

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



Child Approach Incident Standard Operating Procedures

South West Metropolitan Region

Summary

These SOPs outline the procedures to be undertaken in responding to, investigating, recording and reporting child approach incidents within the South West Metropolitan Region.

Important:

These SOPs are not to be used when a child has been abducted. The Public Affairs Branch, SOP's for Issuing Amber Alerts and the State Crime Command, Kidnapping for Ransom SOPs may be applicable.

Document Control Sheet

Document Properties

Title	Child Approach Incident SOPs, SWMR
Subject	Procedure in response to child approach incidents
Command responsible	South West Metropolitan Region
Authorisation	Region Commander, Assistant Commissioner
Security Classification	OFFICIAL: Sensitive
Publication date	January 2024
Current version number	1.3
Review date	January 2026
Document RMS number	D/2024/126329
Linked RMS folder	D/2024/23257
Copyright statement	© Crown in right of NSW through NSW Police Force 2024
Suitable for Public Disclosure	Yes

Modification History

Version #	Version creation date	Author / Position	Summary of changes
01	15/04/2015		
02	31/05/2022	Det.Sen.Sgt. Rod Cutler	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Update of reporting procedureAddition of post reporting procedure Insertion of Powerbi report
03	02/01/2024	Det.A.Sen.Sgt Veronica Stevens	Reformat to comply with CET Memo D/2023/1307809

Table of Contents

SUMMARY2

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET3

1 PURPOSE.....5

1.1 Scope.....5

1.2 Roles & responsibilities5

2 PROCEDURE.....5

2.1 Initial notification5

2.2 First Response Police6

2.3 Identify crime scene6

2.4 Contact supervisor whilst at location6

2.5 Advise parents / guardian6

2.6 Supervisor.....6

2.7 Attend Scene.....6

2.8 Notify Duty Officer / Crime Manager7

3 REPORTING7

3.1 COPS Event.....7

3.2 SITREP.....7

3.3 Police Media Unit.....7

4 INVESTIGATION.....7

4.1 Investigation.....7

4.2 Offender identification or arrest.....8

4.3 Monitoring and Review8

ENDNOTE REFERENCES.....8

1 Purpose

This procedure provides a systematic process for the response to child approach incidents within the South West Metropolitan Region.

1.1 Scope

Standard practices are to be utilised where children (16 years and under) are approached and/or there is an attempt to lure them away physically or verbally or assault them.

1.2 Roles & responsibilities

Assistant Commissioner - SWMR	Document Sponsor
SWM Region Operations Manager	Document Owner
All Staff within SWMR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must comply with these SOPs in respect of child approach incidents.

2 Procedure

2.1 Initial notification

As much information as possible is to be obtained including, but not limited to:

- Current condition and location of the child
- Assess any need for medical treatment
- Contact details of parent or guardian/informant and advise the caller that Police will attend as a matter of urgency.
- Request that they and the child remain at a nominated safe location to await Police attendance. If medical treatment is required notify ambulance.
- Description of offender and vehicle(s)
 - gender, age, racial appearance, clothing worn, distinctive features such as tattoos or scars, and distinctive smells and words used
 - make, model, any distinguishing features, last known direction and time elapsed since last seen
- CAD job for broadcast by VKG / Radio

2.2 First Response Police

Attend as soon as possible to make a full assessment of the incident.

- Ensure safety of child
 - Assess need for immediate medical treatment
 - Reassure the child and parent(s) that they are safe and Police in the general area are looking for the offender
- Reaffirm all details
 - Speak with the child using open questions and confirm all details including descriptions, time frames, words used, any physical contact with the child
 - Broadcast any updated details for information of other Police

2.3 Identify crime scene

Through speaking with the child and parent / guardian police should be able to identify the location and size of any crime scene. Arrange for a proper assessment to be completed including physical evidence, DNA and canvass for witnesses.

2.4 Contact supervisor whilst at location

As soon as practicable once you have sufficient information, and before leaving the scene contact the supervisor or a duty officer and advise them of all relevant information so that they can make an informed decision as to what further resources are required.

2.5 Advise parents / guardian

In line with the charter of victim's rights, ensure that the parent / guardian are informed of the progress of the investigation including details of OIC, COPS event number and any arrests made.

2.6 Supervisor

Ensure an appropriate and timely response is given to all child approach incidents.

Ensure child approach jobs are acknowledged and attended in a timely manner, continually monitor information passed via radio to ensure appropriate responses are being made.

2.7 Attend Scene

Where possible supervisors should attend the scene of all child approach incidents that are not late reports in order to provide support and resources to responding police. Consideration should be given as to the service and experience of initial responding police, the individual circumstances of the incident and any similarities with other reported incidents in the surrounding area.

2.8 Notify Duty Officer / Crime Manager

The Duty Officer or Crime Manager must be provided known information to ensure an appropriate response.

Ensure that all child approach incidents receive an appropriate level of investigative response and reporting.

- Consider the individual incident, the potential impact on victim and community and the level of investigation required. Assign appropriate investigators from CI or GD's.

3 Reporting

3.1 COPS Event

Create an incident of 'Offence Against the Person Other' with further classification 'Child Approach'. Include an associated factor of "Child Approach Related." If a substantive offence has been committed (ie sexual touching) a child approach incident will also be created.

3.2 SITREP

A SITREP must be completed for all child approach incidents as they often raise serious concern within the community and attract media attention.

3.3 Police Media Unit

The Police Media Unit (PMU) provides a media management and advisory service to all NSW Police Force employees, ranging from over-the-phone advice to attending major crime scenes and managing critical issues. PMU is staffed 24/7 by both sworn officers and unsworn communications specialists. Child approach incidents can be of great community discussion. A lack of informed facts often leads to misinformation being distributed causing further angst.

4 Investigation

4.1 Investigation

Ensure the investigating officer has the appropriate skills to conduct the investigation. In all investigations consider the following:

- Canvass of crime scene and immediate vicinity for witnesses
- Statements from children and witnesses
- Canvass of area for closed circulate television (CCTV) footage
- Collection of exhibits for forensic analysis
- Circulation of imagery internally for offender identification

- Circulation of imagery via media release for offender identification
- Liaison with Child Protection Register teams for offender identification

4.2 Offender identification or arrest

Should an offender be charged and convicted with a registrable offence, the offender may be placed on the Child Protection Register.

Should an offender be charged with a non-registrable offence, the command will review the circumstances and assess the offender for a Child Protection Registration Order. These applications must be filed at court within 60 days of sentence.

A SITREP must be completed should any person be charged.

4.3 Monitoring and Review

Commands must review incidents monthly to establish any links between incidents.

SWMR will maintain a Power BI report for all child approach incidents.

<http://powerbi/reports/powerbi/Organisation%20Unit%20Reports/Field%20Ops%20Metro%20and%20Regional/South%20West%20Metro/South%20West%20Metro%20Region/Incidents%20and%20Crime%20Types/Child%20Approach>

This report should be used to review child approach incidents both within your command, neighbouring commands and across the region.

Endnote References

Policy format and name changed to comply with CET Memorandum D/2023/1307809.