THE MISSING PERSONS TASKFORCE

A REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE TO MISSING INCIDENTS

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Introduction

1. The Missing Persons Taskforce was launched by the Prime Minister on 10 December 2009. Alan Campbell MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Crime Reduction at the Home Office, was invited by the Prime Minister to chair the Taskforce which set itself a remit of improving the multi-agency response during the period in which persons are missing. Missing is an issue which cuts across many sectors and agencies. Membership of the Taskforce included Helen Southworth MP, DAC Richard Bryan, (the ACPO lead on Missing Persons), Martin Houghton-Brown (Chief Executive, Missing People), the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre and a number of key Government Departments.

Background

2. Every year in the United Kingdom, an estimated 250,000 people go missing, of whom approximately 140,000 are children and young people. However, a complete national data set is not available, so the estimated figures relate to reported cases of missing persons, rather than the actual numbers who go missing. Police forces are still in the process of complying with the recently introduced Code of Practice on missing persons data. People go missing for many different reasons and in many different circumstances. Some decide to go missing to escape debt or family problems. Some suffer dementia, or mental health problems. Some are forced or lured to go missing through for example, abductions, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Some drift out of contact due to transient lifestyles or problems with alcohol or drugs. Some suffer little ill effect, others may come to harm. Some die, through misadventure, homicide or suicide and the impact on their families can in many cases be devastating.

Current Arrangements

3. The issue of missing persons is a complex and multi-layered one requiring a co-ordinated multi-agency response. The current delivery landscape is similarly complex and in some ways fragmented. The Government recognises that there is room for improvement in the coordination of operational and governance arrangements. Local authorities and the police have also sought greater clarity around agency roles and responsibilities. Further detail on the national, local and non Government sector delivery landscape are set out below.

4. At a national level, the Missing Persons Bureau within the National Policing Improvement Agency commenced operations in April 2008. It is currently the lead Government agency for policy on missing persons and provides professional operational support services to police forces, is the central knowledge and coordination centre for missing and unidentified people/remains and provides valuable assistance to families with regard to locating missing people. On 11 January 2010, the Government announced the intention to move the national lead on missing children to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre – to enable
CEOP to build on their extensive experience of responding to incidents where children and young people have been or are vulnerable to abuse.

5. At a local level, services to missing persons are delivered through 43 police forces in England and Wales and 152 local authorities in England. Within local authorities, the issue of missing persons cuts across a number of areas, including homelessness, mental health services, children’s services and young runaways provision, statutory local safeguarding children boards and local safeguarding vulnerable adults boards (soon to be statutory).

6. Alongside the local and national statutory agencies, there is a wide range of non-Government organisations operating across the country, all involved in aspects of policy and delivery of services, including, for example, emergency accommodation and the two helplines, Message Home and Runaway Helpline, provided by Missing People.

7. In terms of governance there is currently a Strategic Oversight Group (SOG) on Missing Persons led by the NPIA and chaired by DAC Richard Bryan, which looks at strategic issues relating to the reduction of missing persons incidents whilst the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) leads on taking forward policy and work on Young Runaways through a Cross-Departmental Working Group. It has driven progress towards improving services for young runaways, including development of the Young Runaways Action Plan, and has the wider policy lead across Government on safeguarding children and young people.

8. Throughout its work the Taskforce has been mindful of the impending move of responsibility for missing children to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, and that further work is underway on the detail of those arrangements. Where recommendations in this report are made that impact on missing children as well as adults, these have been jointly attributed to NPIA and CEOP.

Work carried out to date

9. Helen Southworth MP, who chairs the All Party Parliamentary Group on Children Who Run Away or Go Missing, chaired a parliamentary panel in December 2007 which made recommendations on ways to reduce the number of children going missing or running away, and ensure the immediate safety of those who do run away or go missing. However many of the recommendations remain unimplemented.

10. The DCSF works closely with other Government departments, key stakeholders and delivery partners, including police, representatives of local government and children’s services, and experts from the voluntary sector, to drive forward improvements in services for young runaways. In 2006 the Children’s Society produced a report “Stepping Up: the Future of Runaway Services” which was published in Autumn 2007 and the Government supported its findings. Its recommendations were based around the concept of a safety net for young runaways at a national, regional and local level. This led to the development of the Young Runaways Action Plan, which benefited from the commitment and support of all the key stakeholders.
11. We are also aware that separated children from overseas who in many cases claim asylum and are placed in the care of Children’s Services are at risk of going missing from care and returning to their traffickers. These young people may not know when they run from care that they have been trafficked into the country for exploitation. The Government has been acutely aware that this category of children requires support measures of a different kind and the Government published revised guidance, aimed at practitioners, in July 2009, “Statutory Guidance on Children Who Run Away and Go Missing From Home or Care”, in which this category of children were included.

The Missing Persons Taskforce

12. Persuaded by the strength of the case for improvement, the Prime Minister established the Missing Persons Taskforce in December 2009 and a full list of membership and Terms of Reference of the Taskforce are contained at Appendix B to this document.

13. The Taskforce has met three times and hosted a multi-agency stakeholder engagement event in London on 24 February 2010. In the course of its work, the Taskforce has considered the evidence base for missing, commissioned and considered an analysis of police and local authority compliance with existing practice, and considered whether the current legislative framework on local organisations is adequate. In addition, it has considered examples of good practice and successful measures already in place and how these might be extended nationally. The Taskforce identified gaps in compliance and how these might be addressed, and in turn looked at how information is collected consistently to gain a better understanding of the issues. It has also agreed to the creation of a research sub-group to examine gaps in knowledge and awareness of missing, and consider the commissioning of specific pieces of work to improve awareness and knowledge of issues which are yet to be fully understood. In addition, it has established a virtual network of practitioners, NGOs, and sector experts to liaise on missing persons going forwards.

14. In response to its findings, the Taskforce sought stakeholder input on improvements in the response, tested stakeholder understanding of the issues, sought stakeholder views on the emerging themes and recommendations, and during consultation, identified barriers to improved performance and effective responses by local agencies and how these may be overcome, ensuring that it sought to identify the support needs of families. Finally, it considered the adequacy of the investigative approach to the identification of found bodies and remains by the Coroner’s Service and the effectiveness of police liaison.

Taskforce findings

15. At the outset of the Taskforce discussions, the following issues were identified as problematic areas that the Taskforce work should look to address:

- Missing issues are not universally understood by all agencies and practitioners
- Areas of poor data collection;
Multi-agency response not always complementary, coherent or coordinated;

Roles and responsibilities of all agencies not always clear;

Existing resources not always used to best effect;

Lack of data and evaluation means sharing of policies and best practice are at times haphazard;

Agencies’ capability, capacity and risk management need to be reviewed; and

Levels of support to families of the missing were not felt to be sufficient.

16. Flowing from the above issues, the Taskforce identified four key themes under which the majority of the Taskforce recommendations are grouped at paragraph 18 below. However the Taskforce also recognised that these recommendations represent only the first phase in the work needed to fully address this issue and concluded there should be a longer term programme of work to:

- reduce the incidents of children and vulnerable adults going missing; and
- achieve operational best performance during the period in which people are missing.

Case study

Helen, aged 42, went missing from a care home in South London. She is diagnosed with a severe mental health problem, and had gone missing without money, a phone or any means to travel on public transport. It was mid November and cold.

Missing People was asked to start work on the case almost immediately. The charity prepared a poster and web appeal, and went on to start organising television appeals in the London area. Missing People informed the police, care home and missing person’s family of progress.

Three days later a nurse phoned the charity’s freephone helpline number to report that the missing person was an inpatient on her mental health ward in North London, many miles away from the missing person’s care home. The nurse had recognised that her patient was extremely vulnerable and, worrying that someone might be looking for her, the nurse checked the Missing People website and saw the appeal. Missing People were able to alert the investigating police force and care home and the missing person was returned safely.
Making it Happen

17. The recommendations contained in this report will need to be closely monitored to ensure delivery. Mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that the visibility of Missing Persons as an issue is maintained and that implementation of the recommendations is carried out. The Taskforce therefore recommends the creation of an Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group (IDMG) on Missing Persons. This would ensure that all relevant Government departments remain engaged on the work around missing persons, and will help ensure the visibility and accountability for delivery of the Taskforce recommendations. In particular, the Taskforce makes the following recommendations on governance and accountability:

- There should be an Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group (IDMG) on Missing Persons, chaired by a nominated Minister, through which Ministers would oversee delivery of the Missing Persons Taskforce recommendations;

- A new senior official level working group (Strategic Delivery Group), with representation from all organisations involved in the Taskforce, should be put in place to ensure implementation of a programme of work on missing persons.

- A communications plan should be developed to ensure existing good practice and advice on different agencies roles and responsibilities may be clearly communicated.

18. During the course of the Taskforce work, four key themes emerged, under which the remaining recommendations contained in this report are grouped. These themes were felt to be the areas where improvements would have real impact on the ground and where attention should be focused. The themes are as follows:

- Data and information management
- Improved multi-agency working
- Risk assessment and information sharing
- Support for families

19. These themes were explored at a stakeholder event in February this year which was attended by over 70 representatives from Government, NGOs, police and local authorities with a key role and interest in missing persons. Families of missing people were also present and input directly into the event. The event proved extremely valuable and output from the event fed directly into the work of the Taskforce and the emerging recommendations. With the exception of issues around governance which are dealt with separately in this report, the issues raised and improvements suggested at the stakeholder event fell into the categories above and this report will now consider each of these themes in turn.

Data and Information Management

20. In considering this issue, the Taskforce found that there was clear variation across the country in respect to the basic processes and arrangements.
in place to respond to and deal with the issue of missing persons. Compliance with the police code of practice, for example, is variable and Local Authority performance against the national indicator on young runaways also varies. The NPIA is already working to ensure improved compliance rates but action is needed to ensure full compliance with the code of practice and similarly that issues relating to NI71 are addressed (NI71 forms part of the National Indicator Set (NIS) and assesses performance in local authorities and police forces on information management and service provision). This will help ensure a national picture of missing incidents is available and will help forces ensure the minimum information is available to ensure services are provided effectively at a local level.

21. National guidance to police forces on the management, recording and investigation of missing persons was produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers in 2005. The 2010 version of this guidance is due to be published this Spring. Revised statutory inter-agency guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, has just been published, setting out how organisations and individuals should work together locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, including those who go missing.

22. Accurate data on the number of people who go missing is notoriously difficult to maintain, and there is insufficient information about how many people remain missing at any one time. Despite the fact that measures to improve the method of data collection by the key agencies involved have been introduced, the situation remains unsatisfactory. Collecting the right data at a local level is therefore essential to driving improvements in services for missing people.

Case study

West Mercia Police were experiencing high numbers of reports concerning ‘looked after children’ and so took an active look at the issue. One home, for example, reported 265 missing children to the force since 2008, with one child reported 81 times. The force worked hard to target the missing persons cases in their area and drew up a list of the specific challenges faced and developed an action plan to: intervene with top missing persons using local policing teams, challenge poorer performing homes and hospitals and raise standards of corporate parenting in those homes. This enabled them to deal more effectively with the problem and detailed figures show that during the year 2009/10 the force was able to reduce the number of missing incidents significantly and make cost savings of £5,723,000 - the equivalent to 139 Constable posts.
23. At the stakeholder event, the view was expressed that inspected assessments were preferred over a self-assessment regime. In addition, there was no one single, composite inspection report on missing to cover the whole country. This has led to a disjointed picture and there is reason to suggest that a joint inspection regime between Ofsted, HMIC and the Care Quality Commission would ensure greater consistency in the performance of local authorities children’s services, children’s homes, adult care homes and the police in meeting National Minimum Standards, where applicable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- NPIA and CEOP, with support from ACPO to ensure full police force compliance with the Police Code of Practice on the Collection and Sharing of Missing Persons Data;
- ACPO to issue revised Guidance on Missing Persons Investigations, incorporating good practice identified in data collection and information sharing and disseminate to forces;
- DCSF to work with CLG to ensure focus on Young Runaways is maintained and ensure that local performance data includes information on missing;
- Government to work with Ofsted, HMIC and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure correct measures are in place for monitoring and assessment of performance on missing incidents.

Risk Assessment and Information sharing

24. Under this theme, which includes issues around the sharing of information on individual cases, it quickly became evident that a multi-agency risk management in all missing cases was essential. From the policing and investigation point of view, there was a feeling that missing needed to be defined and classified on an equal level to crime to allow police to conduct the necessary enquiries. Numerous examples of good practice were quoted in relation to management of risk, including multi-agency panels, Ni71 data exchange, ContactPoint, Tasking and Coordinating processes in police forces and effective family support. These included the Lancashire Pilot involving a joint working arrangement between Lancashire Police and Lancashire Social Services Department, (SSD), with agreed protocols and a clear structure to resolve interagency disputes and problem cases. Other examples included the work done by West Mercia Police’s missing persons risk reduction strategy. But overall, it was agreed that risk assessments must be dynamic and regularly reviewed, and underpinned by professional judgement and processes.
Key recommendations arising from these points therefore include:

- Government, in conjunction with stakeholders, to develop a shared risk assessment model for practitioners to use across all sectors;
- Government to consider legal issues relating to sharing of personal data and whether further legal powers are required to ensure data can be shared between necessary agencies;
- A national model of information sharing should be developed which can be tailored at a local level to ensure data and information can be shared between operational practitioners and agencies on persons at risk;
- The Department of Health (DH) will work with partners to develop an approach to managing risks related to adults with mental illness, learning disability or dementia who go missing.

Improved Multi-Agency working

The Taskforce also considered examples of good practice where local action with partners has resulted in improved outcomes for missing people, children’s services and the police. The Communities and Local Government’s (CLG’s) work on preventing youth homelessness has recognised the importance of early identification and intervention, understanding that many of the factors that lead to homelessness can also trigger young people to run away. Joint CLG and DCSF guidance already in place should improve joint working between children’s services and housing authorities and has set out how joint protocols can be developed. Local authorities, through outreach services, will know about rough sleeping in their area. In London a database, accessed by outreach services, holds information on rough sleepers across London who sleep rough during the year. Over 3,000 people sleep rough over the year in the capital with up to 250 on any
single night. A significant number of local authorities and the health care sector already have protocols in place to agree inter-agency responses to running away or children who go missing. However, there was evidence of a mixed picture of implementation. When children do go missing from care, for example, the authority responsible for their care and the placement provider should work with the local police following the accepted local protocols for managing missing person incidents. There needs to be increased co-operation across local authority boundaries, and between statutory and voluntary organisations, with co-operation being key to meeting the needs of missing children and adults effectively.

27. The Taskforce learned from stakeholder feedback that a number of pockets of good practice existed among police forces and in local authorities, for example, a disability line in Northamptonshire, autism cards, bulletins to publicise UASCs, refuge in South Yorkshire, Street Safe in Lancashire, dedicated missing persons officers in Hertfordshire, family mediation in Brent and Kent, and the Westminster Health Protocol. It was felt that lessons learned from the adoption of good practice needed to be considered for wider adoption and roll-out in a greater number of police forces, local authorities and the health sector.

Case study

The Lancashire Pilot involved a joint working arrangement with Lancashire Social Services Department, (SSD), with agreed protocols and a clear structure to resolve interagency disputes and problem cases. Referrals were based on three reports being made within a three month period, with escalation processes through strategy meeting and executive review levels. The results of the Lancashire Pilot were that, in the first year, a 32% reduction in missing person reports was achieved from 508 to 343, set against a 7.5% increase elsewhere in Lancashire. The second year of the pilot saw a further reduction of 44%, and the worse individual’s missing person record reduced from 78 to 18 reports. There was also a reduction in the number of referrals for strategy meetings from 14 to 3. The success of this good practice working has been discussed and shared with other forces for instance Devon and Cornwall Constabulary followed Lancashire’s multi-agency working scheme and in 2007 their own project reduced the number of missing persons reports by 35% and a further 17% in 2009. The force has also achieved significant savings through direct entry of missing reports into its COMPACT case management system.
The message from stakeholders was that any new guidance planned by central government needed to be concise and reviewed continuously and embedded fully into local practice. It was suggested that user friendly and multi-agency practice guidance be produced on all aspects of missing, which the Taskforce considers to be essential. This should include guidance on child trafficking and victims of child sexual exploitation. In addition, stakeholder feedback resulted in calls for improved training, single points of contact, and improved measures in relation to multi-agency reviews of all missing persons cases where a death occurs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- CLG to continue to work with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and local authorities to identify those factors that lead young people to run away and to encourage local authorities to put in place effective preventative measures.

- Home Office and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), in conjunction with partners, to consider development of multi-agency practice guidance and an online resource on the response to missing incidents to include guidance on the roles and responsibilities of all agencies when people go missing;

- Lessons learned and examples of good practice already available to be identified and disseminated to police forces, health sector and local authorities, including private, commercially run care homes;

- The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) and Department of Health (DH) should consider the role of both the Local Safeguarding Adult and Local Safeguarding Children Boards on managing the local multi-agency response to missing persons and ensuring that local protocols are established and followed;

- Police forces, local authorities and partners in health sector to nominate a single point of contact for each agency to liaise with and to ensure policy and practice on missing is being delivered on the ground;

- All sectors should consider reviewing the existing and future training requirements for practitioners around missing;

- ACPO, NPIA and CEOP should consider a multi agency review, taking account of the outcome of the inquest, of missing person cases where a death occurs.

Support for Families

Taskforce feedback revealed that there was great inconsistency of support provided to families when family members go missing for whatever reason. This included a lack of information on service provision/processes/procedures. There was also a lack of clarity around who does what and potential duplication of services. Feedback also identified inconsistent provision and support of Single Point of Contact cover in forces in order that families would know who to contact and direct any queries.
30. Practitioners and relatives of missing persons, who attended the stakeholder event, were keen to ensure that the messages around support for families were recognised and understood. It was felt that all agencies needed to consider where there are deficiencies in the levels and nature of support to families and those who go missing and in particular, as part of their remit in taking on responsibility for missing children, CEOP should consider what additional support can be given to families of missing children and consideration should be given to the development of an online support capability for families.

31. Others identified the need for greater levels of support to families through a dedicated framework involving single points of contact, NGOs, peer groups, online fora and community engagement. The Taskforce was told that, with suitably targeted training, dedicated missing persons staff could be established within police forces. Feedback stressed the importance of publicity in missing persons cases, and the value of peer support groups.

Case study
Vicky’s husband, Vinnie (20s), went missing six and a half years ago:
“When my husband first went missing there was the huge impact of suddenly going from being a couple and having two wages to suddenly overnight becoming a single mum who could only work part time, with a mortgage and bills to pay. There was this traumatic thing going on that my husband was missing but there was still the everyday living to do as well.

“It’s horrendous enough that you’re in the situation that you’re in, but I think a lot of people don’t realise what the implications are. You want there to be a rule book, you want instructions on how do you cope in this situation and there isn’t one. “It’s like I’m always up against a brick wall; people don’t understand. My mortgage company, I can explain the situation until I am blue in the face, but they still ring the house and ask for him. Until seven years is up and I have a death certificate or some kind of evidence then I can’t see it changing.

“I’m always told that it’s just such a unique situation. I suppose it is not something that solicitors come across everyday but again I can’t be the only person this has happened to.”
32. The Taskforce also identified that there are a range of legal procedures in England and Wales to establish that a missing person may have died. These procedures allow for a missing person’s estate to be administered or for a surviving spouse or civil partner to remarry, but there is no general procedure. We consider that this law could be simplified for the benefit of those left behind by missing persons.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government to scope the options for extending and improving the support available to families of the missing, identifying mechanisms by which every family gets the support it needs;
- Better information should be provided to families on the support available from police; other agencies and NGOs;
- Examine ways in which an online facility or toolkit providing advice and support could be made available for families.
- Ministry of Justice to consider the benefit and circumstances in which a presumption of death might apply in missing persons cases.

33. A full list of all the recommendations from the Taskforce is set out at Appendix A to this report, with the Taskforce Terms of Reference and membership at Appendix B.
APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MISSING PERSONS TASKFORCE

The full list of recommendations as set out in the report are as follows:

1. There should be an Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group (IDMG) on Missing Persons, chaired by a nominated Minister, through which Ministers would oversee delivery of the Missing Persons Taskforce recommendations;

2. A new senior official level working group (Strategic Delivery Group), with representation from all organisations involved in the Taskforce, should be put in place to ensure implementation of a programme of work on missing persons

3. A communications plan should be developed to ensure existing good practice and advice on different agencies roles and responsibilities may be clearly communicated.

4. NPIA and CEOP, with support from ACPO to ensure full police force compliance with the Police Code of Practice on the Collection and Sharing of Missing Persons Data;

5. ACPO to issue revised Guidance on Missing Persons Investigations, incorporating good practice identified in data collection and information sharing and disseminate to forces;

6. DCSF to work with CLG to ensure focus on Young Runaways is maintained and ensure that local performance data includes information on missing;

7. Government to work with Ofsted, HMIC and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure correct measures are in place for monitoring and assessment of performance on missing incidents.

8. Government, in conjunction with stakeholders, to develop a shared risk assessment model for practitioners to use across all sectors;

9. Government to consider legal issues relating to sharing of personal data and whether further legal powers are required to ensure data can be shared between necessary agencies;

10. A national model of information sharing should be developed which can be tailored at a local level to ensure data and information can be shared between operational practitioners and agencies on persons at risk;

11. Department of Health (DH) will work with partners to develop an approach to managing risks related to adults with mental illness, learning disability or dementia who go missing.
12. CLG to continue to work with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and local authorities to identify those factors that lead young people to run away and to encourage local authorities to put in place effective preventative measures.

13. Home Office and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), in conjunction with partners, to consider development of multi-agency practice guidance and an online resource on the response to missing incidents to include guidance on the roles and responsibilities of all agencies when people go missing;

14. Lessons learned and examples of good practice already available to be identified and disseminated to police forces, health sector and local authorities, including private, commercially run care homes;

15. The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) and Department of Health (DH) should consider the role of both the Local Safeguarding Adult and Local Safeguarding Children Boards on managing the local multi-agency response to missing persons and ensuring that local protocols are established and followed;

16. Police forces, local authorities and partners in health sector to nominate a single point of contact for each agency to liaise with and to ensure policy and practice on missing is being delivered on the ground;

17. All sectors should consider reviewing the existing and future training requirements for practitioners around missing;

18. ACPO, NPIA and CEOP should consider a multi agency review, taking account of the outcome of the inquest, of missing person cases where a death occurs.

19. Government to scope the options for extending and improving the support available to families of the missing, identifying mechanisms by which every family gets the support it needs;

20. Better information should be provided to families on the support available from police; other agencies and NGOs;

21. Examine ways in which an online facility or toolkit providing advice and support could be made available for families.

22. Ministry of Justice to consider the benefit and circumstances in which a presumption of death might apply in missing persons cases.
APPENDIX B

TASKFORCE MEMBERSHIP

Alan Campbell, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Crime Reduction, Home Office (CHAIR)
Terrie Alafat, Communities and Local Government
DAC Richard Bryan, ACPO Lead on Missing Persons
Bruce Calderwood, Department of Health
DCC Jim Gamble / Alex Nagle, CEOP
Elizabeth Gibby, Ministry of Justice
Tyson Hepple, Home Office
Martin Houghton-Brown, Chief Executive, Missing People
CC Peter Neyroud / Sean Sutton, National Missing Persons Bureau at NPIA
Jeanette Pugh, Department for Children Schools and Families
Helen Southworth MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Children Who Run Away or Go Missing

Terms Of Reference

To scope the measures required to improve outcomes for missing persons, and to work across Government departments, police forces and other relevant organisations, to:

- Identify the key strategic risks in relation to missing persons and ensure appropriate responses are put in place;
- Assess the current policy and practice in response to missing persons, and consider whether any legislative or statutory response is required;
- Identify measures of successful intervention already in place, especially early location and recovery, and propose how the multi-agency response could be extended and improved;
- Identify barriers to an improved local multi-agency response to instances of missing and how these may be overcome, eg: consistent data available for use between agencies;
- Consider whether greater effectiveness and cost effectiveness can be secured through using existing resources.
- Identify research opportunities to improve understanding about missing persons.
- To make recommendations for the missing persons programme to the Prime Minister and Home Secretary.