



College of Policing

07-004 DEBRIEFING

Home/Armed Policing/Post Deployment/Introduction/Debriefing

Once an armed deployment has been concluded, a full debrief should be considered to identify opportunities for operational and organisational learning. Large or protracted operations should include arrangements for a specific debriefing session so that good practice or areas for development related to command structure, tactics or equipment used can be identified and lessons learned. Debriefs should be documented.

There are a range of issues that may be addressed during the debriefing process, but not all will be required in every situation. Each has a different but equally important purpose. These are operational and tactical, organisational and evidential.

It may be appropriate to undertake an Organisational Learning debrief when the criteria for post incident investigation has been met and an independent investigation has commenced.

Organisational Learning debriefs provide an opportunity to identify potential safety related improvements. Where conducted in the context of a post incident investigation, careful facilitation and identified terms of reference are required in order to ensure that the matters discussed do not compromise the independent investigation.

Such a debrief should only be undertaken once detailed accounts or evidential statements have been provided to the independent investigative authority and an indication has been given that, having considered the evidence available at that stage, there is no suggestion of criminal action or misconduct on the part of any of those attending the debrief. Where such criminal acts or misconduct have been identified this should be taken into account in determining whether a debrief is appropriate. It may also be appropriate to obtain legal advice.

The independent investigative authority, and where required the police SIO for the crime investigation relating to the original incident, should be informed that an Organisational APP content Organisational Learning Debriefing in PIP. V1.0 03062014

Learning debrief is being considered and should be provided with the terms of reference. Any observations or objections should be documented and included in the subsequent consideration regarding whether a debrief is appropriate in the circumstances.

Although any decision to undertake an Operational Learning debrief whilst an independent investigation is ongoing will be based upon the prevailing circumstances, in general terms the most likely areas for consideration will be;

- asset allocation;
- command structures and access to tactical advice;
- tactical capability to respond to an incident.

It will not be appropriate to address the specific actions of individuals, evidential issues relating to witness accounts or scene and post incident management during such a debrief.

The decision relating to an Organisational Learning debrief being conducted should be taken by an individual who did not perform an operational or command role in the incident being debriefed. The decision and supporting rationale should be recorded.

The individual(s) tasked with facilitating the debrief should have an appropriate knowledge of local and national guidance related to Armed Policing. The debrief should be conducted by an accredited Post Incident Manager who has the necessary debriefing skills and who did not perform an operational or command role in the incident being debriefed. Where this cannot be achieved a trained debriefer, supported by a Post incident Manager, should be used.

A record of those attending the debrief, and a suitable summary of the discussions, should be maintained. This summary should include identified good practice and areas for development which will support the organisational learning and improvement. Where anonymity has been granted to any person attending this should be documented appropriately.

The ACPO Armed Policing Secretariat has a responsibility for disseminating good practice and lessons learned. Forces are encouraged to submit early reports to the Secretariat using the following email address
acpo.policeuseoffirearms@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Prior to officers finishing duty, the senior supervisory officer should also consider if there are any outstanding issues which need to be addressed; see (07- 045)Defusing.