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Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme	
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Title	Investigation of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences
Version	1
Summary	This policy outlines MPS minimum standards for immediate response, recording, investigating and supporting the prosecution of rape and serious sexual offences.
Branch / OCU	Territorial Policing Violent Crime Directorate
Date created	November 2008
Review date	November 2011

Policy for the Investigation of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences

Introduction

This policy amends and updates previous policy concerning 'the investigation of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences' as contained in Item 3, 1/2005, 12 January 2005, which is now cancelled.

It outlines Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) minimum standards for immediate response, recording, investigating and for supporting prosecutions of allegations of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and must be read in conjunction with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with the same title under Associated Documents and Policies below.

Application

The investigation of rape and serious sexual offences rests with the Borough Operational Command Units (BOCUs). This policy applies to a**ll police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the MPA must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant MPS policy and associated procedures.** This policy will be of particular relevance to:

- BOCU Commanders
- Crime Managers
- Borough Forensic Managers
- Forensic Practitioners
- Borough Sapphire Teams
- Child Abuse Investigation Teams
- Community Safety Units
- Compass Teams
- Human Trafficking Team
- Station Reception Officers
- Integrated Borough Office staff
- MetCall Staff
- Uniform Response Officers
- CID Officers
- Telephone Investigation Bureaus
- Borough Intelligence Units
- Met Intelligence Bureau

This list is not exhaustive.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide comprehensive direction that is readily available to all MPS personnel involved in the investigation of rape and serious sexual offences. It will ensure that all offences are recorded in accordance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) and that a consistent approach is adopted to the investigation of such offences regardless of the surrounding circumstances.

Scope

This policy applies to the investigation of rape and serious sexual offences, from the initial reporting, through investigation, supervision and disposal. Serious sexual offences are defined as:

- Rape
- Sexual assault by penetration
- Sexual assault where the assault is particularly violent or features of the offence are aggravated
- Causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Any other offence of a sexual nature deemed especially serious by the Investigating Officer (IO)
- Any attempt to commit any of the offences above

Policy Statement

Rape is the most serious crime investigated on a borough and the trauma which victims experience presents the police service with unique challenges. The MPS has made continuous efforts to improve victim care and the investigation of rape and other serious sexual offences. This Policy brings together this knowledge in a single standard operating procedure. It is incumbent on all staff to see that the standards set in this policy are complied with so that we can be confident that we are delivering the highest possible service to victims.
The aims of the MPS in relation to the investigation of rape and serious sexual offences are:

Primary aim

To investigate, identify and assist in the prosecution of perpetrators to the satisfaction of the victim and community.

However, where a criminal prosecution of a perpetrator is not feasible:

Secondary aim

To identify and pursue alternative courses of action (where appropriate with or by partner agencies) to ensure that victims receive a high standard of support and aftercare while utilising all appropriate means to gain intelligence concerning the perpetrator.

These aims are not mutually exclusive. Where appropriate, both objectives will be pursued simultaneously.

Benefits

- Delivering the highest possible service to victims of rape and serious sexual offences
- An increase in the number of reports made to police
- An increase in the number of offenders brought to justice

- All offences are recorded correctly and are NCRS compliant

Responsibilities

This policy is owned and approved by Territorial Policing Crime Operations, Strategic Committee and will be reviewed by Sapphire, Violent Crime Directorate, TPC. It s to be implemented by Borough Commanders. Enquiries about this notice should be made to Sapphire, VCD, TPC.

Associated Documents and policies

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) 2002 thematic inspection on rape investigation
- Metropolitan Police Service's Rape Review 2005,
- Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) 2006 review "Without Consent",
- The ACPO/Home Office Performance Standards Unit Rape Stocktake 2006,
- Home Office report "Investigating and detecting rape offences"
- Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) "Guidance on Investigating Serious Sexual Offences".
- Critical Incident policy
- Minimum Standards for the Primary Investigation of Crime - Standard Operating Procedures.
- Standard Operating Procedures on interviewing significant witnesses
- Victim's Code of Practice
- Domestic Violence Standard Operating Procedures
- MPS Personnel committing domestic violence, rape or other serious sexual offences
- Management of Sexual and Violent Offenders that Fall Within the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements - Standard Operating Procedures
- National Crime Recording Standards
- Location of Crimes Guidance
- Vulnerable Adult Abuse SOP

This policy cancels Item 3, 1/2005, 12 January 2005

Any enquiries about this policy should be directed to Sapphire, VDC, TPC on 47312.