

## Strategic Firearms Commander

The Strategic Firearms Commander:

- Has overall strategic command, with responsibility and accountability for directions given;

All firearms commanders should endeavour to be located where they can best undertake their respective roles.

Strategic and Tactical Firearms Commanders should be located in positions where they are able to communicate, can be updated on developments and intelligence, and have access to tactical advice. As Strategic and Tactical Firearms Commanders perform different functions, their location needs may differ. (APP Armed Policing 05-020)

- Must set, review, communicate and update the strategy based on the threat assessment and the available intelligence;

As a consequence of the dynamic nature of the initial stages of many spontaneous firearms incidents/operations, the initial working strategy will be developed by the Initial TFC. As soon as practicable, the strategy should be referred to the SFC for agreement or amendment and ratification. This may result in a change in direction or priorities, or the implementation of tactical parameters which constrain the tactical plan.

- Should consider consulting a Tactical Advisor;
- Should consider any tactical parameters to be placed on the police response;

Tactical Parameters are directions by which the SFC can constrain certain activities. They may be based simply upon what the SFC believes to be a proportionate response to the threat and circumstances of the incident/operation, or due to wider environmental or community issues having been considered. In setting parameters, commanders should consider consulting a Tactical Advisor to discuss the effects of the parameters on the formulation of tactics.

- Must ensure that the strategy for the armed deployment is recorded, including any changes to it, to provide a clear audit trail;

The TFC must ensure that they accurately record the SFC's strategy so that the intention of the operation is clear and is communicated consistently as it is cascaded to staff.

- Must authorise the deployment of AFOs, and ratify or rescind the deployment where it has already been approved by the Tactical Firearms Commander;
- Should ensure that all decisions are recorded, where practicable, in order to provide a clear audit trail;

The term **“Victim”** in this context can be applied to any individuals or groups identified as being at specific risk as a consequence of the subjects intention(s), or those who may already have been subjected to harm and are requiring medical care. The urgency for medical attention will dictate whether there is a need to act immediately to save life or whether it is possible to wait whilst the information and intelligence is developed. The presence of a victim will focus activity and is key consideration for the TFC. The ability to formulate limited information and intelligence into a briefing product to allow AFOs to deploy in time critical situations is a core requirement of the role of commanders.

It is important to identify relevant “Locations”, which may include the location of injured victims, intended victims and the subject. The following information relating to the location will impact on the decision making process;

- Is the area quiet or busy with members of the public?
- Is there a local propensity for certain types of criminal activity?
- Have there been other previous similar occurrences in the locality?
- The physical nature of the location (e.g. the structure of a building or the extent of an open country area).
- Are there any known hazards specific to the area?

The TFC will frequently be operating from a remote location and therefore reliant upon information gathered at the scene/location. The OFC, by providing such factual updates from the scene will allow the TFC to review their initial assumptions.

With regards to the ‘Subject’, consideration of their ‘Identity’, ‘Capability’ and ‘Intent’ (ICI) will assist in the formulation of a threat assessment focused on the various individuals and groups who may be at risk of harm.

The **“identity”** of a subject is fundamental to finding out further information regarding them as indicated above. Ideally this would include full identity and antecedent information about the subject. However it may neither be necessary or always practicable to ascertain their full identity. It may only be possible to obtain a brief physical description, part vehicle registration mark (VRM), or a certain specific mannerism or behaviour. For the TFC, the objective is to provide sufficient information to enable officers to identify the correct individual. The information gained may indicate whether they are likely to behave irrationally or have a propensity for violence. Factors such as these may influence the threat that a subject poses and the risk to the subject if confronted.

In respect of subject identification, there is a need for commonality of language to ensure interoperability between firearms officers and other specialist areas. The below three definitions are taken from the ‘Guidance on the Use and Management