

Victoria Police Manual – Procedures and Guidelines

Operational debriefings

Source Policy

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

- VPMP Operational debriefings

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. Criteria for conducting a debrief

1.1 *Hot debrief*

- As required by **VPMP Operational debriefings**, a hot debrief must be held where the Area of Operations Commander, Incident Commander or Pursuit Controller considers it necessary to quickly assess the conduct of an operation or incident. Generally, a hot debrief should be held where an operation was subject to an operation order.
- Hot debriefs may assess the operation or incident as a whole, or specific units' roles in the operation or incident.

1.2 *Full debrief*

As required by **VPMP Operational debriefings**, a full debrief must be held following a critical incident, where use of force has been used on a child, or where the Area of Operations Commander, Incident Commander or Pursuit

Controller considers it necessary. A full debrief may occur in the first instance or following the conduct of a hot debrief.

A full debrief should be considered:

- where concerns about or deficiencies in the conduct of the operation or incident were identified in the hot debrief
- following large operations or incidents that involved a number of members, specialist units or other emergency services or organisations
- following non-routine high risk or protracted incidents or operations
- for cross-border pursuits, or a pursuit that resulted in a collision where there were no injuries
- where the conduct or outcome of the incident or operation may attract scrutiny from oversight bodies, the public or the media.

2. Attendees

VPMP Operational debriefings requires the debriefing convenor to determine who is to attend the debriefing. The nature of the incident or operation will inform who should attend and the following is a guide to the minimum attendees. Convenors may require other employees to attend, as they consider necessary.

2.1 *General operations /incidents*

- Hot debrief held immediately after the completion of operation or incident – all employees directly involved
- Full debrief – a representative group of participants; all or a group of Officers and supervisors from police units involved; if applicable, supporting emergency service or organisation

2.2 *Vehicle pursuits*

- All members from primary and secondary units
- Divisional Patrol Manager, if they directed the termination of the pursuit

2.3 *Searches of properties*

- Level One (where force was used to gain entry) – Sub-officer who directly supervised the search and members involved
- Level Two – authorising Officer and members involved
- Level Three – the SOG Officer or other SOG representative and members involved

2.4 **Critical incidents**

- Area of Operations Commander and Incident Commander.
- Members directly involved in the incident, unless medical or welfare reasons dictate otherwise; the members are:
 - to be advised to seek legal advice before attending
 - not to be compelled to answer questions at the debriefing where they may incriminate themselves
 - not to be accompanied by a third party, e.g. legal practitioner
- All or a representative group of members from other police units present
- A representative from Police Communications Division
- Other emergency services or outside agencies not to attend

3. Debriefing content

3.1 **General principles**

As stated in **VPMP Operational Debriefing**, the debriefing convenor is responsible for determining the debriefing content. Hot and full debriefs should address the following minimum issues:

- whether all of the Safety First and SMEAC principles were incorporated and followed in both the planning and the execution of the operation or incident
- whether the plan (SMEAC) was properly conveyed to and understood by all the participants
- whether the objective of the operation or incident was successfully achieved, or if not why not
- the operational adequacy of the planning, orders and resources
- whether any required follow-up action or documentation has been completed or is being undertaken
- in relation to an incident or critical incident, what action has been taken, or can be taken, to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

3.2 **Debriefing report guide**

Full debriefs require the preparation of a written Debriefing Report. The following Debriefing Report Guide is provided to assist convenors and is for guidance only. It is not exhaustive, nor will all of the details be applicable to each incident.

Debriefing Report Guide	
General Information	
• Operation Order Name • Brief Details of Incident • Debrief Location • Time • Members Present • Debriefing Convenor • Task Print Out Attached	• Name of Operation Order, if applicable • Time of debrief • Area of Operations Commander/Incident Commander (police)/ Incident Controllers (other combating authorities)/other members' names/registered numbers/ services/attach list • Name, rank, number, location, phone, fax, internal mail code • Yes/no
• Situation • Mission • Execution • Administration/ Logistics • Communications	• Was it adequately covered/explained/understood • Was it adequately described/explained/understood • Were all assessments, contingencies, strategies considered/explained? - briefing - conducted/by whom/location/adequacy - reasonable foreseeable contingencies – considered and listed/if not, why not? - withdrawal/disengagement strategy – considered/ utilised/ adequacy • Considered/adequacy/notes-log • What was available/adequacy/back up/between services/are Intergraph tapes available or referenced?
Incident Management System (ICCS)	
• Mission/Objectives (Management by Objectives) Were objectives adequately identified/explained/communicated/understood? • Command Structure (Functional Management) Was a command structure identified and functional management (Planning, Logistics, Operations, Intelligence, Investigation, Public Information and Safety Advisor) considered, applied or delegated. • Span of Control Was the number of tasks and/or personnel under the direct control of the Police Commander and functional officers (if delegated) appropriate in the circumstances?	
Operational Safety Principles	
• Safety First – adopted/defined/consider different safety principles for different incidents • Risk Assessment – different assessments for different incidents/what risks were considered • Take Charge – immediately identified(were tabards worn)/ command and control by Area of Operations Commander, Incident Commander, other (was it effective)/ location of command post/handover • Planned Response – various incidents to be considered/operation order/emergency management	

Debriefing Report Guide

plan/functions of personnel/ adequacy/was plan understood by all involved

- **Cordon and Containment** – I.C.E.N.C.I.R/planned operation/emergency management plan
- **Avoid Confrontation** – planned operation/critical incident
- **Avoid Force** – could force be avoided/what options were considered/available
- **Minimum Force** – if force used/was it minimum/what options available/were they available
- **Forced Entry Searches** – considerations regarding decisions as to why this option was utilised (last resort)
- **Resources** – available/utilised/sufficient/insufficient/informed/considered

Vehicle Pursuits (if applicable)

- Whether the pursuit was conducted in accordance with the **VPMP Urgent duty driving and pursuits** and **VPMG Urgent duty driving and pursuits**
- The extent of compliance with Rule 305, Road Rules—Victoria
- Whether supervising Sub-officers accepted responsibility for and carried out Pursuit Controller function
- Effectiveness of the communications centre
- The competence of each police driver involved
- The number of units involved and their roles
- The effectiveness of the coordination & control of the pursuit
- The effectiveness and level of planning
- Risk management strategies applied – threat to safety of any person, speed of vehicles (police/offender) identity of offender known, road/weather/traffic conditions etc.
- Collision – location, injuries (police member/s &/or offender) relatives notified,
- Other relevant matters – distance covered during pursuit, duration of pursuit, primary unit, back up unit driver/observer), vehicle types (offender/police), offender/s details, registration numbers, MCIG attending, etc.

Other Matters

- Media – Media Liaison notified/attended/marshalling point identified
- Welfare – considered/food/relief/injuries/relatives and/or Clinical Services notified
- Occupational health and safety – issues raised/referred to, identify ongoing potential threat to members
- Emergency Response Guide – if applicable/type of incident/referred to/points covered
- Other topics raised – convenor's discretion/feedback of personnel present
- Overall, what went well – convenor's discretion/feedback
- What would we do differently next time – convenor's discretion/feedback
- Debrief convenor's comments – discretion/pending interviews, if any
- Debrief convenor's recommendations – attach list, if applicable

Debriefing Report Guide

- Further pages attached – yes/ no – number of pages
- Debriefing finish time
- Distribution – through relevant Line Managers to the Assistant Commissioner (Education) or Critical Incident Management Review Committee.

Further Advice and Information

For further advice and assistance regarding these Procedures and Guidelines, contact your supervisor or local training officer.

Update history

Date of first issue	22/2/10	
Date updated	Summary of change	Force File number
20/06/2011	Circumstances requiring a full debrief has been expanded to include where operational safety equipment is used in an incident with a child (section 1). Consideration should also be given, where relevant, to what action can be taken to prevent similar incidents occurring again (section 3).	067499/11
27/08/2012	Inclusion of the Incident Management System (ICCS) framework into the Debriefing Report Guide (section 3.2).	065003/10