately advise the tasking officer of that fact. Tasking officers should act upon such advice to ensure, as far as practicable, that additional or alternative resources are tasked to mitigate such risk.

Priority policing process

POLICY

Tasking officers receiving details of calls for policing services are to:

(i) determine whether the call relates to a threat to personal safety or property security;

(ii) in the case of threats to personal safety or property security, establish whether the call indicates a known threat, a potential threat or a perceived threat;

(iii) direct officers to attend to the call for service or initiate an alternate expectation strategy based on the application of the priority policing process. See the priority policing process flowcharts contained in Appendixes 14.5: 'Threats to Personal Safety', 14.6: 'Threats to Property Security' and 14.7: 'Other Calls for Service' of this chapter; and

(iv) ensure that organisational boundaries do not impede an appropriate and timely response to calls for service. Where no officers are available within a tasking officer's area of responsibility and an immediate response is required, the tasking officer should request a tasking officer in a neighbouring area, in accordance with relevant regional arrangements, to direct officers from that area to attend the call for service. Tasking officers receiving requests for assistance from tasking officers in other areas are to ensure that officers are directed to attend the call for service in accordance with the priority policing process and regional arrangements.

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