

# Module 2

## Conflict Management



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Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: National Decision Model

Section 3: Code of Ethics for Policing in Scotland

Section 4: Stay Safe

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### Aims:

Describe the theories, principles and concepts of conflict management in relation to operational safety.

### Learning Outcomes:

Officers/staff will be able to:

- Explain the principles of the National Decision Model (NDM)
- Explain the principles of threat assessment, including dynamic risk
- Identify warning and danger signs when confronting subjects and the various human behaviours officers/staff will be presented with
- Describe Police Scotland Operational Safety Training Tactical Options Model
- Identify and explain the tactical options available
- Describe the principles of stay safe

## Section 1: Introduction

The nature of policing is such that conflict is sometimes inevitable. The appropriate police response in situations will vary greatly.

However, what is important is that the police response is Proportionate, Legal, Accountable, Necessary and Ethical, and officers can Justify their actions at all times. The primary aim in a situation will always be to control and neutralise any threat in order to maintain the peace and uphold the law as safely as possible for all concerned.

Police Scotland has approved the adoption of a single NDM. This values-based tool provides a simple, logical and evidence-based approach to making decisions in any conflict situation.

## Section 2: National Decision Model

### Introduction

Police decision making is often complex; decisions are required in difficult circumstances, often in quick time and they are open to challenge. Using the NDM will ensure a greater focus on delivering the mission of policing and acting in accordance with our ethical principles.

Understanding and practising the NDM will help officers/staff to develop the professional judgement necessary to make effective policing decisions.

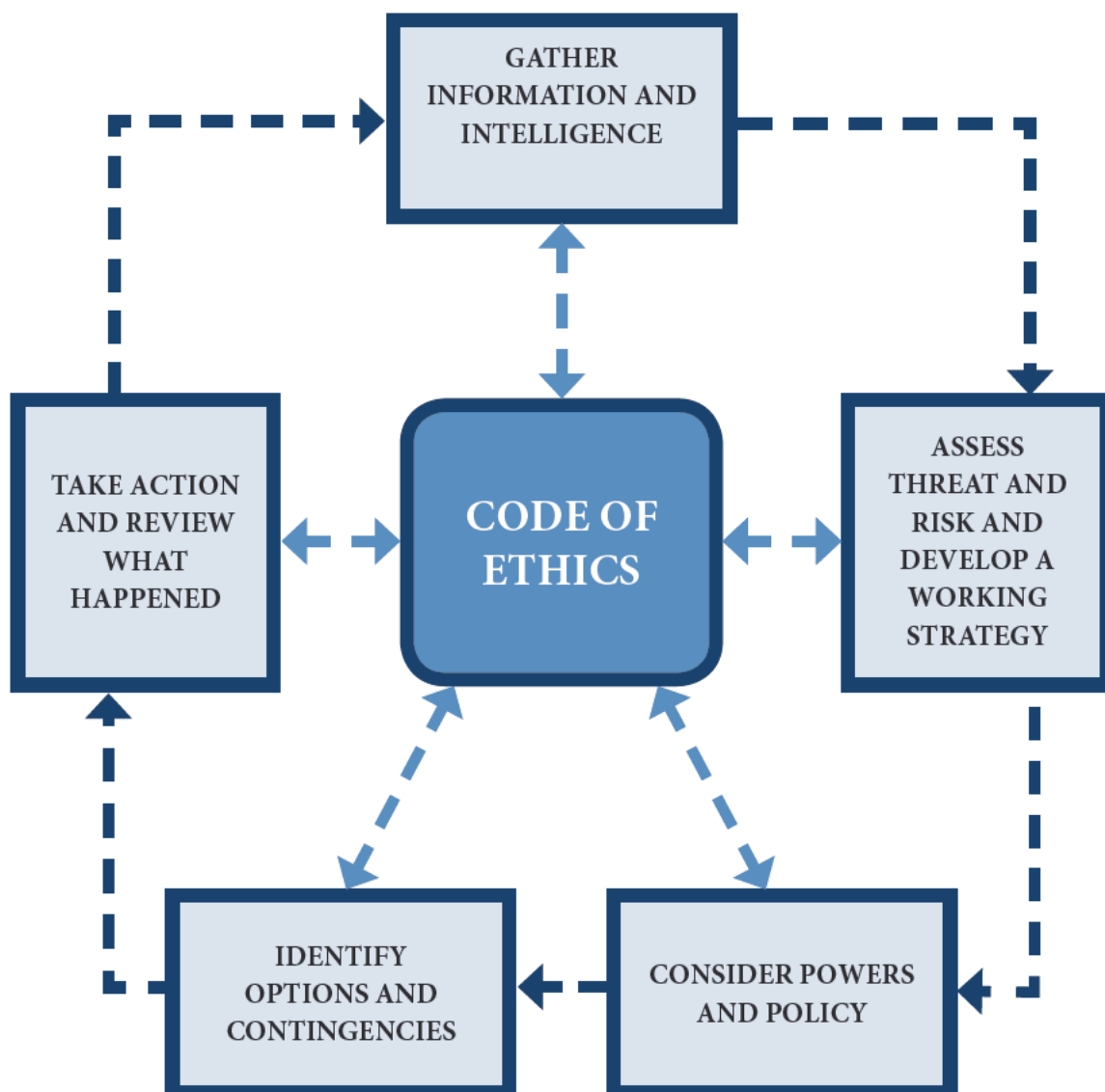
The NDM is suitable for all decisions. It can be applied to spontaneous incidents or planned operations, by an individual or a team of people, and to both operational and non-operational situations. Decision makers can use it to structure a rationale of what they did during an incident and why. Supervisors/managers and others can use it to review decisions and any actions taken. Adherence to the model will assist officers/staff when writing reports after an incident and if they are subsequently called upon to justify their actions.

The NDM has been adopted to support and assist decision making as to the most appropriate response when dealing with a situation.

## Applying the National Decision Model

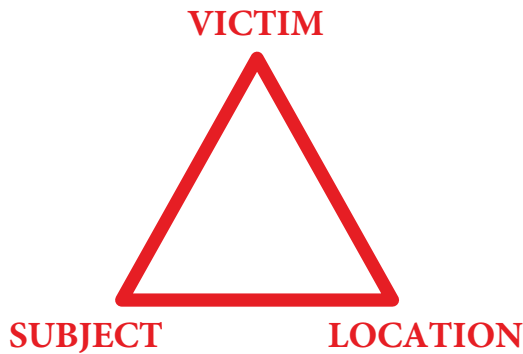
The NDM has six key elements. Each component provides the user with an area for focus and consideration. The Code of Ethics is connected to and supports the five stages of the decision making process. One step logically follows another, but the model allows for continual re-assessment of a situation and the return to former steps when necessary. This allows the officer/staff to use the model with a degree of flexibility, assisting with their dynamic risk assessment and decision making. An officer/staff may apply the NDM in any given situation both consciously and subconsciously. This may be before, during or after an incident.

## National Decision Model



### **Stage 1: Gather Information and Intelligence**

A correct and defensible decision is more likely to result from consideration of all relevant information and intelligence such as:



When gathering information and intelligence officers/staff should also attempt to establish as much information about the following in relation to the subject:

- Identity
- Capability
- Intent

This may come from what the individual officer/staff sees, hears or even feels for themselves or from what they are told by another person. Information from local circulations, experience from previous encounters or data gleaned from a use of force reporting system may also be relevant.

Gathering information and intelligence is an ongoing process.

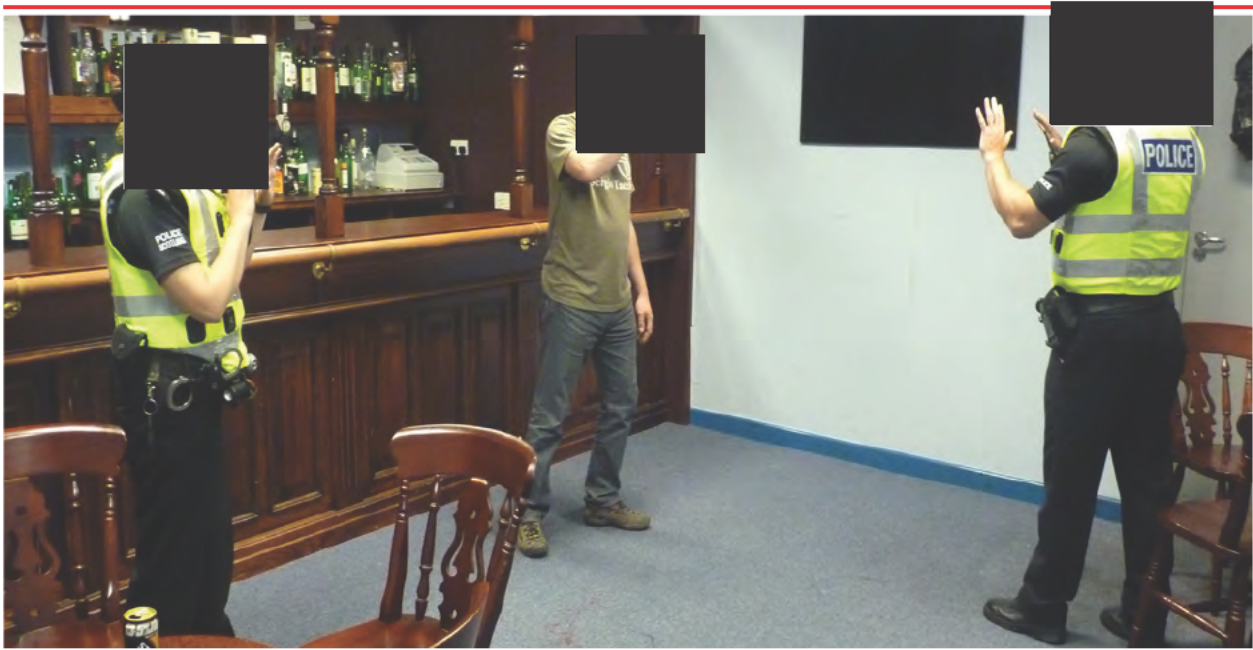
Officers/staff will continually ask themselves:

- What has happened?
- What do I know so far?
- What further information do I want or need?
- How do I obtain this information?

### **Stage 2: Assess Threat and Risk and Develop a Working Strategy**

Threat assessment means accurately assessing any person, object or place which could put an officer/staff at risk. In addition, the identity of the threat, such as the subject, should be assessed; the capability of the subject (for example armed and the subject's intent to cause harm should also be assessed. Officers/staff should establish an appropriate and prioritised working strategy. It should be a proportionate and focused policing response. The working strategy should:

- Maximise the safety of the public and/or the subject
- Minimise the risk to the Police
- Preserve the scene
- Gather evidence and bring the offender to justice
- Return to normality, or a new normality



## Threat Assessment

Officers/staff are routinely required to respond to conflict situations. A conflict can be described as “a trial of strength between opposed parties or principles or be at odds with”.

### General

Officers/staff should remain alert to possible risks at all times. Awareness is a method of increasing the chances of recognising a threat at an early stage, allowing officers to respond effectively. Part of that awareness involves assessing the threat that confronts officers/staff. On the basis of the available information/intelligence, an officer/staff will be able to make an assessment of the threat faced. Threat assessment links into the common understanding of dynamic assessment of risk. Officers/staff carry out subjective assessments of hazards during high-risk real-time incidents, and take appropriate and immediate actions to manage the hazards and control the risks.

### Definition

Threat assessment means accurately assessing any:

#### Person

This may be obvious from a subject’s actions, demeanour or their ability.

#### Object

For example, a syringe in a subject’s pocket, a razor blade taped to the door handle of a stolen car.

#### Place

Environmental factors such as a confined dwelling when confronting an aggressive volatile subject(s).

## Risk Categories

Every person, object or place falls into one of two categories:

**High risk** – presents an obvious threat.

**Unknown risk** – may present a potential threat.

### There is no such thing as a ‘LOW RISK’

There is no ‘low risk’ or ‘no risk’ categories due to the unpredictable nature of subject interaction.

It should be noted that the only risk categories are high and unknown.

Linking this into previous understanding of a threat, does a subject have the **Means, Ability, Opportunity** and **Intent** to do harm to an officer/staff, others or themselves?

When all four elements are present, with an immediate danger, and no other means of escape this is known as **Jeopardy**.

If an officer/staff is of the perception that they are in imminent danger, then that officer/staff may take pre-emptive action to manage the threat.

## Preparation for Policing

An officers/staff most common threat is through their own complacency. Officers/staff are required to continually conduct dynamic risk assessments, re-assess the situations and ensure the correct response is put in place.

The following colour coding system highlights the phases an officer/staff routinely experiences on duty:

- White:** relaxed/unaware of surroundings, low survival prospects, relies on luck.
- Yellow:** still relaxed, but aware and confident of dealing with any situation.
- Red:** ready and alert to any person, object or place.
- Black:** survival mode.

In an effort to enhance operational safety, officers/staff should be in the yellow stage as a minimum response when on duty.

## Confrontational Considerations

There are three factors which will have a direct effect on an officers/staff chances of falling victim to an assault. They are as follows:

- Mental mindset
- Tactics
- Skills

Individual officers/staff must account for any deficiencies identified in these areas, and take the appropriate action to rectify them. An officers/staff mindset begins with the realisation that any officer/staff can become a victim of violence. A positive mindset enables an officer to:

- Operate at the proper and appropriate level of awareness
- Detect or anticipate warning signs (assessment)
- Deal with the threat appropriately
- Reduce and deal with any trauma suffered during and after an incident

The subject's behaviour is a factor in identifying options.

## Warning Signs, Danger Signs and Impact Factors

### Warning Signs

Generally subjects who anticipate the need to fight do not launch directly into an assault for fear of injury. They initially begin by using attack gestures known as 'ritualised combat'.

By learning to identify these signals officers/staff give themselves a significant advantage.

Warning signs include:

- Direct eye contact
- Facial colour darkens
- Head back
- Subject stands tall to maximise height
- Kicking the ground
- Large movements
- Breathing rate accelerates
- Stop/start behaviour

### Danger Signs

Danger signs are more than warning signs. Subjects may begin to lose control physically. When this occurs their physical signals are significant and spontaneous.

It is critical that officers/staff understand and recognise these signals as they can be indicative of an imminent attack.

Neglecting or ignoring these signals may put the officer/staff at a serious disadvantage.



### Danger Signs include:

- Fists clenching and unclenching
- Facial colour pales
- Lips tighten over teeth
- Head drops forward to protect throat
- Eyebrows drop to protect eyes
- Hands raised above waist
- Shoulders tense
- Stance changes from square to sideways
- Subject breaks their stare and looks for intended body targets
- If the subject is out of breath, the final signal will be a lowering of their entire body before moving forward to attack

### Impact factors

Impact factors are those human and environmental differences that make each incident unique and every officer's/staff perception different. These factors can have a crucial bearing on making tactical decisions and may provide justification to the use of a specific level of force:

- How should an officer/staff approach the situation?
- What should an officer/staff say?
- Does an officer/staff need assistance?
- What personal protective equipment is the best option? Being aware of impact factors will not provide officers/staff with answers, but will encourage them to ask the correct questions

**Impact Factors include:**

- Size, age, strength, gender
- Drugs/alcohol
- Ability
- Numbers
- Opportunity and intent to do you harm
- Weapons
- Skill levels
- Injury/fitness
- Exhaustion
- Willingness to listen
- Special knowledge
- State of subject's mental health
- Subject's physiology
- Nature of crime
- Clothing
- Proximity of others
- Danger to others
- Police powers, skill and perception
- Perception of the non-verbal behaviour of a subject
- Perception of imminent danger
- Perception of being in a position of disadvantage
- Perception of the subject's level of resistance

Please note that these lists are not exhaustive.

**Environmental Impact Factors include:**

- Space
- Proximity to furniture
- Domestic situation (kitchen = access to weapons)
- Escape routes
- Weather conditions
- Conditions underfoot

**Profiled Offender Behaviour**

The term profiled offender behaviour categorizes the actions and behaviour of the subject. This may include the warning and danger signs they exhibit, coupled with the impact factors present. This profiled behaviour will determine the response of officers/staff who must react proportionately to the actions of the subject. Profiled offender behaviour is split into six categories which are as follows:

- Compliance
- Verbal Resistance and Gestures
- Passive Resistance
- Active Resistance
- Assaultive Resistance
- Serious/Aggravated Resistance





### Compliance

A large percentage of subjects dealt with are reasonable and will comply with any lawful instruction given by the officer/staff. This compliance may be verbal or it may be active compliance such as stopping when told or showing the contents of their hands.



### Verbal Resistance and/or Gestures

Where a subject verbally refuses to comply with an officers/staff request and/or also exhibits body language which indicates non-compliance.



### Passive Resistance

This non-violent conduct, is where a subject refuses to comply with lawful instructions e.g. subject simulates a dead weight / sits or stands and will not move.



### Active Resistance

A form of conduct where the subject actively resists the officer/staff, but does not become directly assaultive: e.g. swallows drugs / runs away or struggles against officers/staff.



### Assaultive Resistance

Physical conduct that results in a direct attack on an officer/staff or person.



### Serious/Aggravated Resistance

The highest category of resistance displayed by a subject where there is a possibility of serious injury and/or death. This could include the use of a weapon of any kind.

## Dynamic Risk Assessment

In addition to any role specific risk assessment, officers/staff should conduct an assessment of any actions they are undertaking or being tasked to undertake. This is sometimes referred to as dynamic risk assessment.

The guidelines for officers/staff conducting dynamic risk assessments are:

- Duty to protect/preserve human life; which includes their own.
- Should be aware of their physical limits –never take unnecessary risks.
- Should advise someone what they are doing (or going to do) and try to get support before they do it.
- Should seek information and advice – this will aid officers/staff to make a judgement.
- To apply correct procedures in every situation.
- Will record their decision making process either at the scene or soon afterwards in an official notebook or other recognised journal.
- Supervisors and managers are there to assist and offer guidance.

### Stage 3: Consider Powers and Policy

Officers/staff must only act within the law. A sound knowledge and understanding of available legal powers is therefore essential. In addition, local policies may determine what action should be taken. Other areas such as common law, powers of search etc, should also be considered. European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) provide an essential point of reference and will impact on any assessment or decision implemented.

The Human Rights Act, 1998, confers a number of rights. The main concerns for officers/staff, who may require to use some degree of force in the execution of their duty, are articles 2,3 and 5.

The ECHR articles are:

**Article 2** – Protects the right of every person to their life. (There is a positive duty on the police to act). The second paragraph of article 2 provides that death from defending oneself or others, arresting a suspect or fugitive, or suppressing riots or insurrections, will not contravene the article when the use of force involved is no more than absolutely necessary.

**Article 3** – Prohibits torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

**Article 4** – Prohibits slavery, servitude and forced labour.

**Article 5** – Provides that everyone has the right to liberty and security of person.

**Article 6** – Provides a detailed right to fair trial.

**Article 7** – No person may be punished for an act that was not a criminal offence at the time of its commission.

**Article 8** – Provides a right to respect for one’s “private and family life, his home and his correspondence.”

**Article 9** – Provides a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

**Article 10** - Provides the right to freedom of expression, subject to certain restrictions that are in accordance with law, and necessary in a democratic society.

**Article 11** - Protects the right to freedom of assembly and association, including the right to form trade unions.

**Article 12** - Provides the right for women and men of marriageable age to marry and establish a family.

**Article 14**- contains a prohibition of discrimination.

A Police Officers entitlement to use force is contained within the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Under Scots Law, a Police Officer is entitled to use reasonable force under the following circumstances:

- Self Defence (under Scots Law this extends to the defence of others).
- To effect a lawful arrest
- To prevent the escape of a subject
- To prevent a crime being committed
- To preserve order

#### Stage 4: Identify Options and Contingencies

It is not possible to list all the options available to deal with conflict; for example, in certain circumstances to do nothing may be an option. Each of the techniques described in this manual represents a tactical option. It is vital that officers/staff understand the medical implications of each option, as this is likely to be relevant when making the appropriate choice.

An option that carries a high risk of serious injury is less likely to be justified in circumstances where the threat faced is unlikely to cause any or little harm to others. The tactical option chosen must be proportionate to the threat faced in all the circumstances.

#### Tactical Options

Officers/staff are required to fully assess the situation, and consider the impact of their actions on the subject. Therefore officers/staff should select the most appropriate tactical option, whilst keeping injury potential in mind.

The Police Scotland Operational Safety Training Tactical Options Model allows for the fact that each situation an officer/staff faces varies.

The Tactical Options Model gives the officer/staff options to choose from when facing a situation that involves risk to officer/staff safety. It also allows the use of more than one option at a time.

The Tactical Options Model, in conjunction with the National Decision Model, is very easy to understand and utilise. It gives the officer/staff relevant information on how to evaluate the use of force and gives reasonable guidance in determining what tactical option may be required.

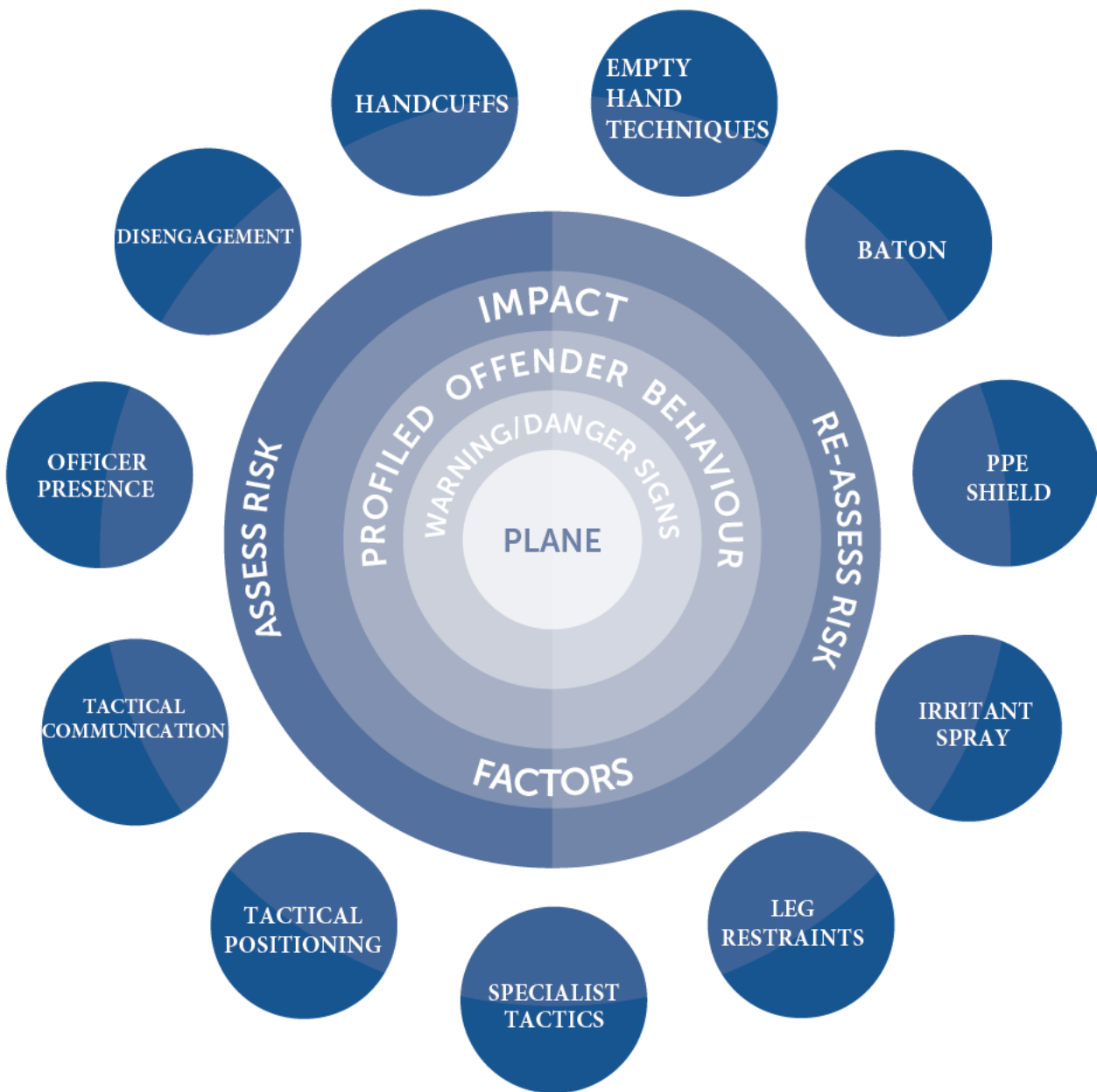
The Tactical Options Model provides the tactical options available to an officer/staff when interacting with a subject. Officers/staff can work through the model, allowing them to choose the most appropriate tactical option.

At the heart of the Tactical Options Model is Police Scotland's criteria for use of force. Officers/staff must ensure that any force they use must be;

- Proportionate, Legal, Accountable, Necessary and Ethical.
- The action taken must reflect the values of Police Scotland (Integrity, Fairness and Respect)
- Did the action meet the standards expected of Police Scotland?

Officers/staff must thereafter take cognisance of **Warning/Danger signs, Profiled Offender Behaviour and Impact Factors** to assess the risk, and choose the most appropriate tactical option.

# Operational Safety Training Tactical Options Model





### Officer/Staff Presence:

This term encompasses the visual, physical and psychological impact, an officer/staff's uniform and presence of specialist equipment may have. This presence may subsequently affect the mind and will of another.

An officers/staff appearance, bearing, stance and even the sight of officers/staff personal protective equipment, can have an effect on the subject's behaviour. Officer/staff presence forms a large part of non-verbal communications. This will include tactical positioning.



### Tactical Communication:

Tactical communication is an essential part of policing, and means the ability to give and receive information in a way that gains a tactical advantage. It incorporates verbal and non-verbal communication skills and is the ability of an individual to effectively use all forms of communication, within reason, to resolve an identified area of conflict. This can include giving specific direction, commands and / or instructions to a subject, even in a forceful vocal manner.

For full guidance on tactical communications, please see module 3.

**Disengagement:**

Officers/staff need to be able to withdraw from any type of situation. Upon arrival officers/staff should be assessing the area and looking for an escape route should the need arise, cover and concealment should be considered. After selecting the appropriate option, the officers/staff should continually assess available options to gain a tactical advantage





### Empty Hand Techniques:

Empty hand techniques allow the officers/staff to control and restrain a subject.

Empty hand techniques include; holds and restraints, blocks, strikes, take downs, spit hood, ground defence, breakaways and searching.



### Baton:

The baton allows the officers/staff to defend themselves and/or to control and restrain a subject.

Baton techniques include baton strikes, baton arm locks and knife defence.



### **Irritant Spray:**

Irritant spray is a hand held canister, which uses an airborne delivery system to convey an inflammatory agent to a subject to limit the subject's actions.

### **Leg Restraints:**

Leg restraints are a temporary restraining device which allows the officers/staff to restrict the movement of a subject's legs.

### **Personal Protection Shield:**

The personal protection shield provides protection to the police officer against attacks from thrown objects and blunt edge weapons and can be utilised in a containment situation.

### **Handcuffs:**

Rigid handcuffs are a temporary restraining device which allows the officers/staff to restrict the movement of a subject's arms.

### **Tactical Positioning:**

Tactical positioning gives officers/staff an overview of the subject and surrounding area, enhancing their safety and ability to deal with an evolving situation.

### **Specialist Tactics:**

These include armed policing, public order, deployment of horses, dogs or any other specialist tactics not normally deployed by conventional officers.

### **Contain and Negotiate:**

Best practice in high risk situations is contain and negotiate.

A situation may arise where there is a need to set up a controlled area and restrict access to an area. Immediately setting up inner and outer cordons may be required to prevent escalation of the situation and maintain a distance between the subject and the police or public.

The principal operating strategy of resolving high risk incidents by police is containment and negotiation. Force is to be used as a last resort.

## **Stage 5: Take Action and Review what Happened**

An appropriate response should allow officers/staff to verbally and/or physically control the situation.

This will ensure the safety of everyone involved namely, the public, the officer/staff and the subject.

Officers/staff should select and implement the option that will provide the best result for all, in any given situation. Officers/staff should continually assess the situation with a view to implementing the correct tactic. Officers/staff should be aware that if circumstances change (new information or intelligence then such decisions should be re-assessed and the process repeated until the best decision is reached and action taken. Recording and reviewing the incident is important to assess what went well and what didn't go so well. Should use of force forms be required to be completed, the NDM will assist in this process.

## Section 3: Code of Ethics for Policing in Scotland

The code of ethics for policing in Scotland sets the standards expected of all those who contribute to policing Scotland. It is neither a discipline code nor an unattainable aspiration tool. Rather the code is a practical set of measures, which reflect the values of Police Scotland. All officers/staff in Police Scotland are responsible for delivering a professional service to everyone across the country. This code sets out both; what the public can expect from Police Scotland, and what Officers/staff should expect from one another.

### Integrity

Officers/staff must recognise their role in policing as being a symbol of public faith and trust, and the obligation that is placed upon them to act with **Integrity, Fairness** and **Respect**. Officers/staff should behave in a manner which reflects the values of policing in Scotland. They are personally responsible for their own actions and will when appropriate, exercise their discretion. They should act as a positive role model in delivering a professional, impartial service, placing service to communities before their own personal aims. Officers/staff will not accept any gift or gratuity that could be perceived to compromise their impartiality. They should avoid all behaviour which is or may be reasonably considered; abusive, bullying, harassing or victimising. Officers/staff will demonstrate and promote good conduct and will challenge the conduct of colleagues who they reasonably believe to have fallen below the standards set out in this code.

### Fairness

Officers/staff should act with courage and composure and face all challenges with self-control, tolerance and impartiality. They will promote positive wellbeing within the community and ensure that all people have fair and equal access to the police services according to their individual needs. Officers/staff will maintain an open attitude and strive to improve their understanding and awareness of cultural, social and community issues. Officers/staff will carry out their duties in a fair manner, guided by the principles of impartiality and non-discrimination.

### Respect

Officers/staff should take pride in working as part of a team dedicated to protecting people. They will show respect for all people and to their beliefs, values, cultures and individual needs. Officers/staff will have respect for all human dignity and understand that their attitude and the way they behave will contribute to the consent communities have for policing. Officers/staff will respect and uphold the law in order to maintain public confidence and, by enhancing their own personal knowledge and experience, contribute to the professional development of policing. They should always treat people, including detained people, in a humane and dignified manner. They will ensure that relationships with colleagues are based on mutual respect and understanding and shall, therefore, conduct all communications on that basis.

### Human Rights

Officers/staff should ensure their actions in policing operations respect the human rights of all people, whilst understanding that they themselves also enjoy these same human rights. Officers/staff will not undertake high-risk activities or use force other than where Absolutely Necessary in order to attain a lawful objective and only after they have balanced all the competing priorities, being aware of (**Article 2**). Officers/staff will not encourage, instigate or tolerate any act of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment, under any circumstance, and will never stand by allowing others to do so. Officers/staff must understand that the humane treatment of prisoners is an essential element of policing and that the dignity of all those entrusted to their care remains their responsibility (**Article 3**). Officers/staff must understand all people have an equal right to liberty and security, and accordingly will not deprive any person of that liberty, except in accordance with the law (**Article 5**).

Officers/staff must investigate crimes objectively, being sensitive to the particular needs of affected individuals, whilst following the principle that every subject of a criminal investigation is innocent until found guilty by a court (**Article 6**). In carrying out their duties officers/staff will respect everyone's fundamental rights. Officers/staff will only interfere with privacy or family life when legally authorised to do so (**Article 8**), and will respect; individual freedoms of thought, conscience or religion, expression, peaceful assembly, movement and the peaceful enjoyment of possessions (**Articles 9, 10, 11**).

## How we Deliver Matters

### 'Accountability begins at the first encounter'

The way policing is delivered has a direct effect on the individuals, communities and the public and will influence the degree of relevance, trust and confidence the public have in Police Scotland. Officers/staff must remember that it is equally important to show not only **WHAT** is delivered but also **HOW** it is delivered.

The diagrams below illustrate and show that **WHAT** is delivered, and **HOW** it is delivered, is in direct proportion to the degree of public support or consent achieved. By understanding what has gone before, Officers/staff should be clear that if policing is delivered in a negative way, Police Scotland's relevance as a police service reduces, trust within communities diminishes and Police Scotland loses the support of the public.



If all the decisions made, and the choice of action are in accordance with the principles of the Code Of Ethics, then there is a greater likelihood that Police Scotland will secure public trust and confidence. Every interaction Officers/staff have with the public leaves a trace.

Officers/staff should ask themselves, **what trace did they leave?** And more importantly, **are they proud of it?**

## Section 4: Stay Safe Principles

The deployment of ‘authorised firearms officers’ (AFOs) should only be authorised in the following circumstances:

Where the officer authorising the deployment has reason to suppose that officers may have to protect themselves or others from a person who:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- For the destruction of animals which are dangerous or suffering unnecessarily.

Unarmed officers/staff are most likely to be initial responders to incidents which meet the first two of the above criteria, and are at greatest risk when called upon to deal with armed subjects if they act upon their own initiative.

Armed officers have a range of generic tactical options and specific firearms tactics that can be used to respond to the incident. Prior to the attendance of armed officers, it may be possible for unarmed initial responders to take action as previously described. They may also be required to perform specific roles in support of armed officers.

Some of the general tactical options that may be considered by firearms commanders and armed officers are:

- Waiting
- Taking mitigating action
- Keeping the subject under observation
- Carrying out an investigative assessment
- Containing the area around the subject, thereby minimising the opportunity for harm
- Communication with the subject
- Taking decisive action

Unarmed initial responders should consider these generic tactical options when responding to a firearms incident. It may be necessary for unarmed officers and staff, in consultation with the tactical or operational firearms commander, (TFC or OFC), to implement some of the options prior to the arrival of armed officers.

What are your responsibilities under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)?

Under the ECHR, the police, as a public authority, have a positive obligation to ensure that the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the ECHR are protected.

In keeping with the principles of the ECHR the rights of all people must be considered, including those of the subject. Each individual’s right to life is absolute. However, potentially lethal force may be used if it is absolutely necessary for the legitimate aims outlined in Article 2 of the ECHR.

Officers must not be expected to endanger their own lives, or the lives of their colleagues in ill considered attempts at rescue, or to effect an early arrest.

What can you expect when you arrive as an unarmed initial responder?

- Support from initial TFC
- Confusion from the public
- Armed support

The initial responder is a vital link in the gathering of relevant information to assist firearms commanders and armed officers in determining an appropriate response. Armed officers may wish to speak to first responders prior to deployment. The TFC / OFC should provide advice to first responders at the earliest opportunity.

Armed officers have a range of generic tactical options and specific firearms tactics that can be used to respond to the incident. Prior to the attendance of armed officers it may be possible for unarmed initial responders to take action as previously described. They may also be required to perform specific roles in support of armed officers.

What can you do at the scene?

- **Stay Safe** :- Think about your own and the public's safety
- **See** :- What is happening and where
- **Tell** :- Communicate, describe incident/type, weapon
- **Act** :- Stay Safe, update, observe/contain

## Stay Safe

1. Use the National Decision Model (NDM)
2. Do not approach unnecessarily
3. Use cover
4. Consider safe approach / escape routes
5. Consider safety of others
6. Wear correct PPE

## 1. Use the National Decision Model

Use the NDM to guide your actions and help you identify information and intelligence important to incident commanders.

## 2. Do Not Approach Unnecessarily

It is important that you consider your own safety. Do not unnecessarily expose yourself to danger and do not go straight to the scene without a dynamic risk assessment of the dangers.

The first police officer who attended the scene of the Hungerford massacre in 1987 was shot and killed by the subject. The officer had just arrived at the scene in response to reports of gunfire. He died sitting in his patrol car, radioing colleagues that he had been shot. Michael Ryan, the subject, had fired 23 rounds at the officer as he arrived. Remember you may become the focus of the subject's attention.

### 3. Use Cover

The use of effective cover can offer a degree of protection. There are two types of cover.

#### Cover from fire

#### Cover from view

You must consider the type of weapon that the subject may possess. This will alter your risk assessment and cover required.

Firearms generally fall into three categories:

#### Handgun

#### Shotgun

#### Rifles

The bullet or shot fired from any weapon can travel over some distance and still cause injury. Remember that rifles are normally more powerful and accurate than other firearms and their ammunition is capable of travelling the greatest distance (in some cases miles). If you cannot confirm the type of firearm 'Treat it as a rifle'. Treat all firearms as real and loaded until proved otherwise (normally when in possession of the police).

Not all firearm incidents involve firearms carried by the subject. You may have to consider:

- Bladed weapons
- Other potentially lethal weapons or devices

### Cover From Fire

Examples would include:

- Substantial brick
- Stone walls (not breeze block)
- Substantial tree
- Earth banks
- Vehicle's engine block- vehicles offer very little ballistic protection with the possible exception of the engine block.

Cover from fire is sometimes also described as hard cover.

Where cover from fire is not available it may be possible to make use of:

#### Cover from view

If the subject cannot see you, they may not fire at you. However, it is possible to anticipate where you are and shoot through the cover.

Examples would include:

- Wooden fence
- Hedgerow
- Vehicles

### 4. Consider Safe Approach and Escape Routes

Ideally the subject should not be able to see your approach and will therefore be unaware of your presence or position. Whatever the cover you have been able to utilise, always ensure that you have a safe approach and escape route from it. If a subject approaches you or identifies where you are, you may need to move.

If utilising cover of darkness, consider how safe your escape route would be during daylight hours.



## 5. Consider your colleagues and members of the public and prevent them from coming into the danger areas.

Direct them positively, using a safe route to containment positions or rendezvous point away from the scene.

Consider safety of others.

Remember your duty under the ECHR.

## 6. Wear Correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Do you know what protection your force issue patrol body armour gives you?

Is it stab resistant?

Does it protect you from firearms?

What size / type / calibre firearms/ammunition will it stop?

If you cannot answer these questions you are at risk. **Find out.**

Most issue patrol body armour is only effective against short barrelled handguns! (Not shotguns or rifles).

You should check that your body armour is in good condition and still fits you correctly.

**See**

Where are the subjects now/going?

How many casualties/subject(s)?

**What weapons, actions?**

The initial responder is vital to the gathering of first hand 'real time' information and intelligence. Accurate information from the scene will enable armed officers to be deployed more quickly and effectively.

Confirm, as far as possible, the exact location of the subject(s) and the nature of the incident, without unnecessarily exposing yourself to danger.

Gather relevant intelligence on the subject(s) and related premises or vehicles, potential victims and casualties. Accurate information and descriptions are important.

The subject(s) location is vital to directing armed officers to the right place as quickly as possible. Where the subject(s) are moving about, real time updates allow the effective redirection of those officers.

The type of weapon will have an impact on the equipment and tactics used by armed officers.

Is it a firearm or other type of weapon?

What type of firearm/weapon is it? Describe what you see or have been told at the scene.

Detail is important, e.g. type and size of knife. Not just that it is a knife.

What is the subject(s) doing with the weapon?

Have threats been made?

**Tell  
Communication**

**Describe location and subjects**

**Explain type of Incident**

**Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity**

The information that the initial responder gathers at the scene needs to be passed accurately, briefly and clearly to the control room. The picture in the control room may not be as clear as the initial responder thinks.

If you think you have a firearms incident – say so!

Ensure descriptions are accurate. If you don't know details, guard against guessing or speculating. In many firearms incidents different descriptions of the same subject have led to confusion about the number of subjects involved.

The TFC and the firearms tactical advisor will be relying on accurate information from you at the scene in order to plan an effective response and to deploy suitable resources to protect the public and assist you as an initial responder.

**Act**

**Stay safe**

**Update**

**Observe / Contain**

**First Aid**

**Stay Safe**

Consideration needs to be given to minimising the risk to the public. Direct them to a place of safety or prevent them from approaching the scene if appropriate. Each incident will be different and you should seek advice from the TFC as soon as practicable.

**Remember your obligations under the ECHR.**

**Update**

Where you gain additional relevant information, provide updates whenever possible. You are the eyes and ears on the ground supplying 'real time information'.

**Observe/Contain**

Remember the generic tactical options that may be considered by armed officers that were discussed earlier. Two of these options (observation and containment, may be viable for use by unarmed officers and staff.

Keeping the subject under observation, either overtly or covertly, will assist with the gathering of intelligence and the subsequent deployment of armed officers.

Containment is an option when the subject is known or believed to be in a particular location, the intention being to isolate the subject or place limits on their permitted movement. Where the subject is in possession of a firearm it is less likely that their movement can be constrained safely by unarmed officers or staff. Where viable, containment may be either static or, in some circumstances, may move with the subject. It may also allow time for more detailed planning of a police response. When considering this option, consult with the TFC as soon as practicable.

**First Aid**

You have an obligation under the ECHR. Render first aid if safe to do so.

## High Explosive (HE) Grenades

Whilst the criminal use of HE grenades is extremely rare in the United Kingdom, the tragic murders of PC Fiona Bone and PC Nicola Hughes in Greater Manchester in September 2012 have highlighted the potential that both armed and unarmed initial police responders may be required to respond to such a threat.

The characteristics of HE grenades are inherently unpredictable. The following guidance should therefore be considered to be indicative rather than prescriptive.

## General Considerations

The capability of a grenade will vary depending upon its type and environment in which it is deployed. As a general rule, where no protection exists, a grenade will be lethal within a range of 5 metres of where it detonates and may cause death or serious injury within a range of 50 metres of where it detonates. The characteristics of a grenade mean that it will create a 360 degree threat and it should therefore be remembered that protection from all sides may be necessary to prevent injury being caused.

## Distance

In the absence of any appropriate PPE, persons in line of sight are likely to suffer fatal injury within 5 metres, serious and possible fatal injuries within 20 metres and injury within 50 metres. To minimise the likelihood of any injury being caused a person in direct line of sight without PPE or without any suitable cover would need to be 200 metres or beyond from the point of detonation.

## Characteristics of the Blast

A grenade blast and accompanying fragmentation tends to travel upwards and outwards in a conical shape from the ground. The angle of this blast direction depends upon factors such as the type of ground.

## Cover

Effective hard cover will generally protect a person from the effects of a grenade even when it is deployed in close proximity. Effective cover could be provided by structures and objects such as brick walls, vehicle engine blocks, mounds of earth etc. Generally cover that would stop conventional firearms ammunition would also be effective against grenades. The potential for the grenade to be thrown and subsequently explode behind or to the side of the cover being used should be considered.

## Immediate Reaction to the Deployment of a Grenade

Officers/staff may be aware that a grenade has been deployed against them in several ways:

### Physical sighting of the grenade being thrown/deployed towards them.

Physical sighting of components of the grenade such as the fly-off lever or extracted pin as the grenade is deployed.

Sound of a sharp 'crack' as the grenades fuse is initiated prior to detonation. (About 4 to 6 seconds later).

Where it is believed, or becomes evident that a grenade threat exists, immediate action should be taken to find hard cover/or create distance from the grenade. If possible this should be simultaneously accompanied by a clear shout of "GRENADE" in order to warn others.

If a grenade is thrown, any hard cover used must be very close by as the unpredictability regarding where and when the grenade will detonate creates a danger of being caught in the open ground. In the absence of immediate hard cover, or ability to create an effective safe distance, officers/staff should lie prone (face down) with legs and feet facing towards the threat. When deciding whether to adopt this position the proximity of the subject and nature of any other weapons that the subject has should be considered. Adopting this position should allow the blast to pass over head and enable the officer to then react by either creating distance from the threat or adopting a more suitable position to respond to any continuing threat.

## What do you need to remember?

**Stay Safe:-** Think about your own and the public's safety

**See:-** What is happening and where

**Tell:-** Communicate, describe incident/type weapon

**Act:-** Stay safe, update, observe/contain