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14.24 Priority codes

POLICY

Job taskings are assigned one of four priority codes by members under the supervision of:

- (i) the Duty Officer, Police Communications Centre, Brisbane;
- (ii) the officer in charge of a police communications centre in areas not controlled by the Police Communications Centre, Brisbane; or
- (iii) in places where no police communications centre exists, the officer in charge of the station where the information requiring the attendance of police is received; or
- (iv) the Inspector, Special Emergency Response Team, where due to the type, or methodologies of the duties being performed it is not practical to obtain a priority code as outlined in paragraphs (i) to (iii) above.

To ensure that officers are aware of the degree of urgency required in attending an incident, complaint, request for assistance or other matter, the following priority codes are allocated:

- (i) Code 1 - for very urgent matters when danger to human life is imminent;
- (ii) Code 2 - for urgent matters involving injury or present threat of injury to person or property;
- (iii) Code 3 - for routine matters; or
- (iv) Code 4 - negotiated response.

14.24.1 Criteria for assigning a priority code

POLICY

A member assigning a priority code to a task should use the following guidelines:

Code 1 - 'Very Urgent' - may be assigned in the following circumstances:

- (i) when an officer or member of the public is in need of help in circumstances where life is actually and directly threatened and is in immediate danger of death. This includes the need for assistance in similar circumstances when an officer is having problems escorting prisoners, is trying to effect crowd control or is endeavouring to keep law and order at civil disturbances, etc.;
- (ii) when shots are being fired or an explosion or bombing has occurred and danger to human life is imminent;
- (iii) at the time of a major incident or serious fire, or in the case of a robbery or any crime in progress where there is danger to human life;

(iv) in instances of asphyxiation or electrocution where life may be saved or where a person is attempting suicide or other forms of self harm likely to cause death or serious injury; or

(v) in any other instance where it is known that danger to human life is imminent.

Code 2 - 'Urgent' - may be assigned in the following circumstances:

(i) incidents similar to those above and any other urgent situations without the element of imminent danger to human life being apparent;

(ii) in any other urgent situation when it is known that danger to human life is not imminent; or

(iii) incidents involving injury to a person or present threat of injury to a person or property.

Code 3 - 'Routine' - may be assigned to all other matters which are considered to be routine and not requiring classification of Code 1 or 2.

Code 4 - 'Negotiated Response' - is only to be assigned to calls for service in accordance with approved Regional/Command/District negotiated response policies.

ORDER

The member responsible for assigning a priority code to a task is to:

(i) assign a code to the task having regard to Service policy and the information available;

(ii) change the code as circumstances and information warrant; and

(iii) advise the member responsible for transmitting the task of the assigned code for that task and any change to that code.

The member responsible for transmitting the task and code is to notify the member assigned the task of the priority code for the task and any change to that code.

Officers are not to alter or upgrade allocated priority codes unless directed by a member responsible for assigning priority codes.

14.24.2 Negotiated response

A 'negotiated response' is a method by which calls for service from a client may be prioritised through negotiation.

A negotiated response agreement exists when a member of the Service and a client have agreed to respond to an incident in a specified manner.

The aim of negotiated response agreements is to promote better management of police resources.

In this section the term:

(i) 'relevant member' means a member of the Service authorised under the provisions of a Regional/Command/District negotiated response policy to enter into negotiated response agreements; and

(ii) 'client' means a person who reports an incident to police or requests police assistance. The term includes a person representing any organisation, company or body.

14.24.3 Outcomes of negotiated response agreements

POLICY

Negotiated response agreements are to result in a definite course of action being agreed between the relevant member and the client.

Examples of appropriate outcomes of a negotiated response agreement include:

(i) the client reporting the incident at a nominated police station when it is open or on the next working day;

(ii) the client attending at and reporting the incident immediately at the nearest 24 hour police station; or

(iii) if the nature of the incident is such that the attendance of an officer at a time acceptable to the Service and the client is suitable, the recording of particulars and giving an undertaking to the client that an officer will attend as agreed. Where Regional/Command/District negotiated response policies allow a single officer patrol to attend, that option should be considered.

14.24.4 Approval of Regional/Command/District Negotiated Response Policies

POLICY

Proposed Regional/Command/District negotiated response policies are to be submitted by the relevant Assistant Commissioner to the Deputy Commissioner (Regional Operations), for approval prior to implementation.

Upon receiving approval to implement a negotiated response policy, officers in charge of Regions/Commands/Districts are to ensure that:

(i) members of the affected community are advised of the nature of the negotiated response policy and the police response alternatives;

(ii) members are provided with suitable training in the use of the applicable negotiated response policy; and

(iii) standing operating procedures are developed to ensure that the negotiated response policy is applied with consistency.

14.24.5 When negotiated response agreements may be entered into

POLICY

Subject to the requirements of a Regional/Command/District negotiated response policy, incidents

which would not otherwise be assigned a priority classification of 'Code 1 - Very Urgent' or 'Code 2 - Urgent' may be considered for a negotiated response.

Negotiated response agreements may be entered into with a client who;

- (i) personally attends a police station or establishment;
- (ii) telephones a police station, establishment or police communications centre; or
- (iii) by prior arrangement, as part of an approved Regional/Command/District negotiated response policy, sends an approved form to a police station or establishment.

Negotiated response agreements may be entered into when:

- (i) the relevant member is satisfied that:
 - (a) a negotiated response is an appropriate method of responding to the call for service;
 - (b) the wishes of the client are considered and met; and
 - (c) the client understands the negotiated response agreement; and
- (ii) the client and the relevant member have agreed that immediate police attendance is not required, and an alternative method of reporting the incident has been agreed to.

PROCEDURE

In considering whether a negotiated response is an appropriate method to respond to a call for service, members receiving such calls should ascertain the following information relating to the incident and, unless they are relevant members, convey that information to a relevant member:

- (i) informant/complainant/witness details, including name, address, current location and telephone number;
- (ii) the nature of the incident;
- (iii) the time the incident occurred or whether it is still occurring;
- (iv) details of any threat or injury to any persons and any medical assistance required;
- (v) type and value of any property involved in the incident;
- (vi) identification or location of any suspects/offenders;
- (vii) whether any weapons are involved;
- (viii) whether any person involved in the incident is affected by drugs or liquor;
- (ix) the nature of any nuisance or risk to the public caused by the incident; and
- (x) regularity or frequency of the incident.

14.24.6 When negotiated response agreements may not be entered into**POLICY**

A negotiated response agreement is not to be entered into when:

- (i) all relevant information cannot be obtained or clarified;
- (ii) the relevant member believes that a negotiated response is not appropriate, regardless of the wishes of the client; or
- (iii) the client does not wish to enter into a negotiated response agreement.

In such cases the call for service is to be allocated an appropriate priority code.

A relevant member who enters into a negotiated response agreement, which requires that an officer attend a location at a specified time, is to ensure that details of the negotiated response agreement are recorded in accordance with s. 1.6.1: 'Recording initial demand' of this Manual.

14.24.7 Procedures to be adopted when negotiated response agreements cannot be fulfilled**POLICY**

If, as part of a negotiated response agreement, a relevant member and a client agree that an officer or the client would attend a location at a specified time, the client is to be notified of any likely delay or proposed change to the time or location agreed upon. Regional/Command/District negotiated response policies are to assign the responsibility for providing such notification to a suitable member of the Service.

If the conditions of a negotiated response agreement are not met, the original negotiated response agreement ceases to exist. A new agreed response may be negotiated, otherwise an appropriate response code is to be assigned to the call for service.

14.24.8 Single officer patrols**POLICY**

Where practicable, single officer patrols should not be tasked to attend incidents involving weapons or disturbances involving a number of offenders, unless they are assisting officers who are already in attendance at such incidents.

Officers in charge of regions or commands are to ensure that where single officer patrols are performed, for example:

- (i) one and two officer stations;
- (ii) traffic enforcement;
- (iii) crime reporting;
- (iv) enquiries; or
- (v) any other operational duty,

that standing operating procedures are implemented within their respective region or command to minimise identified operational risks, for example:

- (i) single officer patrols;
- (ii) vehicle interceptions; and
- (iii) communication black spots.

See also ss. 1.5.4: 'Standing Operating Procedures and Standing Orders' and 1.5.5: 'Standing Operating Procedures - format' of this Manual.

Officers performing single officer patrols are to familiarise themselves with the relevant standing operating procedures in relation to single officer patrols within their respective region or command.

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