

these services, investigating officers, Post Incident Managers and staff association representatives have distinct roles. It is, however, essential that all officers, Post Incident Managers and those involved in any debriefing process are able to demonstrate integrity of purpose in all communications between each other and in record making and debrief procedures.

- 7.86 All appropriate steps should be taken by the Police Service in the initial stages following the discharge of firearms to reduce any possible risks of the investigation, required under Article 2 ECHR, being undermined by any deficiencies, such as failing to secure the evidence, including witness testimony and forensic evidence. The procedures adopted should be designed so as to demonstrate integrity of purpose in all actions and discussions between the officers involved.
- 7.87 Nothing in this section should be interpreted as constraining effective action by the Police Service or the officers involved in adopting an operationally necessary procedure to secure best evidence, arrest or bring to justice those who may be involved in ongoing criminal activity, or a follow-up investigative process.
- 7.88 The responsibility for securing evidence and taking appropriate action in an Article 2 investigation remains with the Police Service until such time as the independent investigative authority has taken over the investigation.
- 7.89 The responsibility of the police force being investigated is to facilitate that investigation through, for example:
- Identification and preservation of scenes and exhibits;
 - Identification of immediately available witnesses;
 - Securing of physical evidence;
 - The availability of experienced family or witness liaison officers.
- 7.90 Early notification to the independent investigative authority will enable these procedures to be adopted, and initial actions being taken by the police to be agreed at an early stage.
- 7.91 Where an initial account is made by officers, it should, subject to any legal advice that they are given, be made as soon as practicable. These accounts should be recorded in writing, timed, dated and signed.
- 7.92 Each officer's initial account should only consist of their individual recollection of events and should, among other things, address the question of what they believed to be the facts and why, if relevant, they considered that the use of force and discharge of firearms was absolutely necessary.

Providing Accounts

- 7.93 Detailed accounts should not normally be made immediately, but can be left until the officers involved in the shooting are better able to articulate their experience in a coherent format, normally after at least forty-eight hours.
- 7.94 As a matter of general practice, officers should not confer with others before making their accounts (whether initial or subsequent accounts). The important issue is to individually record what their honestly held belief of the situation was at the time force was used. There should, therefore, be no need for an officer to confer with others about what was in their mind at the time force was used. If, however, in a particular case a need to confer on other issues does arise, then, in order to ensure transparency and maintain public confidence, where some discussion has taken place, officers must document the fact that this has taken place, highlighting:
- Time, date and place where conferring took place;
 - The issues discussed;
 - With whom;
 - The reasons for such discussion.
- 7.95 There is a positive obligation on officers involved to ensure that all activity relating to the recording of accounts is transparent and capable of withstanding scrutiny.
- 7.96 Where an officer has any concerns that the integrity of the process is not being maintained, they must immediately draw this to the attention of the person in charge of the post incident process and ensure that this is documented.
- 7.97 A person involved in a traumatic or life-threatening encounter will often experience a range of physiological and psychological responses which may determine their perception of time, distance, auditory and visual stimuli and the chronology of key events. This may affect their ability immediately after the incident to recall what may be important detail. Where, over time, officers recall further information, this should be recorded in a further account.
- 7.98 There may be circumstances where it is necessary for officers to provide more detailed information at an earlier stage. This could be to address issues associated with a person who is now in custody, or in relation to an ongoing criminal investigation, for example, where a person was not arrested at the scene.
- 7.99 It is the responsibility of each individual police officer involved in the incident to ensure that any information that may be relevant to the investigation is revealed, recorded and retained. This information should include an officer's own observations relating to the incident and any accounts received from witnesses.