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| **Trauma Risk Management (TRiM)**  |
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# Overview

## What is this about?

### As part of our work within Police Scotland/SPA, officers and staff can be involved in or exposed to potentially traumatic events. Although many will not develop any problems as a result of this, some will.

### The Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) process is in place to support officers and staff affected by a potentially traumatic incident at work.

### If an officer/staff member is exposed to trauma at work, and it leaves them feeling distressed or that their health is being adversely affected as a result, the TRiM process could help.

## Who is this for?

### This is for officers and authority/police staff who are directly involved in potentially traumatic events.

### “Direct involvement” in an incident is where someone has face-to-face and/or first-hand experience of the incident.

### For example:

* officers who attend the scene of incidents and perform a specific role; or
* staff working in the Contact Centre who are directly communicating with people at the scene or attending the incident.

### These examples are not exhaustive.

## Key information

* TRiM can be used to help officers/staff members after they have witnessed or been involved in a potentially traumatic incident at work.
* The TRiM process starts with a wellbeing check by managers, to provide information and see who might need a TRiM intervention.
* A TRiM intervention could mean:
	+ Being invited to discuss the individual’s thoughts and reaction to the incident at a briefing meeting (within 14 days after the incident).
	+ Completing a TRiM Risk Assessment (between 4 and 21 days after the incident, with follow-up assessments after 28 days).
	+ Being provided with guidance documents to help support the individual.
* A TRiM intervention can include a one-to-one or group risk assessment, where an assessor will work with the individual(s) to identify what support we could provide to help them. It involves meeting with an assessor in a safe environment to discuss the incident, how they have been since, and possible ways forward.
* Details of what is discussed during the TRiM process will be kept confidential, unless there is evidence of an illegal act, or where there may be a significant risk to individuals.
* TRiM is a voluntary process, but we would encourage all officers and staff to ask for help if they need it.
* TRiM is an internal process, and should not be used for victims or witnesses of crimes.
* Some examples of potentially traumatic events are given below (this list is not exhaustive):
	+ A serious multiple casualty incident
	+ Serious injury or death of an individual in the execution of duty
	+ Serious abuse/injury to child
	+ Serious injury or death of a member of the public resulting from police operations - examples of this could include a shooting by an officer, or an injury or death caused by the collision of a police vehicle
	+ Any incident that causes profound emotion, such as the sudden death of an infant
	+ A death in custody
	+ A life threatening/potentially traumatic incident involving the officer/staff member and/or a close friend/family/a colleague
	+ Any incident considered to be a serious physical or psychological threat, particularly in situations of extreme violence or where life-threatening risk has been experienced
	+ Any loss of life that follows extraordinary and prolonged expenditure of physical and emotional energy
	+ Any incident where the circumstances are so unusual, or the sights or sounds so distressing, as to produce a high level of immediate or delayed emotional reaction that surpasses the coping mechanisms of the individual
	+ Shooting incident involving self or colleague
	+ Suicide
	+ Serious public disorder
	+ Exposure to multiple relatively minor or routine incidents
	+ Any event resulting in a high emotional reaction that overwhelms a person’s normal coping mechanisms
	+ Incidents where there may be PIRC involvement

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# Officer/Staff

## What you need to do:

### We know that it will not always be possible to avoid or minimise exposure to potentially traumatic incidents during your work.

### If you feel that you have been adversely affected by exposure to trauma whilst at work, you should speak to your manager or another manager on duty as soon as possible so that they can start the TRiM process. Remember, the earlier we identify the problem, the quicker we can start managing it, and helping you move on.

## What you need to know:

### Your manager should check how you and/or your team are doing after any potentially traumatic incident, to see whether it would be appropriate to use the TRiM process.

### If you feel that you have been affected by an incident at work and would like to take part in the TRiM process, you do not have to wait for your manager to ask you. You can ask your manager to start the TRiM process for you, or you can self-refer. Self-referrals should be made through your local TRiM mailbox (North, East, or West).

### The TRiM process should not be used if you have experienced traumatic events linked to your personal life, or other work/personal stressors. For these, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) can be contacted for support, advice, and counselling.

## Contact details for local TRiM Co-ordinators:

### You should choose which mailbox to use based on your geographical work location. This is so that we can find a TRiM Co-ordinator who is as close to you as possible.

* TRIM West mailbox
* TRIM East mailbox
* TRIM North mailbox

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# Manager

## What you need to do:

* Do what you can to prevent or minimise your team’s exposure to potentially traumatic incidents. However, we also recognise that in our line of work, this will not always be possible.
* Identify situations where team members have had direct involvement in a potentially traumatic incident and assess whether TRiM is required.
* Complete the Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Record Form (076-005) and/or refer to appropriate support services.

## Straight after the incident

### Where any of your staff have been exposed to a potentially traumatic incident in the course of their work, you need to carry out a wellbeing check to see if they need any support. (See the Trauma Risk Management [TRiM] Wellbeing Meetings Guidance document for more details.) You should remember to think about immediate welfare needs, like whether your team members are fit to drive home.

### You should monitor members of your team for signs of distress, and do everything possible to avoid any more exposure to trauma for the following 72 hours.

### You should complete the Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Record Form (076-005) with details of the team members who were involved in the traumatic incident. Ask them if they would like to be referred for a TRiM intervention, and note their response on the form. Their details should be included on the form even if they do not want to be referred. The form must be completed and sent every time a wellbeing check is carried out and when TRiM is considered/offered – even if no one in the group wants/needs a TRiM intervention. Send this to your local TRiM mailbox (North, East, or West).

### It is important that you remind team members that they can self-refer for TRiM by contacting their local TRiM Co-ordinator via the relevant TRiM mailbox.

## Within 72 hours of the incident

### It is important that the Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Record Form (076-005) is submitted within 72 hours of an incident. When the TRiM Assessor receives the referral, they will speak with you and/or those named in the referral, to find the best way forward and plan what support can be offered. Together, you will make sure that the most effective support is provided to your team member(s).

## What you need to know:

### TRiM should not be used if a member of your team experiences traumatic events linked to their personal life, or other work/personal stressors. For these, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) can be contacted for support, advice, and counselling.

## Contact details for local TRiM Co-ordinators:

### You should choose which mailbox to use based on the geographical work location of the team member(s) you are referring. This is so that we can find a TRiM Co-ordinator who is as close to them as possible.

* TRIM West mailbox
* TRIM East mailbox
* TRIM North mailbox

# Resources

**Forms**

* Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Record Form (076-005)

**How to Guides**

* Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Wellbeing Meetings Guidance

**Reference Documents**

* Trauma Information
* TRiM Testimonials

**Related Procedures**

* Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
* Health and Wellbeing Procedure (pending)

**Useful Links**

* Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
* TRiM Model
* Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service TRiM video
* Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
* Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
* NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Guidance
* Data Protection Act 2018

**Appendix A**

Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Testimonials

The following testimonials were written by Police Scotland/SPA officers and members of staff. They explain how TRiM helped them after they had been involved in traumatic incidents. We hope that reading their experiences will help you understand how this process could help you if you have been involved in a traumatic incident at work.

**“Assured that I would not be left in distress”**

“The TRiM assessor contacted me 4 days after the incident and was very explanative about what TRiM was able to do for me and I was enabled to feel listened to and assured that I would not be left in distress at any time and that there would always be someone for me to contact if I needed it now or in the future. I would recommend this service to anyone of my colleagues”.

**“Worthwhile and extremely useful”**

“The TRiM assessor that came to see me made the effort to know how I had my cuppa beforehand and ensured there was one on the table when I got in. The assessor was very understanding while I was giving him my information and detail about my experience. I think TRiM is worthwhile and extremely useful”.

**“Very well thought out”**

“I found the experience very well thought out, with a fountain of information provided. I have used TRiM twice in my position as a Call Handler and can honestly say it has helped. I have recommended it to others since”.

**“Helped me to deal with the issues I had”**

“I found the TRIM assessor very approachable and greatly helped me to see the incident that I had attended in a different light which helped me to deal with the issues I had”.

**“No judgement”**

“It is very worthwhile. The assessor explains to you that they are not counsellors however they listen to your concerns and there is no judgement. The process helped me to understand my reactions to the event and I was given time to talk about it in confidence”.

**Appendix B**



**Trauma**

**Information**

**Although you are a member of the Police Service, whose job it is to help others, you are not necessarily immune from the natural reactions to what has happened.**

**You have experienced a traumatic event or critical incident** - any incident that causes people to experience unusually strong emotional reactions that have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either socially or at work.

Even though the event may be over, you may experience some strong emotional or physical reactions, now or later. It is very common, in fact quite normal for people to experience emotional distress when they have experienced a serious event.

Sometimes the emotional aftershocks (or stress reactions) appear immediately after the event. Sometimes they may appear a few hours or a few days later. And in some cases weeks or months may pass before the stress reactions appear.

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days or longer depending on the severity of the event.

With understanding and the support of friends and family the reactions usually pass more quickly. Occasionally the event is so painful that professional assistance may be necessary. This does not imply weakness, but the event was just too powerful for people to manage themselves.

**Some common signs and signals of a stress reaction**

**Physical**

Exhaustion, palpitations, rapid breathing, tremors, shaking, profuse sweating, especially of the hands, vomiting, loss of appetite, comfort eating, muscle tension – leading to headache backache, chest pains, dizziness.

Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal – they will decrease over time and become less painful.

Any of the above may indicate the need for a medical evaluation. **When in doubt contact your GP or NHS 24.**

**Cognitive (thinking)**

Confusion, nightmares, uncertainty, hyper vigilance, suspiciousness, intrusive images, blaming someone, poor problem solving and decision making, forgetfulness.

**Emotional**

Fear, guilt, panic, denial, anxiety, agitation, irritability, depression, intense anger, apprehension, numbness, outbursts, feeling overwhelmed, sadness.

**Behavioural**

Withdrawal, restlessness, pacing, change in social activity, increased alcohol consumption.

**Spiritual**

Questioning of beliefs/faith. Loss of meaning and purpose, sense of isolation.

**Remember you do not need to react to be normal, but it is normal to react.**

**When to seek help – if any of these persist after a month or so:**

* The event is still on your mind.
* You feel tense, exhausted, confused or restless.
* You feel very angry.
* Those close to you comment on your personality change.
* Your work performance deteriorates.
* You have nightmares, flashbacks, panic attacks or disturbed sleep.
* You are more accident-prone.
* Your work and personal relationships are suffering.
* You have noticed an increase in your smoking/drinking habits.
* You are relying on more medication.

Ways for you to respond to the stress reaction.

* **Within the first 24-72 hours,** alternating periods of rest and exercise will help physical symptoms.
* Talk to people and spend time with others.
* **Beware numbing the pain with overuse of drugs and alcohol** – you don’t need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem.
* **Maintain your usual routine –** eat regularly and get enough rest.

**Ways for family members, friends and work colleagues to respond to your stress reaction:**

* Listen carefully.
* Spend time with the traumatised person.
* Offer your assistance and listening ear if they haven’t asked for help.
* Don’t take their anger or other feelings personally.
* **Don’t tell them they’re ‘lucky it wasn’t worse’** – those statements do not console traumatised people. Instead tell them that you are sorry such an event happened and you want to understand and assist them.

**Additional Help**

* + Occupational Health
	+ Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
	+ National Wellbeing Co-ordinator
	+ Your GP
	+ TRiM Co-ordinators (refer to TRiM SOP for contact details)

**Appendix C**

Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) Wellbeing Meetings Guidance

**The wellbeing meeting – guidance for managers and supervisors**

Conducting a wellbeing check at the end of a shift is considered good management practice. It is an expression of interest in the wellbeing of those involved and an opportunity to give support and information. It is also an opportunity to check out welfare needs. Managers must ensure that checks takes place shortly after a traumatic incident or before those involved go off-duty.

The wellbeing meeting should provide the opportunity to discuss thoughts about the incident. It is not designed to look at the incident in depth and it must not become a discussion of the facts of the incident as this could escalate an individual’s emotional state. It should give those involved an opportunity to express their views, without fear of censure.

Availability of the self-referral process to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)/counselling service or Occupational Health and the confidential nature of both should be reinforced at the end of the meeting.

The officer/supervisor in charge should carry out the wellbeing check. If the officer/supervisor in charge does not feel able to carry out the check another trained manager may assist.

The officer/supervisor in charge should record that the wellbeing check was carried out and to whom, when it took place, whether this was individual or in a group, those who attended, where it took place and any actions/outcomes agreed and/or addressed. This record is confidential to the people involved and should not be discussed or disclosed without the consent of the individuals involved.

Remember - ‘**RSVP**’

**Reassure individuals**

Take individuals to one side before the end of a shift. Tell them you want to know how they are, so find a private place where this can take place uninterrupted. Do not answer any telephones or radios.

**Support staff**

Acknowledge their involvement in the event. Tell them clearly you want to support them, hence the meeting. Try, at this stage, not to discuss other events or pressures.

**Ventilation by staff**

Allow staff to offload and talk about what has happened. Do not ask them how they are feeling, as you are not trained to deal with their feelings. If you consider they have done well – offer praise. Do not criticise whilst undertaking this welfare task.

**Plan**

Plan for the future. Explain how it is ‘normal’ to have physical and emotional reactions, draw their attention to the guidance document entitled Trauma Information. Explain that memories take time to fade. Discussion on these reactions can be beneficial.

Discuss what they are going to do following this process and how important it is to keep talking about what has happened, keeping a balance with normal life of work, home etc. Ask individuals what further help they would like. Plan ahead if need be. Mention that a good support system of family, friends and colleagues is important and that they do access them. Consider offering the individual a lift home if thought appropriate and confirm whether or not they are going home to an empty house. If so explore options to address this.

A contact number shared at this point can be useful so that individuals feel supported and do not leave feeling isolated.

**N.B.** Should a supervisor be unclear about using this process please contact the TRiM Co-ordinator or National Wellbeing Co-ordinator for advice.

TRiM does not replace the wellbeing check carried out by line managers but can be used to supplement it to help individuals to normalise reactions following a serious incident.

Compliance Record

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| Equality Impact Assessment: Date ~~Completed~~/Reviewed: | 04/08/2021 |
| **Information Management Compliant:** | Yes |
| **Health and Safety Compliant:** | Yes |
| **Publication Scheme Compliant:** | Yes |

Version Control Table

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Version | History of Amendments | Date |
| 1.00 | Initial approved version | 15/12/2014 |
| 2.00 | Clarification on what TRiM is not | 26/01/2015 |
| 3.00 | Change to Appendix E | 08/09/2015 |
| 4.00 | Removal of Section 5, TRiM Team; addition of Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Health and Wellbeing SOP. Addition of TRiM contact details | 02/11/2017 |
| 5.00 | Updated to reflect changes in data protection legislation | 24/05/2018 |
| 6.00 | Policy Simplification | 01/04/2019 |
| 7.00 | Statutory change to the TRiM process by licencing body, increasing the timescale to complete a TRiM Risk Assessment following an incident from between 4 and 14 days, to 4 and 21 days. | 04/08/2021 |