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21 December 2022

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Dear J A Harris

Request for information

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 3 December 2022, in which you asked for:

- (1) Please provide any guidelines, rules, Police manual chapters, training materials, Police instructions, or any other documents which provide guidelines TO police around questioning (interviewing, chatting with, discussing, making enquiries, etc) with someone who is not formally detained for questioning or under arrest.*
- (2) Please provide any guidelines or other documents as above that concern beginning, continuing, and ending interactions if this nature, withdrawal of consent by the person Police are interacting with, at what point it is necessary to caution the person or provide access to a lawyer.*

Question (1) is covered within the Investigative Interviewing Witness Guide (attached) in combination with adhering to the Chief Justice's Practice Note on Police Questioning which is freely available by viewing: <https://www.courtsofnz.govt.nz/assets/going-to-court/practice-directions/practice-notes/high-court/pnpoliceq.pdf>

Question (2) is covered within the Investigative Interviewing Suspect Guide (attached) in combination with adhering to the Chief Justice's Practice Note on Police Questioning, also as per the above link.

Yours sincerely



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Investigative interviewing witness guide

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Executive summary	4
Overview	5
Purpose	5
What is the purpose of interviewing witnesses?	5
Guidelines are not prescriptive	5
Who is a witness?	5
Multiple witnesses	5
Witnesses who become suspects	6
Related information	6
Feedback or advice	6
Forms	6
Health and safety duties	6
Interviewing principles and framework	8
Ten principles of investigative interviewing	8
PEACE interviewing framework	8
Interview models	8
Planning and preparing for interviews	10
What should be covered when planning and preparing for an interview?	10
Witnesses requiring special consideration	10
Timing of the interview	10
Should the interview be delayed?	11
Preparing the interview location	11
Engage and explain	12
Preparing the witness for interview	12
Engage the witness	12
Explain interview procedures	12
Account	13
Identifying a suitable interview model	13
Changing models during interview	13
Using the free recall model	13
Free recall questioning style	14
Question types	15
Account: notes and statements	17
Note taking	17
Notebooks	17
Notebook statements	17
Job sheets	17
Written statement	17
Procedure for recording written formal statements	18
Endorsing the formal statement	19
Witnesses not able to read and write	20
Closure and evaluation	21
Closing interviews	21
Evaluate information obtained	21
Self-evaluation	21
Difficult to interview or reluctant witnesses	22
General considerations	22
Witness's right to decline to be interviewed	22
Procedure when witness refuses to talk	22
Strategies for witnesses difficult to interview	23
Investigatively important witnesses	25
Witness examples	25

Visually record witness interviews	25
Selecting interview model	25
Prison/cellmate witnesses	25
Support persons	26
Benefits of having a support person	26
When a support person may be present in the room during interview	26
When to use a support person	26
Who is an appropriate support person	26
Specialist support persons	27
Witness usually chooses support person	27
Support persons who are also witnesses	27
Role of a support person	27
Support persons role during interviews	27
Using specialist interviewers	29
Specialist interviewers	29
Use specialists when visually recording interviews	29
Advantages of visually recording evidence	29
Types of witnesses requiring specialist interviewers	29
Make decisions about using specialists case by case	30
Deciding whether to use a SCWI or Level 3 specialist adult witness interviewer	30
When a Level 3 specialist is not available	30
Visually recorded interviews	32
Compliance with Evidence Regulations 2007	32
Where should visually recorded interviews be conducted?	32
Monitor's role	32
Interview evaluation	32
Evaluation purpose	32
Management of video records	33
Introduction	33
Storage and chain of custody	33
Transcripts	33
Disclosure of video records and transcripts	33
Using the video record as a formal statement	33
After the conclusion of the case - destruction of records	33
Alternative ways of giving evidence	34
Applications for alternative way of giving evidence	34
Factors to consider when deciding whether to apply	34
Procedures for making applications	34
When a section 103 order is made	34
Preparing the witness to give evidence	34
Enhanced cognitive interviewing	35
When should enhanced cognitive interviewing be used?	35
Selection of the interviewer	35
Dealing with significant evidential inconsistencies and/or omissions	35
Further interviews	35
Fabrication	35

Executive summary

Key things to note:

- Every witness is different.
- The guidelines are not intended to be rigidly followed. Be flexible and use techniques as and when you see fit depending on the interviewee, situation and circumstance.
- If there is more than one witness to an incident take care to minimise the risk of memory contamination between witnesses.
- If a witness becomes a suspect during interview, adopt [procedures for interviewing suspects](#) including cautioning the person and visually recording the interview.
- Three interview models are used for interviewing witnesses:
 - [Free recall](#) for cooperative interviewees
 - [Conversation management](#) for reluctant interviewees
 - [Enhanced cognitive interviewing](#); builds on free recall using advanced techniques to assist cooperative interviewees
- Witnesses can move from being cooperative to uncooperative and vice versa during interviews and you may need to change your interviewing technique as a result. Revert to the free recall model where possible.
- Interviews have 5 phases - Planning and preparation, Engage and explain, Account, Closure and Evaluation.
- Always plan and prepare for interviews, no matter what type of interview is being considered
- It is paramount you consider the witness's well-being and investigative needs in decision making relating to interviews.
- Consider having a support person present at an interview to support a witness if it is in the interests of the witness and the person is an appropriate person to support the witness.
- Visually recorded interviews used as an alternative form of evidence must comply with the procedures detailed in the [Evidence Regulations 2007](#).

Overview

Purpose

This chapter provides guidelines for:

- interviewing witnesses, including reluctant or difficult witnesses, using the five stages of the PEACE interviewing framework:
 - planning and preparation
 - engage and explain
 - account
 - closure
 - evaluation
- identifying witnesses requiring special consideration (see 'Investigative interviewing of witnesses requiring special consideration' for the procedures to be followed)
- deciding when specialist interviewers are required
- using [support persons](#)
- the [storage and transcription](#) of video records
- [applications for alternative ways of giving evidence](#).

It is designed to support interviewers at all levels of the Investigative Interviewing Standards and Training framework.

What is the purpose of interviewing witnesses?

The purpose of interviewing witnesses is to elicit the witness's complete accurate reliable account of the alleged event(s) and any other information that would assist the investigation.

Guidelines are not prescriptive

Every witness is different. The guidelines are not a prescriptive format that must be rigidly followed, nor should they imply that all other techniques are unacceptable. You should be flexible, using techniques as and when you see fit depending on the interviewee, situation and circumstance.

Merely following the guidelines will not make a good interview or interviewer. Interviewing is a skilled task requiring training, practice and judgement. As the interviewer, you may decide that in the interests of justice or to promote the witness's well-being the interview requires procedures different to those described.

Any decisions of this kind should be made in consultation with your supervisor and, where appropriate, the prosecuting agency.

Who is a witness?

Witnesses are people who have information about an alleged offence or offender. They may be an eyewitness, present at the event, or someone who can only provide peripheral information. The term includes victims as defined by section 4 Victims' Rights Act 2002.

In these guidelines, the term 'witness'...

includes...	does not include...
victims - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a person against whom an offence is committed by another person - a person who, through, or by means of, an offence committed by another person, suffers physical injury, or loss of, or damage to, property (s4 'victims' (a)(i) and (ii) Victim Rights Act 2002)	suspects Special provisions for dealing with suspects are detailed in the Investigative interviewing suspect guide .

Multiple witnesses

If there is more than one witness to an incident take care to minimise the risk of memory contamination between witnesses by:

- separating them as soon as is practical and interviewing them individually
- if the interview is delayed, consider asking them not to discuss the incident with others involved and explain why, i.e. the potential for post-event information to contaminate memory. Note that a more flexible approach is required with witnesses who may be stressed by the incident as discussing it with others may help therapeutically.

Witnesses who become suspects

The Criminal Investigations (Bodily Samples) Act 1995 (s2) defines a suspect in relation to an offence, as any person whom it is believed has or may have committed that offence, whether or not-

- That person has been charged with that offence; or
- There is good cause to suspect that person of having committed that offence.'

If a witness becomes a suspect during interview [procedures for interviewing suspects](#) should be adopted including cautioning the person and visually recording the interview.

Related information

See also these related Police Manual chapters:

- '[Hate crimes and hate incidents investigations](#)' chapter for information about recognising, recording and dealing appropriately with **hate crime**, **hate incidents** and **hate speech** within the context of scene attendance, investigations, applying proportionality and using discretion
- [Investigative interviewing of witnesses requiring special consideration](#)
- [Investigative interviewing suspect guide](#)
- [Specialist Child Witness Interview Guide](#)
- [Investigative interviewing accreditation policy](#)
- Investigative interviewing doctrine (a document for training):

 [Investigative interviewing doctrine](#) - Prom November 20 15.pdf

625 KB

Other information on investigative interviewing can be found on the [Investigations and intelligence](#) page.

Feedback or advice

Email any feedback, comments or queries to:

investigative.interviewing.unit@police.govt.nz

Forms

All investigative interviewing forms are located on 'Police Forms' under 'Investigative Interviewing'.

Health and safety duties

Maximising safety and minimising risk

Maximising safety and eliminating or minimising risk at work is the responsibility of all Police employees and persons engaged by police to provide a service including contractors and their employees, trainees, interns and volunteers. It is delivered through meeting the obligations under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#) and Police safety policies.

A key enabler is the application of the [TENR-Operational threat assessment](#) in the workplace.

The expectation of the Commissioner and the Act is that persons in the workplace will take reasonable care to ensure that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons, comply as far as they are reasonably able to with any reasonable instruction that is given in order to comply with the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#) or regulations under that Act. They will co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to them and take immediate action to stop any perceived or potential breach of the act or if impractical, immediately report the matter to a supervisor.

Health and safety should be an everyday conversation.

relevant Police instructions include:

- [Health, safety and wellbeing](#)
- this 'Investigative interviewing witness guide' in relation to safe interviewing procedures for witnesses.

Interviewing principles and framework

Ten principles of investigative interviewing

Ten principles provide an authoritative guide to ethical interviewing. Approach all interviews with these principles in mind and use them to actively examine your own attitudes and behaviours.

1	Interviewing is at the heart of investigation.
2	The aim of an interview is to discover the truth.
3	Information must be complete, accurate and reliable.
4	Keep an open mind.
5	Act fairly.
6	Questioning can be persistent.
7	Some witnesses require special consideration .
8	Suspects must be interviewed in accordance with the law.
9	Special care must be taken to identify suspects requiring special consideration.
10	Be sensitive to cultural background and religious beliefs.

PEACE interviewing framework

Conduct witness interviews using the PEACE interviewing framework.

Step	Action
1	Planning and preparation: Review available information and establish interview aims and objectives.
2	Engage and explain: Develop rapport and explain interview processes and procedures.
3	Account: Using an appropriate interview model gain an account of events and probe the account for more information.
4	Closure: Conclude the interview and address any concerns.
5	Evaluation: Evaluate how the information obtained impacts on the investigation and also evaluate the performance of the interviewer.

Interview models

These [three interview models](#) are used within the PEACE framework:

- **Free recall:** encourages cooperative interviewees to give their own account of what happened in their own time and without interruptions.
- **Conversation management:** enables the interviewer to control the interview and elicit as much information as possible from a

reluctant interviewee.

- **Enhanced cognitive interviewing**: builds on free recall using advanced techniques to assist a cooperative interviewee to recall as much high quality information as possible.

Planning and preparing for interviews

Planning and preparation is one of the most important phases in effective interviewing. Always plan and prepare, no matter what type of interview is being considered, to ensure you are ready to conduct an effective and ethical interview.

What should be covered when planning and preparing for an interview?

Step	Action
1	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interview aims and objectives - investigatively important topics - witness profile: identity factors and current state - legal requirements - interview structure - contingencies for interviewee reaction - practical arrangements, including whether or not the interview should be delayed because the witness requires special consideration.
2	Decide if the witness requires special consideration and if they do what initial action you should take.
3	Complete a written interview plan where possible.

It is paramount you consider the witness' well-being and investigative needs in this decision making.

Witnesses requiring special consideration

A witness requires special consideration when additional measures are needed at interview to maximise communication to allow them to provide an accurate account due to their personal characteristics or the circumstances of the offending.

Examples of witnesses who may require special consideration when being interviewed include:

- children
- the elderly
- intoxicated witnesses
- traumatised victims
- witnesses with intellectual disability or mental health conditions
- victims of family violence and sexual assault
- witnesses with communication difficulties, or with English as a second language.

'[Investigative interviewing - witnesses requiring special consideration](#)' outlines factors to consider and how standard interviewing practices might be varied to cater for witnesses requiring special consideration'

Timing of the interview

As a general rule the interview should be conducted as early as possible for both investigative purposes and to minimise the risk of memory contamination and forgetting.

Consider the following when deciding when to interview a witness:

- **investigative factors** - what are the needs of the investigation? How quickly do we need the information?
- **interviewee factors** - what are the needs of the interviewee? Would the interviewee benefit from delaying the interview? Involve the interviewee in the decision.
- **memory factors** - the longer the delay in conducting interview, the greater the room for potential memory contamination and forgetting.

If a witness is showing signs of trauma consider delaying the interview. Check with the witness as to their preference - some may want

to be interviewed straight away. Also remember some witnesses, e.g. family violence victims, may be more forthcoming with information if interviewed immediately. In some cases it is important to interview the witness as near to the event as reasonable so the investigation can be completed with urgency.

Interviews with witnesses who are tired or intoxicated should only be conducted in exceptional circumstances.

Should the interview be delayed?

In some cases (e.g. when the witness is intoxicated, tired or traumatised) you may need to delay the interview until the witness is in a state suitable for interview and you are fully prepared. You want to gain as much accurate information from them as possible.

Ensure you get their full details and any information required for initial action if you believe it would be advantageous to delay the interview.

Preparing the interview location

- Consider the best and most appropriate location to conduct the interview.
- A quiet room that is free from distractions and interruptions allowing both you and the witness to concentrate is an ideal setting.
- Consider where the witness may prefer to be interviewed. It may be appropriate to ask them their preference.
- Set up the interview room and arrange the seating - ten to two is the preferred position.
- Check equipment.
- Make sure you have any required communication aids ready - including pen and paper for drawing sketch plans.
- Consider implications if a [support person](#) or interpreter is required.
- Provide refreshments and tissues where appropriate.

Engage and explain

Preparing the witness for interview

First impressions count, so the opening phase of the interview often determines the success of the interview as a whole. The engage and explain interview phase may be immediately before the interview or on a separate occasion depending on the circumstances of the case. It can also take place in person or over the telephone.

Engage the witness

Establish rapport to put the witness at ease and allow for maximum recall by:

- introducing yourself and any others present
- asking the witness what they would like to be called
- asking when is a suitable time for interview, e.g. do they have any pressing needs or commitments?
- personalising the interview, i.e. treat the witness as an individual and talk to them in a manner and language they understand
- discussing neutral topics
- communicating empathy, i.e. addressing any concerns about events, the interview and the investigation.

Maintain impartiality to establish the foundation for a relationship of trust by:

- keeping an open mind, i.e. don't pre-judge the witness
- using open questions and not interrupting - begin with **TEDS** style questions to encourage the witness to start talking
- actively listening.

Explain interview procedures

Explain interview procedures including:

- reason(s) for the interview - do this in a way that makes the interview's purpose clear but does not specify the nature of the offence
- routine(s) that will be adopted - note taking and method of recording
- the interview structure - tell them they will be asked for their account and then you may ask questions to clarify their information

Account

Identifying a suitable interview model

Different techniques can be used to help witnesses provide a full account of events. The techniques used will depend on your interviewing skills and the witness's level of cooperation.

Use this table to help identify the most suitable model.

Model	Interviewee	Incident	Interviewer
Free recall	Cooperative (including witnesses requiring special consideration)	All	Free recall trained
Conversation management	Difficult to interview or reluctant (including witnesses requiring special consideration)	All	Conversation management trained
Enhanced cognitive interviewing	Cooperative	Serious or complex	Enhanced cognitive interviewing trained

Changing models during interview

Witnesses can move from being cooperative to uncooperative and vice versa during interviews and you may need to change your interviewing technique as a result. Revert to free recall model where possible.

Using the free recall model

The phases and steps of the free recall model are fully explained and practiced within interview training at Level 1 and Level 2. This table details the steps that should be completed when using the free recall model.

Interview stage	Actions
Set the scene and initiate free report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate a free report by using an open TEDS type question. Ask the witness to give an account of everything they know about the matter under investigation. - Allow for pauses and do not interrupt the witness. Actively listen using minimal prompts that do not go beyond the witness's account. - Reflect back what was said where necessary. - Take notes of areas you wish to obtain more information about. - If appropriate, get the witness to draw a sketch plan. If more detail is required go through another free report.
Identify and expand witness topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Break down the witness's account into manageable relevant topics. - Systematically expand each topic of the witness's account by obtaining a free report with open TEDS type questions. When open questions are no longer fruitful use probing 5Wh + How type questions if necessary. - Try to go through the topics in the order the witness gave them in their initial free report. - Take notes of what is said to aid your memory when preparing a formal statement. - Repeat this process until you have covered all topics.
Identify and expand investigatively important topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce investigatively important topics not yet covered. - Systematically expand each topic of the witness's account by obtaining a free report with open TEDS type questions. When open questions are no longer fruitful use probing 5Wh + How type questions if necessary. - Repeat this process until you have covered all investigatively important topics.
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After the witness has provided all their information, summarise back what they have told you in their own words to ensure you have understood them correctly.
Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the witness dates and endorses any sketch plans or notes they have made as they may be referred to later and used in court.

Free recall questioning style

Whether or not your witness requires [special consideration](#), you should use these interviewing techniques to minimise the risk of influencing what the witness says.

Do...	Explanation /example
Keep questions short and simple	The younger or more vulnerable the person, the shorter and more simply phrased the questions need to be.
Ask questions in a language and manner the person understands	i.e. open TEDS type questions in simple language are the best for the majority of interviewees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move to more specific closed questions using 5WH's + How when open questions are no longer fruitful and more detail is required - Begin with the least explicit version of the closed question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The drawback of using specific closed questions is that the witness might respond with a choice without elaborating or be tempted to guess to assist or please you in the absence of a genuine memory. Thus the quality of the information gleaned tends to be poorer than information gained from open TEDS type questions. - Why questions should be couched in an empathetic way. Why questions can gain valuable information for an investigation - but can suggest blame. The context in which they are asked and tonality of the interviewer will make these questions appropriate or inappropriate.
<p>Clarify with the interviewee any wording or phrases as required.</p> <p>If a support person is present, check with them before the interview, wording or phrases you think the witness may find difficult or for which the witness may have a different meaning than commonly held</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'aunty' means parent's sister to most people but to others it may include a long-term female family friend. - the term 'penis' may not be understood but the term 'dick' may.
Avoid topic hopping	i.e. rapidly moving from one topic to another and back again.
Avoid interrupting	Some witnesses may speak slowly and pause for longer.
Avoid repeating questions	The witness might infer their initial response was incorrect.
Avoid developmentally inappropriate questions	e.g. some witnesses might find questions relating to time, date, height, length, weight, age etc difficult.
Only use leading questions (one implying the answer or assuming facts that are in dispute) as a last resort	<p>If a witness responds to a leading question with relevant information not led by the question, revert to open questions.</p> <p>These types of questions may provide the interviewee with knowledge or ideas they have not previously formulated.</p>
Avoid asking questions with a 'Yes'/'No' answer	<p>The witness may want to please by saying 'Yes' and avoid discussing uncomfortable topics by responding negatively.</p> <p>However, these questions may be appropriate for clarification.</p>

Question types

This table outlines commonly used question types.

Open TEDS type questions	Probing 5 Wh's + How questions
Tell	What?
Explain	Where?
Describe	When?
Show	Who?
	Why?
	How?

ADVOKATES

Use the mnemonic 'ADVOKATES' to ensure an eye witness covers all relevant information when describing a suspect.

A	Amount of time under observation	How long did the witness have the suspect in view?
D	Distance	What was the distance between the witness and suspect?
V	Visibility	What was visibility like at the time? (including time of day, street lighting, etc)
O	Obstruction	Were there any obstructions to the view of the witness?
K	Known or seen before	Had the witness ever seen the suspect before? If so, where and when?
A	Any reason to remember	Did the witness have any special reason for remembering the suspect? (e.g., a distinguishing feature or peculiarity, or the nature of the incident itself)
T	Time lapse	How long has elapsed since the witness saw the suspect?
E	Error or material discrepancy	Are there any errors or discrepancies between descriptions given in the first and subsequent accounts of the witness?
S	Salience	It is important to examine how salient a person is within an event scene. Were there 5 armed robbers at the scene or only 1? A person can only process so much information at one time due to limited processing capacity.

If the suspect or other person is well known to the witness the description may still be of use for identification purposes when spoken about by others - but may not have to be as in depth as when the suspect is unknown.

Account: notes and statements

Note taking

When conducting interviews, you face the formidable task of both actively listening and formulating questions. Notes:

- help you later to write the statement or interview summary
- can be used to brief other members of the investigation team
- are not usually discoverable as they are made as part of the investigative process (do not disclose your notes but attach them to the file should defence counsel apply to the court for disclosure).

If you do not take notes, you may:

- miss pieces of information
- make assumptions or misinterpret what was said
- use your own words or phrases rather than the interviewee's.

Be aware that taking too many notes can be a distraction for the interviewee and may interfere with their concentration and ability to recall information.

Notebooks

Your notebook is a record of your duties, what you did, who you spoke to, your observations, sketch plans or diagrams, initial interview notes and, if absolutely necessary, statements from interviewees.

Courts readily accept that police may refer to notes made contemporaneously or as soon as practicable after the event when giving evidence. You must record relevant details about the interview in your notebook including:

- date, time and place of the interview
- interviewee's name and contact details.

Notebook statements

Only take statements in your notebook in exceptional circumstances, e.g. when it is impractical to obtain a formal statement. In these circumstances record the entries as you would a [formal](#) statement. Record these in full in notebook format before the statement commences.

Job sheets

Never record formal statements in job sheet format (job sheets are official records, chronologically listed, of action taken, information gathered, people spoken to and exhibits seized).

Use a jobsheet to record a conversation with a witness when:

- they have been spoken to and it is established that they do not need to be interviewed on a more substantial basis
- a preliminary interview has been conducted and the decision is made to refer the matter to a specialist interviewer
- they refuse to be formally interviewed but have provided investigatively important information.

Written statement

Most witness interviews result in a written formal statement at the end of the interview to:

- record information the witness can provide (for both investigative and prosecution processes) or further lines of enquiry that may then be used as evidence in any court proceeding.
- refresh the witness's memory should the matter proceed to court
- cross-examine the witness should they later give contradictory evidence.

The interview record is a complete record of all information the witness can provide and should also include relevant inadmissible evidence.

When to record a statement

Obtain formal statements from anyone who can provide investigatively important information including:

- prospective witnesses
- witnesses of doubtful reliability
- any person who can give important information in major enquiries
- spouses of suspects and offenders
- associates of suspects
- likely defence witnesses (this helps cross-examination and can prevent witnesses from tailoring stories for the defence)
- people suspected of making false complaints
- people making complaints against the police.

Procedure for recording written formal statements

After the final summary follow this procedure to prepare a written statement.

Step	Action
1	<p>Use Pol2150A (and associated cover sheet) for all witness statements and Pol 2150 B to record witness personal details. (located in Police Forms>Investigative Interviewing>Statements)</p> <p>Ideally, type the statement on the computer. Alternatively, handwrite on lined paper. (Use one side of the page only. Leave space at the top of each page for the file pin). Only record it in your notebook if the other methods are impractical.</p>
2	<p>In the statement's heading enter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the witness's name, age (only if under 18 years) and occupation - date and time of the statement - your name and station. <p>(Do not repeat this information in the text of the statement itself).</p>
3	<p>Using your notes, record the formal statement in chronological order of the incident and narrative form in the first person. (e.g. 'I noticed a yellow car outside the bank...'). Use the person's own words, phrases and expressions.</p> <p>Cover all information the witness can provide in as much detail as possible including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time, date and place of the incident - circumstances of the incident - detail actions and descriptions of people involved or simply present - details of what the individuals did and said - descriptions of property stolen or damaged, and injuries caused - a description of the suspect and how they may be identifiable - any other information that may help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - locate the offender - trace missing property - corroborate or refute information - further enquiries <p>Avoid using abbreviations, jargon or correcting the person's grammar or vocabulary. If the person uses slang or colloquialisms, ask them to clarify the meaning and write the explanation in the statement (so the intended meaning can be clearly understood).</p>
4	<p>If diagrams/maps/sketches were used by interviewee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - record their use in the statement e.g 'I have drawn a diagram of the street, showing where the crash took place'. - ensure the interviewee signs and dates them.
5	<p>Complete the coversheet (Pol 2150 B) with all the witness's personal details. If relevant ask the witness to sign consent for Police access to personal information relating to the investigation. Completing this task at the end of the interview will help prevent the de-personalisation of the interview through asking these administrative questions.</p> <p>To protect the witness's privacy do not disclose the coversheet without legal advice.</p>

Do not:

- short cut this process as it will reduce the quality and quantity of information obtained
- start writing the formal statement until after the witness has given their full account, i.e. an uninterrupted account has been given that has been probed for more information and they have answered all investigatively important questions.

Endorsing the formal statement

Once you have recorded everything in writing take these steps to endorse the statement.

Step	Action
1	<p>Ask the interviewee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - read the formal statement (if this is not possible, follow procedure for witnesses not able to read) - make and initial any corrections or additions and sign at the end of each page
2	<p>Once the interviewee is satisfied with the content of the statement you must record the s82 Criminal Procedure Act 2011 declaration at the end of the statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I confirm the truth and accuracy of this statement. I make the statement with the knowledge that it is to be used in court proceedings. I am aware that it is an offence to make a statement that is known by me to be false or intended by me to mislead.' <p>Invite the interviewee to sign the statement with their full signature below the declaration. If they refuse to sign, note this on the statement and record in your notebook</p>
3	<p>You endorse the formal statement by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initialling and numbering the bottom of each page - endorsing at the end of the statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Statement taken and signature witnessed by:' - adding your full signature, <u>QID</u> and finish time.

Witnesses not able to read and write

If you are unsure about a witness's ability to read and write follow this procedure.

Step	Action
1	Ask the witness to read out the first sentence or two to you. If they have difficulty, offer to read it to them or get a colleague to read it so there can be no allegation of distortion.
2	Sit beside the witness so they can see where you are reading from.
3	<p>Before endorsing the statement write the following declaration:</p> <p>'This statement has been read to me. I confirm the truth and accuracy of this statement. I made the statement with the knowledge that it is to be used in court proceedings. I am aware that it is an offence to make a statement that is known by me to be false or intended by me to mislead.'</p> <p>Make a note about their reading ability in your notebook so you have a record if you are questioned in court.</p>
4	The person reading the formal statement endorses the statement: 'I have read this statement to WITNESS'S NAME. I have asked them if they wish to make any alterations which I have done and initialled with READER'S NAME.' The reader signs off the formal statement and writes the time.

Closure and evaluation

Closing interviews

Whatever interview model has been used, close interviews by:

- reviewing information obtained and confirming that everything has been covered (open a new [account](#) phase if any information has been omitted)
- asking if the witness has any questions and answering them appropriately
- thanking the witness for their time and effort
- advising that if they recall further information about the event after the interview, they should make a written note of what they recall and contact you
- preparing for future events (e.g. referral to support services, photographs, medical examination, court or further police involvement with the witness)
- providing them with your card or name and contact telephone number or another officers as appropriate
- returning to building rapport or other neutral topics
- ending in a positive, polite and prospective manner.

Evaluate information obtained

After interviewing a witness:

- review the information obtained and consider:
 - the impact of the information on the investigation
 - what evidence there is in relation to offences, ingredients and potential defences
 - descriptions of people, items and events that may be vital to the investigation
 - the urgency and need for further enquiries
- consider what follow-up action is required to prepare the witness for any future court proceedings. It may be advantageous to keep in regular contact with the witness especially as court proceedings approach.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluate your own performance:

- what did you do well?
- what could you have done better?
- what areas can you develop?
- how will you acquire these skills?

Difficult to interview or reluctant witnesses

General considerations

If the witness is difficult to interview (compliant but challenging to interview) or reluctant (is not forthcoming with information they have that may assist the investigation) follow the usual procedures for preparing for the interview and engaging with the witness. Note that your attitude to the witness will contribute to how they respond to you and determine the success or otherwise of the interview.

Take particular care to:


- treat the witness with dignity and respect
- keep an open mind - do not assume they will be uncooperative
- be patient - it may be frustrating but the end result will make it worthwhile
- empathise with their position
- be non-judgmental - being judgemental is likely to result in further resistance.

Witness's right to decline to be interviewed

Interviews are always conducted with consent as a witness is not obliged to answer your questions unless there is a statutory obligation (which only exists in special circumstances e.g. under the Land Transport Act 1998). This means it is a person's right to decline to be interviewed and you cannot and must not force someone to speak with you.

Procedure when witness refuses to talk

Follow this procedure if the witness initially refuses to talk to you or be formally interviewed.

Step	Action
1	Spend time building rapport with the witness. This may take several sessions. Record your interactions in your actions.
2	Provide the witness with an outline of the offence(s) under investigation, and explain the potential importance of the information they may have and the processes involved with the interview. Give them enough information to make an informed choice as to whether to speak to you, but do not provide specific details about the allegations or what they are believed to have witnessed
3	Ask them why they don't want to be interviewed, and try to address their concerns. If they refuse to tell you, consider what their concerns might be (from your planning and preparation) and address these.
4	<p>If the witness then agrees to be interviewed, interview them as you would any other witness. If they are not forthcoming with information when using the free recall model then use the conversation management model:</p> <p>-</p> <div data-bbox="146 607 791 656" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">  nves iga ive in erviewing doc rine P rom November 20 5.pd 625 KB </div>
5	If the witness still refuses to be interviewed but will talk with you informally about the offence, obtain as much detail as you can from them using open questions and, if required, closed questions.
6	<p>If the witness refuses to talk to you at all, that is their right. Avoid over persistence and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - get their full details so they can be summonsed if required - proceed to the closure phase of the interview.
7	<p>Closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - close the interview as usual and provide them with your contact details should they change their mind or have any queries later - record in your notebook or on a jobsheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any information they have provided about the offence - the reasons given for refusing to be interviewed - your opinion on why they refused. <p>A detailed account of what was said is vital as the witness may later give contradictory evidence or be called by the defence. Should this eventuate your record may be needed for cross examination.</p>
8	Consider revisiting the witness at another time in consultation with the <u>QC</u> case or a supervisor.

Strategies for witnesses difficult to interview

Some witnesses may be more challenging to interview because they have difficulty understanding what is required or continuously go off topic. In these cases you should:

- be patient. Some witnesses involve a lot more time and effort. Consider why they are difficult to interview including whether they require [special consideration](#) and if you should delay the interview. Some may go off topic because they find it upsetting to discuss the alleged offence(s) and others may simply not understand what is expected of them. Always bear in mind that different people remember things in different ways and what appears to be going off topic to you, may simply be the witness retrieving the information in the most effective way for them.
- consider re-explaining the ground rules, they may simply not understand what is required of them.
- keep using open questions but set clear parameters and re-direct the witness if they go off the topic. If this does not work introduce more probing questions. Be careful not to ask leading questions.
- a witness may not remember all the details of what happened, so do not assume that they know everything. If you keep questioning them when they do not know the answer they may make up information in an attempt to please you or get frustrated with you and the interview process.

See also the '[Investigative interviewing - witnesses requiring special consideration](#)' chapter.

Investigatively important witnesses

Witness examples

Examples of witnesses for whom it is investigatively important to maximise the accuracy and completeness of their evidence include:

- victims of and witnesses to serious offences
- family members of suspects
- witnesses who may later become suspects
- prison/cellmate witnesses.

Visually record witness interviews

The best way to maximise the quality of the evidence of investigatively important witnesses is to visually record their interview (see 'Visually recorded interviews' in the '[Investigative interviewing witness guide](#)').

Police can apply to the judge for an investigatively important witness, excluding prison/cellmate witnesses, to give evidence in chief by visual record based on a number of grounds including:

- the nature of proceedings
- nature of the evidence the witness is expected to give
- relationship of the witness to any other party to the proceeding.

(s103 Evidence Act 2006)

Selecting interview model

Level 3 specialist interviewers who are interviewing significant witnesses may choose to use enhanced cognitive interviewing techniques provided they have been trained in those techniques.

Prison/cellmate witnesses

Prison/cellmate witnesses can provide important information and at times evidence that is included at a trial. Their evidence will incur a higher level of judicial scrutiny and questions regarding the veracity of the witness.

Police must ensure that the [Solicitor-General's Guidelines](#) for use of prison inmate admissions is followed.

The reputational risk posed to Police in any case where a prison or cellmate confession or information is obtained and is to be relied on at Court or to progress an investigation, requires that the relevant Territorial Detective Superintendent **must** be advised.

Each time a witness is considered for use they must be recorded in the Police Register for Inmate Witnesses (IMT File 210823/1077) via the National CHIS Manager.

See '[Target engagement tactics evidential review](#)' in 'Part 18 - Oversight, review and debrief of homicide and serious crime investigations' of the Homicide and serious crime investigations chapter for the review process.

When planning for a witness interview with a prisoner, please refer to the following link regarding [Supreme Court direction on the treatment of prisoner witness evidence](#).

Support persons

Benefits of having a support person

Having a support person present can have many benefits such as:

- reducing the witness's anxiety
- ensuring the witness's well-being and that they understand procedures
- aiding your understanding of the witness's needs
- providing support to the witness leading up to court proceedings.

These benefits help you develop a working relationship with the witness and help to gain a complete, accurate and reliable account.

When a support person may be present in the room during interview

Under regulation [6](#) of the Evidence Regulations 2007 a person may be present at an interview (that is recorded on video) to support a witness if the interviewer considers that-

- a. it is in the interests of the witness; and
- b. the person is an appropriate person to support the witness.

This advice equally applies to all other interviews.

A support person does not have to be present in the room when the interview is conducted. They can be nearby, so the interviewee can speak with them as necessary and /or can be supported in breaks.

Specialist trained interviewers and [CIB](#) staff are trained to deal with serious crime, victims and witnesses. Consideration has to be given to the victim, and the overall investigation. The impact of having another person present in the room needs to be considered.

When to use a support person

When deciding whether to use a support person, ask the witness for their preference and consider:

- whether they are a victim
- the overall investigation
- the impact of having another person present in the room
- the witnesses' characteristics, and
- whether having a support person present will benefit the witness and/or the investigation.

Remember that specialist trained interviewers and [CIB](#) staff are trained to deal with serious crime, victims and witnesses.

Always consider using a support person when the witness:

- is under the age of 18 years or very elderly
- has a communication difficulty (including a disability)
- is showing signs of trauma
- is a victim of sexual assault
- fears intimidation
- uses a language other than English as their first language
- is a victim or witness of a serious offence
- is closely related to the suspect (although bear in mind the relationship of the support person to the suspect and whether they are likely to create barriers to the investigation).

If a witness falls into one of the categories above but you think it is inappropriate to use a support person discuss this with you supervisor.

Who is an appropriate support person

An appropriate support person is someone who:

- is an adult (of or over the age of 18 years)
- is not a suspect or witness in the matter under investigation
- you believe will not attempt to pervert the course of justice
- is available within a reasonable period of time (be flexible, it may be preferable to wait for someone the witness feels supported by).

Appropriate support people include a parent or guardian, carer, family or whānau member, close friend, mental health support worker, specialist support counsellor.

Specialist support persons

Enlist the help of a specialist support person with:

- adult sexual assault victims
- witnesses with communication difficulties (see 'Specialist interviews of witnesses with certain conditions' in '[Investigative interviewing - witnesses requiring special consideration](#)' to see who is appropriate)
- witnesses showing signs of extreme trauma.

Witness usually chooses support person

Usually the support person should be someone of their choice but in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to choose, for example, with a mentally disordered person in care their mental health worker may be the most appropriate person.

Support persons who are also witnesses

Only in exceptional circumstances should the support person also be a witness in the matter under investigation i.e. a support person is required and no one else is available who can provide the witness with the support they require. In these circumstances interview the support person before interviewing the witness and explain they must not take part in the interview while acting as a support person.

Role of a support person

Support person's role during interviews

This table outlines the role of support people during interviews.

Interview phase	Support person's role
Engage and explain	<p>On the support person's arrival, speak to them alone and explain that their role is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide support to the witness and ensure their well-being - ensure the witness understands what's happening - not ask the witness questions about what's happened before the interview, as this will contaminate or influence memory - not discuss anything that's been said in the interview in breaks as this may contaminate or influence memory - not prompt the witness or answer questions on their behalf - participate in a briefing with Police on what has occurred, if necessary. <p>Meeting together with the witness and support person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain/re explain the interview process to the witness in front of the support person - advise the witness of the support person's role - answer any questions they have about the interview process - allow the support person to spend some time alone with the witness to discuss the interview process before commencing the interview <p>If a specialist support person is present speak with them about the witness's needs and decide what is an appropriate interview process.</p>
Account	<p>If the support person is present during the interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inform them they are not to prompt the witness or answer questions on their behalf. <p>Otherwise, arrange for the support person to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitor the interview from another room if the facilities are available and this is the witness' preference, or - wait in a nearby room until the interview's completion.
Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure a support person is present during the interview's closure. If the matter proceeds to court the witness may require ongoing support. - Let them know of any counselling referrals made and possible investigation outcomes. - If a written statement is prepared from the interview, include the support person's details and get them to endorse the statement as well if the interview is conducted in their presence. They should sign the statement: <i>'This statement was made in the presence of...'</i> - Keep the witness (or carer) updated as appropriate, explain processes, brief them for court and arrange for counselling, if required.

Using specialist interviewers

Specialist interviewers

Specialist child witness interviewers	Specialist adult witness interviewers
<p>A specialist child witness interviewer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is a trained interviewer for children and young persons under the age of 18 years - has received specialist training in how to interview children on video record according to the Evidence Regulations and national standards. <p>Contact these interviewers through the Child Protection Team or the CIB or SCWI National Trainer/Co-Ordinator based at PNHQ.</p>	<p>A specialist adult interviewer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is a trained Level 3 specialist adult witness interviewer for persons aged 18 years or older - has received specialist training in using enhanced cognitive interviewing and video recording interviews in accordance with the Evidence Regulations 2007 and national standards. <p>Contact these interviewers through your CIB.</p>

Use specialists when visually recording interviews

Specialist interviewers should conduct all witness interviews that need to be visually recorded.

Interviews should be visually recorded in all cases where the witness meets criteria set out in section [103](#) Evidence Act 2006 and where an application may be made to give evidence by the alternative way of video record.

Advantages of visually recording evidence

The advantages of visually recording interviews can include:

- greater quality and quantity of information obtained
- minimising trauma to the witness by simplifying the process and having their interview played as their evidence in chief
- reducing contamination by the interviewer through the process of transposing the interview into a statement
- providing a valuable means for the witness to refresh their memory before judicial proceedings.

Types of witnesses requiring specialist interviewers

Always consider using specialist interviewers in these cases. These witnesses potentially meet criteria set out in section [103](#) or [107](#) Evidence Act 2006.

Children and adults with disabilities or communication difficulties	Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children and young people under the age of 18 years - Witnesses 18 years or older but with a disability or communication difficulty and who are victims/witnesses of sexual and serious physical assaults - Any case where you believe it is important to minimise the stress on the child witness, including when they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a victim - very young - the witness to a serious offence or an incident in which a family member is a suspect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adults (18 years or older) requiring special consideration especially if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - suffer from some sort of disability (other than intellectual) - are traumatised - fear intimidation - are related to the suspect - are investigatively important. - Investigatively important witnesses to serious offences such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - homicides - serious assaults (including when a recidivist family violence offender is involved) - sexual assaults - kidnapping and abduction - aggravated robberies involving firearms.

Make decisions about using specialists case by case

Make decisions about using specialist interviewers and recording interviews on a case by case basis depending on the availability of a specialist interviewer, appropriate rooms, equipment and transcription services.

If you think a specialist should be engaged to interview your witness, discuss this with your supervisor and:

- if the witness is a child or young person seek advice from your local Child Protection Team or specialist child witness interviewer
- if the witness is an adult seek advice from a Level 3 specialist adult witness interviewer or the CIB.

Deciding whether to use a SCWI or Level 3 specialist adult witness interviewer

Use a specialist child witness interviewer in preference to a Level 3 specialist adult witness interviewer with children under the age of 18 years and witnesses who have an intellectual disability or communication difficulty. Any decisions to depart from this process can be made on a case by case basis by the O/C of the case in consultation with a local specialist child witness interviewer, e.g. if the witness is mature for their age.

When a Level 3 specialist is not available

Districts should have sufficient Level 3 Adult Witness Interviewing resources to enable interviews to be carried out on any day. If necessary, consideration should be given to interviewers being called back to interview when not on duty, eg weekends.

If a specialist adult interviewer is not available, a Detective Senior Sergeant can authorise a suitably competent investigator to conduct and visually record the interview as per the guidelines below.

Consideration must be given to a variety of factors when making this decision (in no particular order) e.g:

- victim and interviewer profile
- potential for a s103 alternate modes of evidence application to play the DVD interview as evidence in chief being made
- known or unknown offender
- urgency of information from interview for investigation and requirement for transcription.

ASA Victim Interviews	Other Victim/Witness Categories
<p>The interview is authorised by a Level 4 (CSP010) trained District <u>ASA</u> Coordinator (Detective Senior Sergeant or Detective Sergeant Acting in the role) to be conducted by a <u>CIB</u> Investigator who is:</p> <p>Level 2 Investigative Interviewing accredited (INT018)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Level 3 <u>ASA</u> trained (ie completion of Detective Qualification Course post August 2013 or CSP005 (pre 2013), or ASA CSP010 (Advanced ASA - Level 4)</p>	<p>The interview is authorised by a Detective Senior Sergeant (or Detective Sergeant Acting in the role) to be conducted by a <u>CIB</u> Investigator who is:</p> <p>Level 2 Investigative Interviewing accredited (INT018)</p>

Note:

- Victim interview rooms must be used. Suspect interview rooms/facilities must not be used to interview victims or witnesses on DVD
- Child victims must only to be interviewed by Specialist Child Witness Interviewers.
- An inactivated/expired Level 3 interviewer should only be considered if they meet the above criteria and proceed with 'normal' interview procedures for visually recording interviews with adults.

Visually recorded interviews

Compliance with Evidence Regulations 2007

Visually recorded interviews used as an alternative form of evidence must comply with the procedures detailed in the [Evidence Regulations 2007](#).

For procedures for visually recording interviews with children refer to the [Specialist Child Witness Interview Guide](#).

Where should visually recorded interviews be conducted?

Ideally a dedicated witness interviewing suite should be used to conduct visually recorded interviews. In exceptional circumstances, other interview facilities may be approved by a [CIB](#) Supervisor.

In all cases ensure the room is set up for the witness and is comfortable, clean and tidy. If using a suspect room, be mindful of the possibility of cross-contamination and the well-being of the witness.

Mobile interviewing units are available in most Districts and via the [PNHQ](#) pool of units to be used in any location.

Monitor's role

A monitor should be used to remotely oversee the interview when visually recording witness interviews, unless exceptional circumstances exist. Reasons for not having a monitor should be recorded in the OC Witness or Investigation notebook. Ideally the monitor should be an officer with a detailed knowledge of the investigation.

The monitor should:

- scrutinise the interview content identifying areas that are missing or which need clarifying or expanding for the purpose of the investigation
- be alert to interviewer errors and confusions in communication between the interviewer and witness
- take accurate and legible interview notes of the required investigative information
- record the time at significant points throughout the interview
- provide feedback on content and/or approach to the interviewer during breaks in the interview
- only interrupt the interview if absolutely necessary e.g. if the equipment fails or a legal requirement is missed
- at the conclusion of the interview complete an [interview evaluation](#) using the appropriate form.

Interview evaluation

The interview evaluation should be completed by the monitor or interviewer on the appropriate form, in consultation with each other.

The evaluation should be completed as soon as practical after the interview, while the information is still fresh in the monitor's/interviewer's mind.

Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- provide a summary of the interview
- process the information from the interview in the context of the investigation
- identify offences, ingredients and probable defences
- establish what further enquiries need to be conducted and determine urgency
- identify important descriptions of people and objects that may be vital to the investigation
- ensure dissemination of the information obtained by providing the investigating team/supervisor with a relevant summary.

Management of video records

Introduction

This section outlines procedures to be followed after visually recording interviews with witnesses, including how to have the video or DVD admitted as an alternative way of giving evidence.

Storage and chain of custody

Because the video recording may be used as an exhibit, the interviewer must take these precautions to ensure it is kept secure and the chain of custody is maintained.

Step	Action
1	Seal, label and arrange for storage of the interview records.
2	Make a minimum of two records. Mark one the 'Master' and the other 'Working' copy. If a third record is made, mark this as a 'Lawyers' copy and retain it to be used later for disclosure if required.
3	Store all copies of the interview record in a secure location. This means a locked cabinet or room as designated by your District.
4	Complete a Certificate for DVD/Video Record (in Police Forms>II>WVR) and store this with each copy of the record.

Transcripts

All witness video recorded interview records should be transcribed if they contain relevant information.

The O/C Investigation is responsible for:

- arranging for transcription of the working tape as soon as reasonably practicable
- taking into account the timelines for initial/full disclosure
- filing of formal statements - see 'Formal statements' in the '[Prosecution file and trial preparation](#)' chapter for more information.
 - contains large amounts of irrelevant and inadmissible material, or
 - is long and complex, or
 - does not present the evidence in chronological order.

Disclosure of video records and transcripts

If a video record of an interview exists it must be noted on the exhibits list and Disclosure Index, as well as any transcript prepared. Refer to 'Disclosure of video interviews, transcripts and TASER data' in the [Criminal disclosure](#) chapter for more information.

Using the video record as a formal statement

See 'Formal statements' in the '[Prosecution file and trial preparation](#)' chapter for information about filing the video record as a formal statement at the appropriate pre-trial stage of a jury trial proceeding.

After the conclusion of the case - destruction of records

The [Evidence Regulations 2007](#) require interview records to be destroyed as follows.

Result	Master	Working	Lawyer's copy
Criminal proceeding concluded	Courts responsibility (10 years after final result)	7 years after record made	7 years after record made
No criminal proceedings brought	7 years after record made*	7 years after record made	7 years after record made

*If 7 years has elapsed since a record relating to an unsolved investigation was made, you must retain the master copy in a secure location until the prosecution is concluded or untenable.

Alternative ways of giving evidence

Applications for alternative way of giving evidence

Ordinarily, a witness will be required to give their evidence orally in court. A witness can only give evidence in court by alternative means (e.g. using a video record of an interview instead of giving evidence in person) if an application is made and granted under section [103](#) of the Evidence Act 2006.

Even where a video record is shown as the witness's evidence in chief, they are required to be available for cross-examination. You should therefore consider, and discuss with the witness, what they might need to minimise the stress of cross-examination, e.g. screens, [CCTV](#) etc as appropriate.

Factors to consider when deciding whether to apply

Make decisions about applying to use the video record as the witness' evidence in chief on a case by case basis taking into consideration:

the criteria set down in [s103](#) (including the views of the witness and whether they are aged under 18), and whether the video will provide the best means of evidence.

An alternative way of evidence application is required:

- in a judge-alone trial, if you believe the video is the best evidence for such a hearing.
- where a pre-trial oral evidence order has been made pursuant to [s90](#) of the Criminal Procedure Act 2011, necessitating a hearing for the taking of the evidence of a particular witness, if you believe the video is the best evidence for such a hearing.

An application is **not** required for any hearing where the relevant witness is not required to give evidence. That includes pre-trial hearings in jury trial matters, unless an oral evidence order has been made in respect of that witness for the purposes of the pre-trial hearing.

For matters that are proceeding beyond a case review hearing and toward a jury trial, the Crown Prosecutor may make an application for an alternative way of evidence where they believe the video is the best evidence for the trial.

Procedures for making applications

In all matters, applications for an alternative way of evidence must be made as early as practicable before the proceeding and well **before** the witness is required to give oral evidence in court.

The O/C Investigation must indicate to the prosecutor as early as possible that they believe an alternative way of evidence application is required for the witness and the grounds for the application (as per section [103](#)). That view and the reasons for it should be set out clearly in the covering report on the file.

The prosecutor:

- considers whether an application is appropriate
- may require evidence in support of the application, and (which the OC will be responsible for obtaining/arranging that)
- makes an alternative way of evidence application at the pre-trial hearing.

When a section 103 order is made

Follow the 'Disclosure of video records and transcripts and TASER data' procedures in the [Criminal disclosure](#) chapter if a judge makes an order under section [103](#) Evidence Act.

Preparing the witness to give evidence

To refresh the witness's memory before giving evidence the O/C Investigation should arrange for the witness to view their visually recorded interview. Usually this should take place within a week of the oral hearing, but the timing will vary depending on the circumstances of the case. For complainants, consider arranging for a support person to be present when reviewing the interview.

Enhanced cognitive interviewing

When should enhanced cognitive interviewing be used?

Enhanced cognitive interviewing should be used with cooperative adult witnesses when you need to maximise the quality and quantity of the information obtained - for example, if the witness is investigatively important.

Selection of the interviewer

Enhanced cognitive interviews must only be conducted by Level 3: Specialist adult witness interviewers who are specially trained in using these techniques. Where practical, also consider:

- the interviewer's experience in relation to the type of offence under investigation and the characteristics of the witness
- any previous experience of the interviewer with the witness (that may aid or have an adverse effect on the interview)
- whether the witness has volunteered a preference.

Dealing with significant evidential inconsistencies and/or omissions

For a variety of reasons there may be significant inconsistencies and/or omissions between the witness's account and other evidence such as:

- what the witness is previously reported to have said
- the accounts of other witnesses
- the scene examination or exhibits
- injuries of the witness or suspect.

You must keep an open mind to the cause of the inconsistencies. They may have arisen for a variety of reasons including genuine mistakes often originating from memory failure or cross-contamination of the witness or others reporting the information, or the witness may be fabricating or exaggerating their account.

Decisions to raise these inconsistencies at interview must be made by the interviewer in consultation with the O/C Investigation taking these principles into account:

- explanations should only be sought:
 - for significant inconsistencies and where careful consideration has excluded any obvious explanation for them
 - on video at the end of the interview (or at another interview) when the witness's account has been fully explored
- the purpose of seeking an explanation is to establish the truth; it is not to put pressure on the witness to change their account
- when seeking an explanation the interviewer must take into account the characteristics of the witness and extent to which they are vulnerable to suggestion, compliance or acquiescence
- questions used to seek an explanation must be carefully planned, phrased tactfully and presented in a non-confrontational manner.

Further interviews

As an investigation progresses it may be necessary to clarify information/inconsistencies that have arisen with a witness. Decisions regarding how this is conducted should be made on a case by case basis. No two situations will be the same and there may be a variety of reasons why a further interview is required.

Consideration should be given to:

- mode of recording, eg video record of interview or written formal statement
- need for support person
- necessity of re-interview

Fabrication

If a further interview is required due to the original complaint being a fabrication, follow the guidance on 'Inconsistent or fabricated complaints' in the [Adult sexual assault investigation \(ASAI\) policy and procedures](#). The same principles for speaking to [ASA](#) victims regarding possible fabrication of complaint apply to other witnesses.

Investigative interviewing suspect guide

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Executive summary	4
Overview	5
Introduction	5
Purpose	5
Guidelines are not prescriptive	5
Related information	5
Feedback	6
Further advice	6
Forms	6
Acknowledgement	6
Interviewing principles	7
Who is a suspect?	7
Ten principles of investigative interviewing	7
PEACE interviewing framework	7
Planning and preparation	9
Planning and preparation process	9
Interview objectives	9
Investigatively important topics	9
Suspect profile: identity factors	9
Children and young persons	9
Suspect profile: current state	10
Legal requirements	10
Interview structure	10
Contingencies for suspect reaction	10
Practical arrangements	10
Written interview plans	11
Duration of interview	11
Safety considerations	11
Health and safety duties	11
Health and safety should be an everyday conversation	12
Engage and explain	13
Attitude	13
Manner and language	13
If suspect elects to speak to a lawyer	13
Informed consent to accompany	13
When you return to the station	13
Off record interviews	13
Procedures for commencing the suspect interview on video	13
Account	15
Using conversation management model	15
Question types	15
Open-ended type questions	15
Probing 5 Whs + How questions	15
Breaks during interview	15
Challenge	15
Admissions and denials	16
Remain professional	16
Importance of listening	17
Unrelated information	17
Allegations of Police misconduct	17
Closure and evaluation	18
Procedure for closing interviews	18
Evaluation	18
Self-evaluation	18

Unco-operative suspects	19
Right to silence	19
When suspects exercise their right to silence	19
Explaining the allegations to a suspect	19
Example of how to explain the allegations to the suspect	19
Co-offenders, multiple offences and gathering intelligence	21
Consistent interview structure	21
Coordination during interviews	21
Co-offenders' statements	21
Multiple offences	21
Gathering intelligence from suspects	21
Interviewing people in Department of Corrections custody	22
Prisoner must consent to interview	22
When is a person in Corrections' custody?	22
Requirements when interviewing people in Corrections custody	22
Restrictions on removing prisoners	22
Fingerprint and DNA evidence	23
Avoid early reference to fingerprint and DNA evidence	23
Procedure when fingerprint and DNA evidence is involved	23
DNA Sampling	23
Lawyers	24
Right to have lawyer present	24
Lawyer's role	24
If the lawyer behaves inappropriately during the interview	24
If a lawyer arrives at the station	25
Avoid entering into agreements with lawyers	25
Privacy	25
The interview record: statements and notes	26
Treat suspect interview records as exhibits	26
Statement format - video, audio or written	26
Procedure for taking audio statements	26
Procedure for preparing written statements	27
Endorsing the statement	29
Suspects not able to read and write	29
Notebook statements and entries	30
Notebook entries about the interview	30
Discussing other topics	30
Discussing interview breaks	31
Endorsement of your notes by the suspect	31
The interview record: Use in court processes	32
Responsibilities	32
Disclosure	32
Defence requests for transcripts	32
Transcription	32
District Court judge alone trials	32
District Court jury / High Court jury and judge alone trials	32
Authorisation of transcripts	32
Other requests for transcripts	32
Presentation of the video interview in court	32
Master copy	32
Interviewing Officer formal statement	32
Availability of working copy	33
Chain of evidence	33
Editing	33

Executive summary

Key things to note in this guide:

- Every suspect is different.
- The guidelines are not intended to be rigidly followed. Be flexible and use techniques as and when you see fit depending on the interviewee, situation and circumstance.
- Interviews have 5 phases - Planning and preparation, Engage and explain, Account, Closure and Evaluation.
- Always plan and prepare for interviews, no matter what type of interview is being considered.
- Consider early whether suspects require special consideration and if so, follow the additional procedures in [Investigative interviewing - suspects requiring special consideration](#).
- All children and young persons must be treated with special consideration due to their age and specific legal requirements.
- It is paramount you consider the suspect's well-being and investigative needs in decision making relating to interviews.
- All suspects must understand the caution and their rights and be allowed to exercise them.
- It is the suspect's right to request a lawyer, consult with them in person and/or on the phone, and have one present while being interviewed.
- If a suspect refuses to answer questions, explain why you want to interview them and outline the allegations so they have a fair opportunity to provide an explanation.
- Always act professionally when challenging the suspect.
- Where there is more than one offender for an offence, consider using a consistent interview structure for all offenders and compare notes when planning and preparing.
- Obtain the Prison Manager's agreement to interview a suspect in Corrections custody and arrange a venue. The Corrections' Chief Executive or their delegate must approve a prisoner's removal from a prison for interview.
- Video recording the suspect's interview is the best recording method and preferred by the courts.
- Only make a written statement when it's impractical to video or audio record the interview, or the suspect refuses to go on video or audio but consents to a written statement.
- Suspect video interviews should be disclosed like any other Police document, but - there is no requirement to create a transcript for the purpose of disclosure.

Overview

Introduction

In the interests of fairness, all suspects should be given an opportunity to be interviewed. They have a right to be made aware of any allegations against them and given a reasonable opportunity to provide an explanation.

Investigators must attempt to gain as much information as possible to establish the truth of the matter under investigation. Interviewing the suspect may provide valuable information not obtained, or available, from other sources.

Purpose

These guidelines:

- outline skills necessary for conducting ethical investigative interviews that encourage suspects to give complete, accurate and reliable information
- outline procedures for:
 - [planning, engaging with suspects and explaining, conducting, closing and evaluating](#) suspect interviews
 - ensuring suspects are cautioned and receive appropriate advice about their rights under the [New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990](#) and the [Chief Justice's Practice Note on Police Questioning](#)
 - managing interviews involving [co-offenders and multiple offences](#)
 - introducing [fingerprint and DNA evidence](#) during interviews
- outline the use of the [conversation management](#) interviewing model
- provide guidance on [dealing with lawyers](#) during suspect interviews
- ensuring compliance with legislative requirements relating to [interview records](#), particularly video records, and their [transcription](#) and use in court processes.

When interviewing suspects it is essential that you are familiar with and act within the terms of the:

- [Chief Justice's Practice Note on Police Questioning](#) ('the Practice Note')
- [New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990](#)
- Section 316 Crimes Act 1961
- [Evidence Act 2006](#)
- [Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989](#)
- [Crimes of Torture Act 1989](#)

Guidelines are not prescriptive

Every suspect is different. These guidelines are generally not a prescriptive format that must be rigidly followed, nor should they imply that all other techniques are unacceptable. You should be flexible, using techniques as and when you see fit depending on the interviewee, situation and circumstance.

There are some aspects that must be complied with for legal or other procedural reasons, e.g. the specific legislative requirements for children and young people. See 'Children and young people as suspects' in the [Investigative interviewing - suspects requiring special consideration](#) chapter.

Merely following the guidelines will not make a good interview or interviewer. Interviewing is a skilled task requiring training, practice and judgement. As the interviewer, you may decide that in the interests of justice or to promote the suspect's well-being, the interview requires procedures different to those described.

Any decisions of this kind should be made in consultation with your supervisor and, where appropriate, the prosecuting agency.

Related information

See also:

- '[Hate crimes and hate incidents investigations](#)' chapter for information about recognising, recording and dealing appropriately with **hate crime**, **hate incidents** and **hate speech** within the context of scene attendance, investigations, applying proportionality and using discretion

- [Investigative Interviewing - suspects requiring special consideration](#)
- [Investigative interviewing witness guide](#)
- [Investigative interviewing - witnesses requiring special consideration](#)
- [Investigative Interviewing Doctrine](#)
- the [Investigative Interviewing Unit's intranet site](#) (Home>Policing Resources>Criminal investigation>National Criminal Investigations Group> Services> Investigative Interviewing Unit) for information on:
 - interview training
 - interview unit technology, transcription software and interview room set-up information.

Feedback

If you have any feedback or questions please forward any comments to:

investigative.interviewing.unit@police.govt.nz

Further advice

For advice on investigative interviewing related matters contact the Investigative Interviewing Unit at Police National Headquarters.

(investigative.interviewing.unit@police.govt.nz)

Forms

All investigative interviewing forms are located on Police Forms under 'Investigative Interviewing'.

Acknowledgement

Much of this guide was developed with the assistance of materials from the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) in England. The Investigative Interviewing Unit gratefully acknowledges the generosity of NPIA in allowing the New Zealand Police to use its materials.

Other material comes from:

- Milne, R. & Bull, R. (1999). *Investigative Interviewing: Psychology and practice*. Wiley: West Sussex.
- Shepherd, E. (2007). *Investigative Interviewing: The conversation management approach*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Interviewing principles

Who is a suspect?

The Criminal Investigations (Bodily Samples) Act 1995 section 2 provides a definition of a suspect:

'suspect', in relation to an offence, means any person whom it is believed has or may have committed that offence, whether or not:

- a. That person has been charged with that offence; or
- b. There is good cause to suspect that person of having committed that offence.

Suspects are also witnesses to the offence who can potentially provide a detailed account that could be invaluable to your investigation.

Ten principles of investigative interviewing

Approach all suspect interviews with these ten principles in mind.

1	Interviewing is at the heart of investigation.
2	The aim of an interview is to discover the truth.
3	Information must be complete, accurate and reliable.
4	Keep an open mind.
5	Act fairly.
6	Questioning can be persistent.
7	Some witnesses require special consideration .
8	Suspects must be interviewed in accordance with the law.
9	Care must be taken to identify suspects who require special consideration .
10	Be sensitive to cultural backgrounds and religious beliefs.

PEACE interviewing framework

Conduct suspect interviews using the PEACE interviewing framework.

Step	Action
1	Planning and preparation: Review available information and establish interview objectives.
2	Engage and explain: Develop rapport and explain interview processes and procedures.
3	Account, probe and challenge: Using an appropriate interview model gain an account of events, probe for more information and challenge any inconsistencies.
4	Closure: Conclude the interview and address any concerns.
5	Evaluation: Evaluate how the information obtained impacts on the investigation and the performance of the interviewer.

Planning and preparation

Planning and preparation process

Consider these areas in your planning and preparation for suspect interviews:

- Interview objectives
- Investigatively important topics
- Suspect profile: identity factors
- Suspect profile: current state
- Legal requirements
- Interview structure
- Practical arrangements including safety
- Interviewing people in Department of Corrections custody.

Interview objectives

- Examine all available evidence - witness statements, scene examination, exhibits and other supporting documents.
- Take relevant extracts from witness statements/reports to assist in your written plan.
- Set the objectives for the interview (include covering identified [investigatively important topics](#), e.g. obtain an account for the suspect's movements between 9am and 12.30pm last night or for blood found on their clothes).
- For complex cases involving multiple witnesses and events, a timeline can assist with the interview planning.

Investigatively important topics

- Identify possible offences committed.
- Consider ingredients and probable defences and decide how to cover these during the interview.
- Understand the strength of the evidence and consider how to introduce physical evidence and statements/descriptions from witnesses.
- Know the established facts and areas needing to be explored.
- Know the geographical area of the offence. It is an advantage to physically examine the scene.
- Establish possible challenges, how and when to introduce these.
- Decide what allegations to outline to the suspect if they invoke their right to silence.

Suspect profile: identity factors

Consider:

- age and maturity
- race (if Māori, include Iwi and Hapu), culture, religion and first language
- gender and sexuality if relevant
- any physical, mental or psychological condition, or other characteristic that may require special consideration (see 'Interviewing suspects with physical, mental or psychological conditions in the guide for [suspects requiring special consideration](#)'). (Be aware of the requirements under [s28](#) and [29](#) Evidence Act 2006)
- any welfare issues that may arise or special needs? For example, is an interpreter required? (see 'Different linguistic, cultural or religious background' in the guide for suspects requiring special consideration)
- suspect's relationship to the victim and domestic circumstances
- current or previous contact with public services, e.g. previous Police contact, CYF, health professionals
- employment and routines.

Also:

- conduct a full NIA check including criminal history and records.
- contact M.O. Section to get details about their *modus operandi* if necessary.
- consider consultation with other experts as required, e.g. Criminal Profiling Unit, Cyber Crime, DNA.

Children and young persons

The vulnerability of children and young persons entitles them to special protection during any investigation relating to the commission or possible commission of an offence by that child or young person. ([s208\(h\)](#) CYPFA- youth justice principles).

Age is a factor in planning, and all children and young persons must be treated as requiring special consideration because of specific statutory requirements (see - 'Children and young persons as suspects' in the guide for [suspects requiring special consideration](#)).

Suspect profile: current state

Speak to other officers who have had contact with the suspect, including that day, and consider:

- the suspect's emotional state, e.g. trauma, distress, shock, depression
- physical state, e.g. injuries, intoxication, tiredness (delay the interview if appropriate)
- authority to search person/property for potential evidence and if/when a search should be conducted.

Legal requirements

Consider your legal obligations.

If there is sufficient evidence to charge the suspect you are interviewing or if you are questioning a person in custody, you must:

- caution and advise the suspect of their rights; and
- not ask questions that amount to cross-examination, in the sense that certain facts are not accepted by Police and you are attempting to whittle down or to differentiate the answers already given (*R v Weaver and Hammon* [1956] NZLR 590).

Note that a person may be regarded as having been detained if there is a physical deprivation of their liberty, there are restraints on their movement or they have a reasonably held belief that they are not free to leave.

See the '[New Zealand Bill of Rights](#)' chapter for further information.

You must fairly inform the suspect what they are being interviewed about and the type of charge they may face (i.e. the degree of jeopardy they are under). This means you cannot minimise the seriousness of the charges they may face.

Consider your specific legal obligations for children and young persons (set out in the [Youth justice](#) chapter and in [Investigative interviewing - suspects requiring special consideration](#)).

Interview structure

- Decide what interview model to use - this will usually be the [conversation management](#) model.
- Work out the interview's parameters and produce a [written plan](#) to use during the interview as a guide to your structure.
- Consider your opening question and [investigatively important topics](#) to be covered including possible offences, ingredients and probable defences.
- Consider what exhibits to produce, how and when.
- Establish possible challenges and decide how and when to introduce these.
- Decide what evidence you may use to outline the allegations against a suspect if they invoke their right to silence to allow a fair opportunity to provide an explanation.

Contingencies for suspect reaction

Consider contingencies for the suspect's reaction, including what to do if they:

- are fully co-operative
- give you a dishonest account
- change from dishonest to truthful during interview
- refuse to be interviewed
- invoke right to silence during interview.

Practical arrangements

- Decide:
 - when and where the interview will take place (e.g. [is the suspect in prison](#))

- who should be present
- the interview's pace, likely duration and need for breaks.
- Examine the interview room and arrange seating (usually in the 'ten to two' position).
- Check equipment. Ensure the microphone is positioned directly between you and the suspect. Have pen and paper for drawing sketch plans if required.
- Prepare presentation and mode of presentation of exhibits as required during interview.
- Decide whether to monitor the interview and make arrangements accordingly.
- Consider what is likely to happen after the interview (e.g. arrest, medical examination, photographs, fingerprints, DNA requests, returned home).

Written interview plans

A written interview plan is preferable when practical. A plan:

- summarises the objective(s) and provides a framework on which to base questioning
- helps you:
 - keep track of what's been covered and what remains to be dealt with
 - identify areas where the suspect's account conflicts with what is already known or has been suggested in other accounts
 - identify new information while keeping track of the interview's objective
- gives you confidence and flexibility to conduct a professional and effective interview.

A proficient interviewer has the ability to be flexible and adapt as necessary. You may need to change or add to the plan during interview as the suspect introduces new information requiring clarification or challenging. Be flexible, adopt a neutral stance and keep an open mind throughout.

Duration of interview

You can interview someone under arrest as long as is necessary provided:

- the suspect's rights are met
- the suspect is treated fairly and ethically.

Be mindful of the requirement to bring them before a court as soon as possible ([s23](#) Bill of Rights Act 1990).

Safety considerations

When we arrest or detain a person, we have a responsibility to protect that person and keep them safe from self-harm and/or suicide or harm from others while they are in Police custody. (See 'Care and suicide prevention' in the [Arrest and detention](#) chapter).

Suspects being interviewed may also pose a danger to your safety and others in the station, as well as to the security of Police property and information. Ensure that:

- a designated and secure interview room is used where available
- a second officer is present or nearby to ensure you can control the suspect
- the suspect is not left unattended and is accompanied to the toilet but allowed to use the facilities in private
- visitors, including legal advisers, are not left unattended while on Police premises, other than when in private consultation with their client.

Take special care when video recording interviews to ensure the suspect is not left unattended near recording equipment.

Note: The more restrictive the security surrounding a suspect while on Police premises, the more likely a court will hold that the person was 'in custody' and therefore, should have been given their caution/rights.

Health and safety duties

Maximising safety and eliminating or minimising risk at work is the responsibility of all Police employees and persons engaged by Police to provide a service including contractors and their employees, trainees, interns and volunteers. It is delivered through meeting the obligations under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#) and Police safety policies.

A key enabler is the application of the [TENR-Operational threat assessment](#) in the workplace.

The expectation of the Commissioner and the Act is that persons in the workplace will take reasonable care to ensure that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons, comply as far as they are reasonably able to with any reasonable instruction that is given in order to comply with the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#) or regulations under that Act. They will co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to them and take immediate action to stop any perceived or potential breach of the act or if impractical, immediately report the matter to a supervisor.

Health and safety should be an everyday conversation.

Relevant Police instructions include:

- [Hazard management](#)
- [Health and safety](#)
- [Wellness and safety](#)
- this 'Investigative interviewing suspect guide' in relation to safe interviewing procedures for suspects.

Engage and explain

Attitude

Your attitude to the suspect is a major contributing factor to how they respond. You should remain professional at all times:

- treat the suspect with dignity and respect
- keep an open mind
- be patient
- empathise with their position
- not be judgemental - your role is to find the truth of the matter under investigation.

Manner and language

Always talk to a suspect in a manner and language they understand.

Some people may require special consideration due to English as a second language (see 'Different linguistic, cultural or religious background' in the guide for [suspects requiring special consideration](#)).

If suspect elects to speak to a lawyer

As soon as practicable after a suspect indicates they wish to speak to a lawyer, you must provide them with appropriate means to consult and instruct one.

Step	Action
1	If they don't have a lawyer or their lawyer is unavailable, give them the list of duty lawyers available. Ask them to select a lawyer.
2	Phone the lawyer and explain the current situation and reason for the interview.
3	Leave the suspect alone to speak to the lawyer in private.

Informed consent to accompany

If a person is not arrested or detained ask them to accompany you to the Police station for interview. Gain informed consent by ensuring they understand they do not have to accompany you and are free to leave at any time.

When you return to the station

Start video recording the interview as soon as you are prepared and commence speaking with the suspect.

Off record interviews

Do not conduct interviews off-record. Never engage in pre-interview interviews (engaging the suspect in an interview off-camera/off-record in an attempt to gain admissions before recording the interview). Judges view these interviews as inappropriate and there is a high likelihood of your pre-interview interview/off-camera interview and subsequent video recorded interview being ruled inadmissible.

Discussions and questioning of a suspect that are not video recorded should be recorded in your notebook and /or written statement format (see '[The interview record: statements and notes](#)').

Procedures for commencing the suspect interview on video

Follow these steps to ensure transparency when engaging with the suspect.

Step	Take these actions with the suspect in the room
1	<p>Inform suspect you want to video interview them about the incident/offence.</p> <p>If they refuse to have the interview video recorded, explain the advantages including shortened interview length, increased accuracy and fairness. If they still refuse a video recorded interview give them the option of audio recording or making a written statement.</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enter the interview details in the interview room logbook. - Check recording equipment and commence video recording the interview. A minimum of two DVDs should be used to record the interview, designated as 'Master' and 'Working' copy. A third may be designated as the 'Lawyers' copy. - Explain that you are recording what is happening to keep an accurate record of what occurs. - Check everyone is visible in the recording and ask the suspect to speak clearly into the microphone.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write in your notebook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any events not already recorded that took place before arriving at the station - rights given and anything said outside the interview room, especially significant statements relevant to the investigation - if the suspect was arrested or a search warrant executed, note how this happened - if the suspect is there by consent, note how consent was gained and that you explained that they are free to go at any time. - Read your notes to the suspect and ask them to sign your notes as accurate. If they agree to the accuracy but refuse to sign, make a note of this.
4	Commence the formal interview.

Use the [DVD/VID 185 Interview Reference Information](#) as a guide to assist with interview procedures.

Account

Unless the suspect requires special consideration (see '[Investigative interviewing - suspects requiring special consideration](#)') conversation management is usually the most appropriate suspect interview model.

Using conversation management model

Interview phase	Action
Free report	- Initiate a free report using an open TEDS type question. Ask the suspect to give an account of everything they know about the matter under investigation in as much detail as possible.
Identify and expand suspect topics	- Break down the suspect's account into relevant and manageable topics. - Systematically expand on each topic using probing 5Wh's + How questions. - Avoid topic hopping as it is confusing to all. - If appropriate to the level of interview, with each topic summarise what the suspect has said using their own words and link to the next topic. Repeat this process until you have covered all their topics.
Identify and expand investigatively important topics	- Repeat the process for expanding suspect topics and cover all remaining investigatively important topics . - Ensure you have given the suspect an opportunity to provide their account of what happened before revealing the nature of evidence against them.

Question types

This table outlines commonly used question types.

Open TEDS type questions	Probing 5 Wh's + How questions
Tell	What?
Explain	Where?
Describe	When?
Show	Who?
	Why?
	How?

Breaks during interview

To ensure continuity in the recording of the interview:

- whenever a break is taken, state the time and reason for the break before leaving the interview room
- when recommencing the interview:
 - state the time and any relevant dialogue or events occurring during the break
 - ask the suspect to confirm your description of what happened during the break.

Challenge

Regardless of the interview model used always challenge inconsistencies between the suspect's account and other information obtained from the investigation. This maximises the benefit of information obtained during the investigation.

Follow these steps to challenge evidence.

Step	Action
1	<p>Consider a short interview break to prepare your challenges - Let the suspect know what you are doing e.g. <i>"I just need to consider what you have said to me and look over the evidence."</i></p> <p>Structure the challenges so each is dealt with individually and generally, present the weaker challenges before the stronger ones, e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge 1: inconsistencies within the suspect's account - Challenge 2: inconsistencies between the suspect's account and witness information - Challenge 3: inconsistencies between the suspect's account and forensic information.
2	<p>Before challenging the suspect, let them know that there are inconsistencies between the information you have and their account e.g. <i>"I have gone through what you said to me earlier and there are some things I don't understand..."</i></p> <p>Introduce each challenge by seeking an explanation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You said... state the suspect's version of what is disputed - We have... state the evidence that contradicts their version of events - Explain that... ask them to explain inconsistencies between what they have said and the evidence. <p>e.g. <i>"You said you know nothing about the burglary at 12 Parrot Street on the 12th of June because you've never been to that address. We found your fingerprints on the window sill at 12 Parrot Street. Explain that..."</i></p> <p>e.g. <i>"You said that tonight you never laid a hand on Jane. We've been told by the doctor that Jane has recent bruising to her ribs and eye. Explain that..."</i></p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge in a clear and focused way. - Present the challenges in a way the suspect can understand. Clear up any ambiguities. - Take care not to misrepresent the strength of the information. - Do not express opinions, as it is the information itself that is important. - Avoid putting suggestions to the suspect about what happened. - If there is no reply, use silence (pause) and then move to the next challenge. - Avoid reading out blocks from statements - paraphrase or summarise and ensure you are fairly representing the information.
4	<p>You do not need to accept the first answer given but avoid repetitive questioning on the same point. However, re-phrasing the question and being robust at times in seeking an explanation is acceptable, especially when the information is strong.</p>

Admissions and denials

A suspect's admission or denial provides valuable investigative information, so still obtain detail and explanations even though they admit to or deny allegations. A thorough investigation will support or refute any admission or denial.

A denial can be common ground for opening your interview at the station e.g. *"Mike, when I spoke to you earlier you said you don't even know John Brown so we need to find out why he's named you as assaulting him."*

Remain professional

Always act professionally when challenging the suspect. Being too overbearing or cross examining the suspect may render the interview inadmissible. What might seem an acceptable risk to take in the heat of the moment may be viewed as unacceptable in the courtroom.

Think of the challenge stage as presenting information that is inconsistent with or contradicts what the suspect has said or not said. Do not be frightened to challenge but remember you do not have to call somebody a liar to make them realise you do not believe them.

Without investigative information supporting your assertions, calling a suspect a liar or saying you don't believe them is opinion

evidence and prejudicial and may affect the admissibility of your interview.

Put challenges calmly and clearly allowing the suspect every opportunity to understand what is being suggested and to provide an explanation.

Importance of listening

During the interview, actively listen to the suspect and consider how their account relates to the information on file. By actively listening you will also increase the stress the suspect experiences if they are attempting to evade issues or lie.

Unrelated information

If a suspect volunteers information unrelated to the offence for which they are being interviewed:

- continue with the interview and advise them their information will be discussed later
- take care not to imply or infer that the information they've given, or may give, could have a bearing on the present interview. There must be no suggestion, implied or otherwise, that any promise or inducement has been held out to the suspect.

Once the original interview has been completed, the suspect is free to give any information they wish. You do not need to video record any conversation about information unrelated to the offence in respect of which they have been interviewed.

Allegations of Police misconduct

If during the interview, the suspect makes any allegation against you or another Police employee, do not stop the recording. Tell them they will be referred to a senior Police employee when the interview is over so their allegation can be formally recorded and, if necessary, investigated. Continue with the interview and report the allegation to your supervisor immediately after the interview has finished.

Closure and evaluation

Procedure for closing interviews

Step	Action
1	On camera, at the conclusion of the interview, offer the suspect the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - playback the interview - add, alter or correct anything - ask any questions and have them answered appropriately.
2	If the interview is conducted immediately or soon after the offence make sure you note their clothing and any injuries. Consider recording these with photographs, and getting them to stand during the interview to capture their state on camera.
3	Ask the suspect to read your notebook entries, bring to your attention any additional or incorrect information and endorse them as true and correct if they wish.
4	To conclude the interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain what will happen next with the video record, i.e. it will be sealed and secured in the exhibit store until court - state the end-time of the interview - sign, seal and secure the master tape or DVD in the suspect's presence - place the master copy in a secure video interview cabinet (usually located in the interview room) with a completed 'Electronic Interview History Report' - write the end time for the interview in the logbook - retain the working and lawyer's copy of the interview with the file.

Evaluation

After the interview, complete an interview evaluation using the appropriate form. Do this as soon as practical after the interview, while the information is still fresh in your mind.

Consider:

- what information has been obtained
- how the account given fits in with other available evidence
- whether any action needs to be taken
- what further enquiries need to be made.

The time taken to complete the evaluation will depend on the amount and complexity of the information divulged during interview. The evaluation is not intended to be an additional administrative chore, rather it should be used as a tool that provides clarity to the investigative process.

Self-evaluation

Being a reflective practitioner will improve your interviewing skills. Self-evaluate your own performance:

- what did you do well?
- what could you have done better?
- what areas can you develop?
- how will you acquire these skills?

Unco-operative suspects

Right to silence

While it is only fair to provide the suspect with an opportunity to answer any allegations, all suspects have the right to silence. This means that if they decide not to talk to you, you cannot compel them to be interviewed and any admissions gained after the refusal may be deemed inadmissible.

However, despite any initial refusal, it is your professional responsibility to explain why you want to interview them and outline the allegations against them so they have a fair opportunity to provide an explanation. If they provide a genuine explanation they may be eliminated from the enquiry.

When suspects exercise their right to silence

Follow this procedure when preparing for interview and engaging a suspect who declines to be interviewed.

Step	Action
1	Always plan and prepare for the possibility of a suspect who exercises their right to silence by having a series of no more than three to five allegations, fully supported by information attained through your investigation. Be prepared to put each one individually to the suspect.
2	If they initially exercise their right to silence after they have been cautioned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain why you want to conduct an interview (i.e. you have received a complaint) and describe the nature of the offence - tell them you have spoken to other people but before you make a decision about the investigation's outcome, you want to give them a chance to tell their side of the story so you can establish the truth.
3	Inform them you will explain the allegations against them so they have a fair opportunity to provide an explanation but they do not have to respond - then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain the allegations fairly - in your notebook record what you have said and any response to the allegations (verbal or non-verbal) as this may later be used as rebuttal evidence should they give evidence that is inconsistent with what was said at interview. If possible obtain the suspect's consent to record this on DVD.
4	If the suspect decides to provide an explanation for the allegations, reassert their right not to say anything and confirm that they wish to waive their right to silence. If they wish to proceed, commence an interview using your chosen model.
5	Ask the suspect to read your notebook entries, bring to your attention any additional or incorrect information and endorse them as true and correct.

Explaining the allegations to a suspect

Explaining the allegations to a suspect is not an attempt to circumvent the suspect's right to silence. You are pursuing the goal of establishing the truth and showing fairness to them.

State the allegations to the suspect so they have an opportunity to offer an explanation. Do not seek an explanation by stating 'explain that' or similar.

Example of how to explain the allegations to the suspect

"From our investigation we've located a witness who knows you and saw you at the rear of the Caltex Service Station on Main St, this morning at 3.00am. Pause

After we executed the search warrant at your home this morning a large amount of property which has been identified as being stolen from the Caltex Service Station was located in the vacant section next to your home. You were seen at the rear of the service station at 3.00am and at 8.30am property stolen was located next door to your home." Pause.

Note: Unlike challenges, when explaining allegations, we do not seek an explanation in any way (e.g. by stating 'explain that'), as that may be seen as contravening a suspects right to silence.

Co-offenders, multiple offences and gathering intelligence

Consistent interview structure

Where there is more than one offender for an offence, consider when planning whether to use a consistent interview structure for all offenders.

If different officers are interviewing different suspects, make sure you compare notes when planning and preparing for the interview. Consistency is especially important with [investigatively important topics](#) and the [challenge phase](#) of the interview.

Coordination during interviews

If interviews are occurring simultaneously, consider using an extra officer (e.g. a supervisor) to co-ordinate what is happening in each interview. Take breaks during the interview to compare what each suspect is saying to determine whether additional investigatively important topics need to be explored.

Co-offenders' statements

The [Chief Justice's Practice Note on Police Questioning](#) (section 30(6) of the Evidence Act 2006) (point 4) states "*Whenever a person is questioned about statements made by others or about other evidence, the substance of the statements or the nature of the evidence must be fairly explained.*"

This includes co-offenders' statements.

Co-offender statements can provide additional investigatively important topics that need to be explored.

Information from co-offender statements may be used in the [challenge phase](#), as you would statements from witnesses. Given the complexity of co-offender evidence, careful consideration and planning is required.

Multiple offences

Multiple offences can be dealt with on one record. In case the offences are heard separately by the courts, deal with each offence separately during the [account](#) phase. Leave a small gap on the recording, before introducing the next offence and reaffirm the [caution/rights](#). For interviews relating to serious crime, consider using a new DVD for each offence to simplify the process should severance be granted.

Gathering intelligence from suspects

When gathering intelligence from suspects apply the same procedures as those used for [interviewing witnesses](#).

Interviewing people in Department of Corrections custody

Prisoner must consent to interview

All prisoners are treated as having greater vulnerability than other suspects - therefore you must comply with the requirements of the [Corrections Act 2004](#) and [Regulations](#) under that Act when interviewing a person in Department of Corrections' custody.

When is a person in Corrections' custody?

A person is in the Department of Corrections' custody when they are:

- in prison
- in custody at court
- in Police custody under warrant of imprisonment where the Police station is acting as a temporary jail
- in Police custody having been remanded in custody and enroute to or from a Department of Corrections' prison.

You must comply with the requirements of the Corrections Act 2004 and regulations under that Act when interviewing a person in Department of Corrections' custody.

Requirements when interviewing people in Corrections custody

You must comply with [r107](#) of the Corrections Regulations 2005 and follow these steps:

Interview phase	Action
Planning and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact the Prison Manager (or delegate) to gain agreement for an interview with the suspect, and arrange an appropriate time and room. - If necessary, arrange for portable interviewing equipment so you can video record the interview.
Engage and explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On arrival at the prison, in the presence of a prison officer: - explain to the suspect their caution/rights - fairly inform them of the reason for the interview and request their consent to being interviewed - if the suspect consents to interview, inform them they may choose to have the prison officer remain in sight during interview (if you prefer, you may also request that the prison officer remains in sight during interview) - if neither you nor the suspect wants the prison officer present, arrange for the prison officer to be contactable by both the suspect and you at all times during interview - inform the suspect that they may end the interview at any time.

Restrictions on removing prisoners

You cannot remove a prisoner from a prison for interview without the authority of the Department of Corrections' Chief Executive or their delegate (section [62](#) Corrections Act 2004).

See 'Temporary release of Corrections prisoners into Police custody' in [Managing Corrections prisoners](#) for procedures when seeking temporary releases.

Fingerprint and DNA evidence

Avoid early reference to fingerprint and DNA evidence

Always remember when interviewing suspects, premature reference to fingerprint or DNA evidence before or during an interview may provide the suspect with an opportunity to fabricate a plausible explanation.

Procedure when fingerprint and DNA evidence is involved

Follow the usual interviewing procedures with these variations, when suspect's fingerprint and DNA evidence is involved.

Interview phase	Action
Planning and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider any reasonable explanations that may account for the presence of fingerprint or DNA evidence and ensure they are explored during the interview. - Giving the suspect an opportunity to provide a reasonable explanation for the fingerprint/DNA evidence is an investigatively important topic you should cover. - Plan when and how you will introduce the fingerprint/DNA evidence, e.g. ask them if they have ever been to (address). - Generally, you should not mention that we have fingerprint or DNA evidence until the challenge phase.
Engage and explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider how much information to disclose to the suspect (you must fairly inform them of the crime they are being interviewed for). - If the suspect has been interviewed before and the sole purpose of this interview is to discuss new fingerprint/DNA evidence, ensure you fairly inform them of the interview's purpose, e.g. to discuss new forensic evidence not available at the initial interview.
Account- suspect and investigatively important topics	The suspect may provide an explanation satisfying you that no criminal suspicion can be attached to the findings, e.g. they had lawful access at the material time or a legitimate reason for touching the object the evidence was found on.
Account - challenge	<p>If the suspect denies being present or touching objects, disclose the fingerprint/DNA evidence to them during the challenge phase and seek an explanation, e.g. <i>“You told me that you know nothing about the robbery at the Wainui Shell Service Station because you have never been there. We found your fingerprints on the counter of this station. Explain that...”</i></p> <p>Note: Unless special exemptions exist, do not mention previous criminal history when introducing the evidence. Such history is not admissible evidence and may lead to the interview being inadmissible.</p>
Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the suspect has provided a reasonable explanation and you are satisfied they have been eliminated from the investigation, thank them for their time and close the interview as usual. - If applicable follow ‘intention to charge’ DNA sampling procedures with an imprisonable offence when an evidential (casework) sample is required. DNA procedures do not have to be recorded on video.

DNA Sampling

Follow guidance provided in [DNA Sampling](#) chapter.

Lawyers

Right to have lawyer present

It is the suspect's right to request a lawyer, consult with them in person and/or on the phone, and have one present while being interviewed.

Having a lawyer present does not negate the ability to have other support people as required present.

Note there are specific legislative requirements for **children and young people** in regards to being able to have a lawyer or nominated person, or both, present.

Lawyer's role

Lawyers present at interview are solely there to represent their client and give their client advice. Do not let the lawyer:

- answer questions on behalf of their client
- 'put words in the mouth' of the suspect
- introduce irrelevant matters
- give you instructions or interfere with or obstruct the interview.

Do not be inhibited by the lawyer's presence.

Interview phase	Action
Planning and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce yourself to defence counsel and explain the offence(s) you wish to interview the suspect about and whether the suspect is currently under arrest. - Allow defence counsel to spend some time with their client and provide them with a room where they can do this in private if they have not had an opportunity to do this. This should not be in the interview room on camera. - Set up the interview room so defence counsel is visible on the camera throughout. Remember, you are interviewing the suspect not defence counsel, so arrange the seating to reflect this.
Engage and explain	<p>Ask defence counsel to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduce themselves when the video recording has commenced and you are introducing those present - explain what their role is. If not already volunteered by counsel, clarify that they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there to provide advice to their client - not to answer questions on behalf of their client or to suggest answers to their client.
Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defence counsel may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask to take a break to speak to their client in private anytime during interview - interject if they consider the interview is oppressive or unfair. - If there is a break in the interview, ask defence counsel to leave the room or stop the recording during the break. Any discussions defence counsel has with their client are privileged and therefore must not be recorded or monitored.
Closure	Provide defence counsel with your details so that they can contact you in the future.

If the lawyer behaves inappropriately during the interview

If defence counsel behaves inappropriately (e.g. answers questions on behalf of their client) to the extent that you believe their actions are obstructive and detrimental to your ability to gather accurate, reliable and complete information from the suspect:

Step	Action
1	Politely refer them back to their role as covered at the beginning of the interview. If appropriate, ask them if they would like to speak to their client in private.
2	If they continue to behave inappropriately warn them that if they continue you will have to stop the interview and they will be asked to leave.
3	If inappropriate behaviour continues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stop the interview, remove them from the interview room and inform a supervisor - provide the suspect with an opportunity to engage another lawyer.

If a lawyer arrives at the station

If a lawyer arrives at the station requesting to speak to the suspect, you must let the suspect know of their presence without delay.

If the suspect:

- wants to see the lawyer, facilitate that without delay
- does not want to see the lawyer, get the suspect to sign a note to that effect and give this to the lawyer, retaining a copy for the investigation file.

Avoid entering into agreements with lawyers

You should not enter into an agreement with a lawyer not to talk to a suspect.

If lawyers request or demand that you not talk to their client without contacting them first and you agree, then you are obliged to contact the lawyer before any further interview of their client. If such a demand or request is made by a suspect's lawyer, you may inform the lawyer that you are not able to enter into undertakings that relate to how Police will further their enquiries in a particular case. You should advise the lawyer that any enquiries will be conducted in accordance with the law respecting the suspect's rights under the Bill of Rights.

Privacy

A suspect is entitled to speak with their lawyer in private. You must turn the recording machine off while this occurs and must not listen on an adjoining monitor.

The interview record: statements and notes

Treat suspect interview records as exhibits

As an exception to the hearsay rule, the record of any **statements** made by a suspect may be admissible as evidence during judicial proceedings.

Treat all records of suspect interviews as exhibits. The original copy of the interview record must be presented to the court for scrutiny during judicial proceedings. With a written statement, this means that the interviewer will read the statement to the court and the judge and/or jury may examine the statement itself.

Statement format - video, audio or written

The [Chief Justice's Practice Notes on Police Questioning](#) (point 5) states that:

Any statement made by a person in custody or in respect of whom there is sufficient evidence to charge should preferably be recorded by video recording unless that is impractical or unless the person declines to be recorded by video. Where the statement is not recorded by video, it must be recorded permanently on audio tape or in writing. The person making the statement must be given an opportunity to review the tape or written statement or to have the written statement read over, and must be given an opportunity to correct any errors or add anything further. Where the statement is recorded in writing, the person must be asked if they wish to confirm the written record as correct by signing it.

Video recording is always the preferred method of recording a suspect interview, **unless**:

1. The person declines to be recorded on video; or
2. It is impractical to conduct a video interview, for a reason such as:
 - i. the interview is to be conducted at a location without video interview capability, or
 - ii. interview equipment is unavailable due to other interviews, or
 - iii. equipment malfunction.

Where a video interview cannot proceed in these circumstances, the interviewer should offer the suspect the opportunity to either:

- record an audio interview, or
- make a written statement (either handwritten or typed).

Procedure for taking audio statements

Step	Action
1	<p>The preferred method of recording an audio interview is with a standard video interview machine. The device can be adapted for audio interview by temporarily covering the camera lens with cardboard.</p> <p>Alternatively, a Police iPhone may be used. Record the interview using the Voice Memos application (with location services turned on, unless inappropriate in the circumstances.)</p> <p>Other audio devices such as a dictaphone will not produce a file with the same integrity and should not be used.</p>
2	<p>State the date, time and location at the beginning of the interview.</p> <p>e.g. <i>“The time is 2.35 pm on Thursday 27 February 2020. We are at Christchurch Police Station.”</i></p> <p>(Statements made by prisoners should not state the place of detention. The city, town or area is sufficient).</p>
3	<p>Identify yourself and the suspect, and any other person present and their role.</p> <p>Explain on the recording why a video interview cannot proceed.</p>
4	<p>Use the same process as if the interview was being recorded on video, with any necessary adaptations (eg. explanation in the audio tape of any non-verbal communication from any party, or clear description of any exhibits referred to).</p> <p>Whenever a break is taken, state the time and reason for the break before pausing the recording, and confirm when recommencing the interview.</p>
5	<p>Before concluding the interview, offer the suspect the opportunity to play back the recording and add any further comments.</p> <p>Advise the suspect what will happen next with the audio recording to seal and secure it.</p> <p>Record details and timings of the interview in your notebook.</p>
6	<p>After the interview, use your Police iPhone to photograph any physical exhibits, documents or other material referred to in the interview.</p>
7	<p>If a standard video interview machine has been used:</p> <p>Secure the ‘master’ copy of the recording as an exhibit.</p> <p>Retain the copies of the recording for working and disclosure purposes.</p>
8	<p>If a Police iPhone has been used:</p> <p>Click on the relevant recording in the Voice memos application.</p> <p>Select ‘Share’.</p> <p>Select ‘OneDrive’.</p> <p>Select ‘Upload to OneDrive’.</p> <p>The file will then be accessible via the OneDrive account on your desktop computer. Upload the original file to IMT, or create a working copy and save the original in a secure folder as an exhibit.</p>

Procedure for preparing written statements

Step	Action
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1	<p>Either handwrite or type the statement using one side of the page only.</p> <p>If typing a statement, use the Suspect Statement template in MS Word forms.</p> <p>A written statement should only be recorded in your notebook if other formats are not available or impractical.</p>
2	<p>Put the date, time and location at the top of the front page.</p> <p>e.g. "27/02/2020; 2.35pm; Christchurch Police Station"</p> <p>(Statements made by prisoners should not state the place of detention. The city, town or area is sufficient).</p>
3	<p>At the top of each page:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - write the person's name followed by "states:" (e.g. "Joe Donald Bloggs states") - in the top right hand corner, record the page number and total number of pages used (add this at the end). For example: "page 2/6" (page 2 of a 6 page statement).
4	<p>Using the conversation management model record the statement as you go in paragraphs as appropriate using 'Question and Answer' (Q&A) format by writing the question in full, asking the suspect then noting in full the reply.</p> <p>e.g. "Q. What were you wearing yesterday? A. I dunno."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record every word using the person's own words, phrases and expressions - Do not include inadmissible matters in the content such as references to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - previous convictions - prison, if the suspect is in custody - matters not relevant to the enquiry (this includes other unrelated offences - a separate interview should be conducted for these) - Avoid correcting the person's grammar or vocabulary - If they use slang or colloquialisms, ask them to clarify the meaning. Write their explanation in the statement, so the intended meaning can be clearly understood.
1st paragraph	<p>State the person's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - name - age and date of birth - residential address, telephone numbers, email address and social network address (e.g. Bebo, Facebook) - occupation and business address, telephone numbers, email address - include domestic circumstances if appropriate. <p>e.g. "My full name is Joe Donald Bloggs. I am 21 years old and was born on 30 March 1990. I live at 3 White Place, Invercargill. My home phone number is 03 123 4567 and mobile number is 021 123 4567. My email address is JBloggs@email.com. I am not working at the moment."</p> <p>This is required to be included in the body of suspect statement (unlike witness statements).</p>
2nd paragraph	<p>Include your own name and give the reason for the making of the statement.</p> <p>e.g. "I am making this statement to Constable White about a fight outside the hotel in Main Street."</p> <p>This is required to be included in the body of suspect statement (unlike witness statements).</p>

3rd paragraph	<p>If a suspect has been informed of the caution/rights include exactly what was said in the statement.</p> <p>e.g. <i>"I have been told by Constable White that I have the right to remain silent.</i></p> <p><i>I do not have to make any statement.</i></p> <p><i>Anything I say will be recorded and may be given in evidence in court.</i></p> <p><i>I have the right to speak with a lawyer without delay and in private before deciding whether to answer any questions.</i></p> <p><i>Police have a list of lawyers I may speak to for free.</i></p> <p>Q. <i>Do you understand these rights?</i></p> <p>A. <i>Yeah."</i></p> <p>If an admission is made during interview and the suspect has not been given their caution/rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - caution/rights them as appropriate - record this in full in the statement at the corresponding place.
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Endorsing the statement

Once you have recorded everything take these steps to endorse the statement.

Step	Action
1	<p>Ask the suspect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - read the statement (if this is not possible, follow procedure for suspects not able to read) - make and initial any corrections or additions and sign at the end of each page - write or type at the end of the statement: <p><i>"I have read this statement. It is true and correct. I have nothing further to add"</i></p> <p>sign the statement with their full signature (if they refuse to sign, note this on the statement).</p>
2	<p>You endorse the statement by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - signing the bottom of each page and any corrections or additions made - writing or typing at the end of the statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Statement taken and witnessed by XXX:" - adding your full signature, full name, rank, <u>QID</u> and finish time.

Suspects not able to read and write

If you are unsure about a suspect's ability to read and write follow this procedure to complete a statement.

Step	Action
1	Ask the suspect to read out the first sentence or two to you. If they have difficulty, offer to read it to them or get a colleague to read it so there can be no allegation of distortion.
2	Sit beside the suspect so they can see where you are reading from.
3	Before endorsing the statement, write or type the following declaration: - 'This statement has been read to me. It is true and correct. I have nothing further to add'. Make a note about their reading ability in your notebook so you have a record if you are questioned in court.
4	The person reading the statement endorses the statement: 'I have read this statement to SUSPECT'S NAME. I have asked them if they wish to make any alterations which I have made and initialled with READER'S NAME.' The reader signs off the statement and writes the time. Either the officer taking the statement or an independent person (may be an officer) may read the statement back to the suspect.

Notebook statements and entries

You should only take statements in your notebook in exceptional circumstances. For example, when it is impractical to conduct a formal interview or when the offence is minor in nature.

In these circumstances record the entries as you would a written statement. There is no need to include an opening paragraph that outlines the suspect's contact details, rather, these should be recorded in full in notebook format before the statement commences.

Notebook entries about the interview

Use your notebook to keep accurate records of all interactions with the suspect that are not recorded on video. You may later be required to satisfy the court of the fairness of the interview. For this reason you should also record the following details in your notebook near the time at which you conduct the interview:

- time and exact words used when the caution/rights was given
- times the:
 - interview started and finished
 - refreshments were supplied
 - interview was suspended with reasons
 - suspect was arrested (if applicable)
 - suspect requested a solicitor and when consulted (if applicable)
- people present
- details of any conversation prior to and after interview
- time and exact words of any admissions made by the suspect prior to and after the interview
- physical description of the suspect
- description of the suspect's behaviour.

The [Chief Justice's Practice Notes on Police Questioning](#)(2(c)) requires anything said by the suspect or person arrested or detained that is relevant to the offence to be recorded. If it is not recorded, and Police seek to give evidence of what was said, particularly if it is inculpatory, then that evidence may be held to be inadmissible or given very little evidential weight.

Caution needs to be taken in continuing a discussion regarding the offence that is not formally recorded on camera. Ensure accurate notes are taken of the conversation.

Discussing other topics

Idle chat need not be recorded in your notes, but anything relevant to the offence needs to be recorded in some way.

You should record the fact that other topics were discussed with a suspect, and invite the suspect to sign a record of that fact (e.g. in your notebook). If the suspect refuses to sign, briefly record the general topics discussed as soon as possible.

If a video interview is conducted, record the fact that other topics were discussed as part of the introduction to that interview, i.e. covering prior events.

Discussion in interview breaks

The same guidelines as above should be followed.

Endorsement of your notes by the suspect

To increase the weight attached to the accuracy of your notes, invite the suspect to:

- read your notes - if this is not possible, read them to the person
- make and initial any corrections or additions
- initial each page
- write at the end of the notebook: *"I have read these notes. They are true and correct."*
- sign the notes with their full signature.

If they refuse to read the notes, read them to the person and ask them if they agree they are true and correct. Record this and their response in your notebook.

If a video interview is conducted these notes will capture details to explain prior events.

The interview record: Use in court processes

Responsibilities

- O/C stations are responsible for ensuring the general security of video recording equipment.
- Interviewing officers are responsible for working copies while in their possession.
- Once stored in property and exhibits stores, the interview record will be logged and stored in the same way as any other exhibit.

Disclosure

Video interviews should be disclosed as per any other police document. (See [Criminal disclosure](#) chapter for more information).

Defence requests for transcripts

If a transcript has already been prepared for prosecution purposes, it should be disclosed after being checked for accuracy. If a transcript has not been prepared, there is no requirement to create one for the purpose of disclosure.

Where the prosecution does not require a transcript, but defence counsel wishes to have one, counsel are free to make their own arrangements for transcription from their copy of the interview.

Transcription

District Court judge-alone trials

Generally, a transcript of a video recorded interview should not be made. In the absence of a transcript the interviewing officer must prepare an evaluation of the interview.

District Court jury /High Court jury and judge-alone trials

A transcript will be prepared when there is a definite indication that the case will proceed to jury trial or Judge-alone trial in the High Court jurisdiction. This will normally be after the trial call-over hearing. Interviews must then be submitted promptly for transcribing.

Authorisation of transcripts

The O/C case completes Part A of the 'Request for Transcription' form (II-RT 03/14) (Police Forms>II>General) and forwards it to a supervisor (Inspector or above) to be authorised.

After the authorising officer signs Part B of the form, the interview is forwarded for typing. When the transcript is complete, the typist completes Part C and forwards it to the O/C case.

It is the O/C case's responsibility to ensure the transcription is accurate by checking the transcript closely against a copy of the interview.

Other requests for transcripts

A request for a transcript will also be considered when:

- the O/C case in a serious crime investigation requires a file to be forwarded out of District for enquiries to be made, or
- the Crown Solicitor makes a specific request, or a judge orders one to be made, or
- the serious nature of the charge, the complexity of the matter investigated or the length, or particular circumstances indicate a transcript is necessary.

Presentation of the video interview in court

Master copy

The master copy is produced by the interviewing officer as an exhibit.

Interviewing Officer formal statement

The interviewing officer's formal statement should include the following points:

- any relevant conversation not video recorded
- at a certain time, date and place, an interview with the suspect was recorded by means of two/three simultaneously recorded

video DVDs/tapes

- at the conclusion of the interview, one of the DVDs/tapes was designated the master copy
- the master copy was labelled, sealed and then exhibited.

The interviewing officer then identifies and produces the master copy as an exhibit. There is no requirement for the interviewing officer to give evidence as to any of the recorded conversation.

Availability of working copy

The O/C case should have the working copy available during court proceedings for reference if required.

Chain of evidence

Current procedures trace the movement of both the master and working copies. It will generally be unnecessary to describe any evidential chain, except where a dispute arises as to the integrity of the copy.

Editing

The master copy will always remain in its original state and will be produced unaltered at committal and defended hearings.

Where an application under sections [78](#), [79](#) or [101](#) of the Criminal Procedure Act 2011 (relevant to a Judge-alone or jury trial respectively) results in an order that a video interview is edited prior to or during trial, Police will be guided and directed by the Crown Solicitor in charge of the case. Since the master copy will already be an exhibit of the court at this point, any editing will usually be from the working copy.

Any editing should be carried out by the [Photography Section](#) to ensure evidential integrity.
