

Victoria Police Manual – Procedures and Guidelines

Research

Source Policy

These Procedures and Guidelines support and must be read in conjunction with the following:

- VPMP Policy development and advice
- VPMP Information sharing
- Research Protocols for Internal Researchers
- Research Protocols for External Researchers

Application

Procedures and Guidelines are provided to support the interpretation and application of rules and responsibilities. They include recommended good practices and assessment tools to help employees make lawful, ethical and professional decisions. Employees should use the **Professional and ethical standards** to inform the decisions they make to support interpretation of Procedures and Guidelines.

Procedures and Guidelines are not mandatory requirements on their own. However, where rules and responsibilities state that employees must have regard to Procedures and Guidelines, the Procedures and Guidelines must be used to help make decisions in support of the rules.

Procedures and Guidelines

1. Conducting research

1.1 General

- Research is commonly conducted with employees or members of the community and can be useful to:
 - understand the needs of the organisation or community;
 - evaluate outcomes of training, services or projects; or
 - assess personal attitudes and preferences.
- Common research methods include:
 - surveys
 - focus groups

- interviews
- observation
- The Policing Innovation and Research Unit (PIRU), Corporate Strategy and Operational Improvement Department provides a research consultancy service and should be contacted for advice on the best way to research an issue.

1.2 Internal Research

- Internal research projects are initiated by employees for the purpose of meeting, evaluating or improving specific organisational objectives. Internal research may be conducted by Victoria Police employees or by academics or private consultants contracted by Victoria Police for this purpose.
- For guidance, refer to the **Research Protocols for Internal Researchers**.

1.3 External Research

- External research projects are initiated by individuals or organisations external to Victoria Police, for example:
 - university students (including Victoria Police personnel) undertaking research towards an academic qualification
 - academics
 - private consultants
 - research institutes and
 - government agencies.
- For guidance, refer to the **Research Protocols for External Researchers**.

1.4 Procedure for gaining approval for research

- As stated in **VPMP Policy development and advice**, approval from the Research Coordinating Committee (RCC) must be obtained by external parties (including employees undertaking research as part of an academic qualification) undertaking any form of research involving Victoria Police information, personnel and/or other resources.
- The PIRU will also provide advice on whether an application must be submitted to the Victoria Police Human Research Ethics Committee (VPHREC) and assist with this application process.
- Application forms (RCC Application Form [VP Form 1343] / VPHREC Application Form [VP Form 1344]) and information for researchers are available from the PIRU intranet site.

1.5 Research Coordinating Committee

The RCC assesses proposed research on a number of criteria, such as the potential benefits of the research to Victoria Police and the community, compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines and alignment with the Victoria Police Research Agenda. The RCC may also consider the commitment of Victoria Police resources that might be required. For guidance, refer to the **Research Protocols for External Researchers**.

1.6 Victoria Police Human Research Ethics Committee

The VPHREC considers the ethical implications of research that is conducted by Victoria Police personnel, or research that affects or concerns Victoria Police personnel or information. For guidance, refer to the relevant **Research Protocols** and the PIRU Intranet site.

2. Approval to use surveys

As stated in **VPMP Policy development and advice**, all surveys conducted by employees must be approved by either a Superintendent or equivalent, or the relevant Department(s) Head depending on the nature of the survey.

Prior to communicating and releasing the survey to the target audience, the survey must be reviewed by PIRU to ensure the research design and methodology is sound. See the table below for the type of survey and corresponding approver.

Survey audience	Approver	
	Superintendent or equivalent	Relevant Department(s) Head and Policing Innovation Research Unit
Public	Surveys conducted at Divisional level that address service delivery issues	All other surveys
Employees	Surveys managed by and circulated within their Department	Surveys that are given to employees from another Department

For advice in relation to developing a survey, contact PIRU PBEA: POLICING INNOVATION & RESEARCH UNIT-OIC.

Further Advice and Information

For further advice and assistance regarding these Procedures and Guidelines, contact Policing Innovation and Research Unit, Community Safety Division, Corporate Strategy and Operational Improvement Department.

Additional information including copies of the **Research Protocols** and the RCC and VPHREC application forms can be obtained through the PIRU intranet site.

Update history

Date of first issue	09/07/10	
Date updated	Summary of change	Force File number
23/05/2011	Updated the name of the former Strategic Research Unit to National Liaison and Research Unit, clarified the research processes and amended the approver position for the conduct of surveys.	066685/11
18/11/13	References to redundant instruments following IMSSD review have been updated with corresponding new instruments.	069562/11
29/03/16	Change the approver of internal surveys from the Census Steering Committee to the relevant Department(s) Head. Internal surveys must be reviewed by Policing Innovation Research Unit prior release.	FF-099743