

**LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS REFERENCES
COMMITTEE**
Questions Taken on Notice

MISSING AND MURDERED FIRST NATIONS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

<p>NSW POLICE FORCE</p>

Hearing: Friday, 28 July 2023

Answers due by: Friday, 18 August 2023

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

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Page 12 of Transcript

CHAIR: A number of recommendations were made to the NSW Police Force. I think it is key to this inquiry to understand exactly what the NSW Police Force did in response to those recommendations. I will read the recommendations to you, Superintendent, and give you an opportunity to provide a response now. Perhaps more particularly, I will ask you to take on notice the question as to what constructive actions have been taken by the NSW Police Force to address those recommendations and to implement those recommendations. That is so we as a committee are able to form a view as to whether or not appropriate actions have been taken by the NSW Police Force to ensure that those families in 1990 and 1991 would not receive the same deplorable treatment, to be frank, in their engagement with law enforcement. I think that is a key aspect. I will put the first recommendation to you, Superintendent. It states:

That the NSW Police Force review all of its policies, procedures and training programs that relate to Aboriginal people, and update them where necessary to ensure they are consistent with best cultural practice. This should be done in consultation with Aboriginal people and those with relevant experience, such as Detective Inspector Jubelin, Dr Diana Eades and Dr Tracy Westerman.

That was the first recommendation. I would like to give you an opportunity to advise what actions have been taken in response to that recommendation. You can take it on notice and provide a detailed response so we can get an understanding of the concrete actions that were taken. Over to you.

ANSWER:

The Aboriginal Strategy and Coordination Team within the NSW Police Force's (NSWPF) Crime Prevention Command provides a specialist cultural lens in the development of culturally considered corporate policy, training, information and engagement with Aboriginal communities.

The team consists entirely of identified Aboriginal personnel who have close connection with community and through the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLOs) and the Aboriginal Employee Network, the team maintains close connection with the Aboriginal communities within NSW to ensure their needs are met and addressed in training programs.

The Aboriginal Strategic Direction is the overarching framework used by the NSWPF in the improvement of Aboriginal people's lives and focuses on a number of key priority areas that are aligned with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The Aboriginal Strategic Direction has recently undergone significant review and is a 'live' document; meaning that it does not have an expiry date and will be updated as appropriate. The Aboriginal Strategic Direction encompasses a multi-level approach to cultural awareness training that is delivered by the Aboriginal Strategy and Coordination Team, varying from new recruits at the Academy to specialist bespoke training to ensure operational needs are met. There are also local cultural awareness training packages that are delivered in the local Police Area Commands (PACs) and Police Districts (PDs), in conjunction with the ACLOs.

Page 13 of the Transcript

CHAIR: They are the sort of programs we want to know about. I was a little surprised we didn't get a detailed submission from the NSW Police Force. It would be incredibly helpful for this committee to obtain detail with respect to those programs and initiatives so that we can make an assessment, especially when we're moving around Australia and seeing what other jurisdictions are doing. We can put to those other jurisdictions what you are doing in New South Wales which seems to be having these positive impacts. What are you doing in your jurisdiction? I want to really encourage you, the police service, to provide detail for us so that we can properly assess the positive initiatives that are being undertaken. Back to you, Superintendent.

Supt Nicholson: There are parts of this that we will need to take on notice in terms of—

CHAIR: Sure. Absolutely.

Supt Nicholson: things such as the gratuitous concurrence, the kinship, the family networks and, for want of a better term, the syllabus within training packages. I don't have that detail with me today. I am certainly across it.

ANSWER:

The Aboriginal Strategy and Coordination Team within the NSWPF's Crime Prevention Command utilises an identified Aboriginal position known as the "Aboriginal Training Coordinator" to create, update, review and deliver the syllabus and training materials. These resources cover topics including gratuitous concurrence, kinship, family networks, and can be provided by the Aboriginal Strategy and Coordination Team.

Training includes, but is not limited to:

- NSWPF Academy: Working with Aboriginal Communities Level 1 Mandatory student foundational awareness training. Content includes gratuitous concurrence, communication (including Aboriginal English), engaging effectively with Aboriginal communities, inter-generational trauma, unconscious bias, Sorry Business and Aboriginal kinship and identity. Training is being delivered face to face by the NSWPF's Crime Prevention Command;
- Recording Aboriginality: a mandatory online training package for all NSWPF employees on the correct recording of Aboriginality in NSWPF systems when managing victims and persons of interest;
- Engaging With Aboriginal Communities: a mandatory online training package for all sworn NSWPF employees focusing on communication (including Aboriginal English), health issues and relationship building;
- Local Induction/Awareness: in all PACs/PDs with high Aboriginal population (35 across NSW) additional face to face induction training is mandatory. This includes a detailed induction into the local Aboriginal community and local history/issues. The Induction program is being undertaken by the ACLO/Education Development Officer and Aboriginal Engagement Officer. Aboriginal community members also support delivery of this induction and awareness.
- Working With Aboriginal Communities Level 2: face to face training at the 35 PACs and PDs. Bespoke training of this nature is also offered to the specialist commands and it is mandatory at the 35 PACs/PDs. Training includes gratuitous concurrence, communication (including Aboriginal English), engaging effectively with Aboriginal communities, inter-generational trauma, unconscious bias, Sorry Business, Aboriginal kinship and identity; trauma informed communication; a history of local

Aboriginal complaint matters and how this impacts relationships between police and community; and

- Cultural Immersion: a recent inclusion in NSWPF training where NSWPF Executive are undertaking cultural immersion activities, speaking to Elders, listening to stories, understanding generational issues and building relationships with senior members of Aboriginal communities.

Page 13 of the Transcript

CHAIR: Is it possible for you to provide to us the materials for that course so that we can assess it?

Supt Nicholson: Sure.

ANSWER:

A summary of the training materials is detailed in the answer on page 2 and 3 above.

Page 13 of the Transcript

Senator COX: Can I ask a clarifying question? Superintendent, when you say at all levels, does that include investigative practice?

Senator COX: I'm particularly asking about investigative training because that is critical to some of the gaps and some of the issues that we found when we spoke to families at Bowraville. So it's not just the cultural context. That is one context. We are talking about key investigative practice here, which should be led by best practice intersecting with culture. When you ask a black woman, 'Is that your child, because they are white? Are you sure that you are going to report that child missing because she is a white child?', that is about, one, your key very conscious bias, but also, two, strictly against your practice standards as an investigator. It's appalling if it's not part of your investigative practice.

.....
Supt Nicholson: The reason I separate it—thank you for that question because I agree that it is important—is the last component of this is what we've done above and beyond what I would call cultural awareness. In our areas across New South Wales with high Aboriginal populations, we now have another two tiers of training on top of that. One is an induction package into those commands. The second is a deeper cultural awareness training, the detail of which, again, I'm happy to take on notice.

ANSWER:

See answer on page 2 and 3 above.

Page 14 of the Transcript

CHAIR: Superintendent, is it possible for you to provide us maybe with examples of that engagement from its start to its finish in terms of example minutes. We could potentially receive documents in camera if we need to maintain confidentiality. Again, it is to give us an appreciation of what is actually happening now on the ground.

Supt Nicholson: Is it alright for me to take that on notice? I'm happy to provide that later.

ANSWER:

In the 35 PACs and PDs with a high population of Aboriginal people, Aboriginal Engagement Officers (AEO) are assigned leadership roles within the Command to ensure close connection between the local police and members of the local Aboriginal community.

An AEO is a Commissioned Police Officer at the rank of Inspector and is competent in the delivery of the NSWPF's training packages discussed above. The AEO works closely with the ACLO in engaging with local Aboriginal communities and supporting the Aboriginal Strategic Direction Crime Prevention Grants program and promoting community safety initiatives. The initiatives identify and promote innovative ways of decreasing crime, the fear of crime, address over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system and work toward building safer communities.

The NSWPF regularly partners with other agencies to provide community events to positively engage with Aboriginal communities.

There are 97 Police Aboriginal Consultative Committees (PACC) which meet four times a year. These meetings are attended by Police, local Government and non-government agencies, and members of the local Aboriginal community. They provide opportunity for local Aboriginal people to raise issues and concerns in relation to crime and policing within their community.

Additionally, these PACs/PDs are required to submit annual Aboriginal Community Profiles and Action Plans, which are a critical source of information to police in ensuring a professional delivery of service to the Aboriginal community in local areas.

Page 15 of the Transcript

Senator COX: Great. Thank you, Superintendent. How long is the training that you referred to? Recruit training involves how many days of cultural awareness training?

Supt Nicholson: I would have to take that question on notice.

ANSWER:

The NSWPF Academy Training takes place in multiple sessions throughout the life of the student's learning. It commences with an initial one-hour lecture delivered by the First Nations support staff (identified personnel); then a two-hour lecture in week 15 delivered by an identified trainer from the Crime Prevention Command.

Throughout their training, students also experience local cultural immersion with the First Nations Cultural Advisor, including witnessing smoking ceremonies and observation of the Tracker Display at the NSWPF Academy.

The Cultural Advisor also introduces students to the local history of the Goulburn area and learn about Dreamtime stories and connection to Country.

Page 16 of the Transcript

Senator COX: Do your FLOs have any specific cultural training in relation to dealing with Aboriginal families not only in a homicide but also in missing person cases?

Det. Supt Doherty: Family liaison is not done by the homicide squad. It is done by another command. I will have to take that question on notice. We can provide that answer to you later.

Senator COX: That would be great.

ANSWER:

In addition to the cultural and spiritual training for Aboriginal families that all NSWPF officers receive, the NSWPF's Family Liaison Officer (FLO) course includes Indigenous content relevant to a FLO's dealings and interactions with families.

These include "Cultural and Spiritual Skills", delivered by the NSWPF's Diversity Trainer, and "Traumatic Grief Awareness", delivered by the NSW Health Forensic Social Worker. The NSW Health Forensic Social Worker may form part of the team that deploys with a FLO.

The NSWPF's FLO Course includes the Religious and Spiritual Diversity Guide for Operational Police, which includes a chapter dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Spirituality and content on people, practice, interviewing, death, bereavement, and mourning. This document is included in the FLO Resource pack, in a mandatory online module, and on the NSWPF's intranet.

In addition, the NSWPF's FLO Program will be holding information sessions with ACLOs, Domestic Violence Liaison Officer's (DVLOs) and Multicultural Community Liaison Officer (MCLOs).

These information sessions are aimed at building awareness of the Family Liaison function, how a FLO is deployed, understanding coronial and investigative processes that need to be shared with families, and how police can best support the family and community, including referring them to support services.

The NSWPF recognises the importance of ACLOs, and where a homicide or missing persons involves an indigenous person, its expectation is that an ACLO may form part of a team that deploys together with a FLO.

Page 17 of the Transcript

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: So there are about 17½ thousand police in New South Wales. Is that right?

Supt Nicholson: I would have to take on notice the exact number.

ANSWER:

As of 9 July 2023, the total number of police officers across NSW is 17,020.

Page 17-18 of the Transcript

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: How many people are there in the state homicide squad?

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Can I just get the numbers on homicide?

CHAIR: Sure. Please.

Det. Supt Doherty: The exact numbers I'll have to take on notice and provide later.

ANSWER:

There are 110 full-time employees attached to the NSWPF's State Crime Command Homicide Squad.

In addition, there are a further 60 to 80 staff on secondment to the Homicide Squad on various Strike Forces.

There is no staff currently in the Homicide Squad who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, however, there is no requirement for employees to disclose this personal information.

Investigators will utilise ACLOs and other support agencies to assist in the investigation when required. As of August 2023, the records kept by the NSWPF indicate that there have been zero murders of any female or child in NSW who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Page 19 of the Transcript

CHAIR: Senator Shoebridge, we will have time to come back to you. Detective Inspector Sim, I'm really keen to understand what has changed since 1990 and 1991 and today as we sit here in 2023. It relates to that initial engagement between a member of the community and law enforcement when someone says, 'I have a deep concern. A family member has gone missing' and how the police service responds. Can you provide any information to us in that regard? What has changed over the last 32 or 33 years, if anything?

Det. Insp. Sim: Thank you, Senator. Certainly. There are remarkable changes. As the lead, I am the one who prepared the current SOPs, or standard operating procedures, for missing persons and unidentified bodies of human remains. They are available. I can provide them on notice.

CHAIR: Please provide them on notice.

ANSWER:

See **TAB A** for a summary of the evolution of the Missing Persons and Unidentified Bodies and Human Remains SOPS from 2020 to 2023.

Page 20 of the Transcript

CHAIR: Give us a feel for the number of reports you are getting, say, on a daily basis.

Det. Insp. Sim: On a daily basis, it can be anything between 15 and 40 incidents of missing persons, which vary from high risk, medium risk to limited risk.

CHAIR: What percentage of them are women and children? What percentage are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? Do you have that visibility?

Det. Insp. Sim: Can I take that question on notice?

CHAIR: If you could, please.

ANSWER:

See **TAB B** for the last four-year statistics on incidents of missing persons and categories.

Page 20 of the Transcript

CHAIR: So that initial risk assessment—and Senator Cox would know better than me, having served in the police service—seems to be to me to be absolutely crucial. We have received testimony from families not just in New South Wales but in Western Australia. There's a concern about the immediate reaction from the relevant police service in terms of mobilising resources and bringing the fact that someone is missing to the attention, for example, of local media to try to get them involved in bringing attention so the wider community is aware of the issue. That initial window of opportunity to take immediate action and mobilise appropriate resourcing is of the utmost importance. Could you give us further information as to how that initial risk assessment occurs? Give us confidence that the systems in place are using an appropriate level of resourcing. For example, local media et cetera is all mobilised when it should be mobilised.

Det. Insp. Sim: Certainly, Senator. I might also add that I was a frontline duty officer at Fairfield City police during those big changes in relation to the standard operating procedures having been rolled out in 2019. I was lucky enough to see it operationally as well as in the position I'm in now. The response is that the risk assessment is commenced as soon as we receive the phone call from the person reporting. That assesses the environment. I will provide—

CHAIR: Provide that on notice, please.

Det. Insp. Sim: Certainly.

ANSWER:

See **TAB C** for the Risk Assessment Process used by the NSWPF to determine the urgency of investigative functions.

Page 20-21 of the Transcript

CHAIR: After I ask one quick follow-up question. I note Senator Cox also has some questions. Detective Inspector, what happens if, as a family member, I am engaging with my local police station? A family member has gone missing. I am desperately concerned. The officer goes through that process that you have outlined. They say it is at a low level or an immediate level, not the highest level. I disagree with that assessment. I can try to imagine how fraught that situation can be. Is there any process to get a second opinion or a review or to elevate it to make sure that a fresh set of eyes looks at it? How do you respond in an immediate fashion if I am the initial person engaging with the officer and I'm not happy with that initial response and I desperately want someone else to look at it? Superintendent?

Supt Nicholson: There are two parts to that question. The first is that it comes back to being embedded into the cultural awareness training that we are doing. If you indulge me for a second, I will make myself clear. I will go back to Bowraville and others, where there was a lack of understanding and the awareness by police regarding Aboriginal culture. People say, 'Someone has gone walkabout.' A lack of understanding as to that what means has led to negative outcomes. What we are saying is that, at that systemic level, we're building in that cultural awareness. Depending on where you work, it's elevated and elevated again so that things like that can't happen. In terms of a localised review of missing persons decisions, I recently was part of a complete change to the way in which we ensure missing persons are viewed daily by the commander of every single police area command and police district in New South Wales. So it is now built into what we would call our prevention disruption and response model. Every day, superintendents, leadership teams and crime managers of every police area command are responsible, with their leadership team, for reviewing the full missing persons case and what actions are being undertaken in that missing persons case. That puts that case before a section known as the crime prevention unit. That is what we would call all of our specialists within a command who come together, of which an ACLO is part. The ACLO provides that cultural sensitivity over the top. The crime manager provides the investigation response over the top to ensure the investigation is sound. Failing all of that, the final failsafe is Ritchie's team.

CHAIR: Thank you. To the extent that we can get all of that on notice in terms of those procedures and protocols, that would be very useful for us so that we understand those checks and balances you have through the system.

ANSWER:

Procedures and protocols in relation to conducting risk assessments are as follows:

- Responding Police conduct the initial assessment on attending the scene (or taking the report at the Police Station) and gather all the relevant information. That Officer then uses the 'Red Flag', 'Vulnerability', 'Situational' and 'Contextual', and 'Other' questions to complete the COPS online risk assessment. That record contains their rationale in support of the assessment as well as mitigation strategies.
- The Supervisor then reviews the risk assessment, applies the same questions (as above), and with their rationale, confirms or alters the risk based on their assessment. The Supervisor also details the mitigation strategies in an attempt to manage the risk.
- Whenever an Event is updated throughout the investigation, the Officer updating the Event is automatically prompted to update the risk assessment. If the

assessment is updated, the Event, including the risk assessment goes through the review process by the Supervisor.

- The Missing Persons Registry (MPR) also reviews all Missing Persons (MP) incidents on a daily basis. This is managed through the daily download of all MP Events from the previous 24 hours from COPS to the MP Database.
- If there are any concerns around the risk or the mitigation strategies, MPR personnel engage with the relevant PAC/PD. If an agreement cannot be reached, there is a formal escalation process between the OIC, their Supervisor, the PAC/PD Duty Officer and the MPR personnel (Consultant, Supervisor, and Manager where necessary).

The key roles in supervising missing person and unidentified bodies and human remains investigations involves:

- Missing Person Registry (MPR)
- Missing Person Coordinator
- Homicide and the Robbery & Serious Crime Squad
- PAC/PD Crime Manager
- PAC/PD Crime Coordinator
- PAC/PD Duty Officer
- PAC/PD Shift Supervisor

The briefing and involvement of the Duty Officer and Detectives early in MP investigations provides further oversight and assessment of risk, and the mitigation of that risk.

These actions are recorded in the individual's investigation log and/or the Event.

Page 23 of the Transcript

Senator COX: I want to ask a clarifying question about your cultural awareness training. How much of that is based on trauma informed practice?

Supt Nicholson: Good question. Trauma informed practice forms a component of the training. That will be a question on notice when I provide more detail about the training.

ANSWER:

Awareness of trauma and inter-generational grief experienced by Aboriginal people and how that loss, grief or trauma could be displayed is contained in the training packages as discussed above.

The training is delivered by identified Aboriginal personnel who either have lived familial experience or connection to the local community and a strong awareness of local trauma faced throughout the years of interactions with the NSWPF.

As a result, it is an embedded feature of all the training delivered above.

TAB A

The Evolution of Missing Persons and Unidentified Bodies and Human Remains (MP&UBHR) SOPs from 2020 to 2023

1. On establishing the MPR in 2019, between August and September of that year, a complete new set of MP&UBHR SOPs were drafted. That version of the SOPs was reviewed having established Region Feedback Forums, which involved representatives from the six Regions of the NSWPF.
2. In November 2019 those SOPs were also provided to the State Coroner who supported them and at the same time, also supported the restructure of the MPU to the MPR.

Annual review of the MP&UBHR SOPs

3. Following the restructure of the MPU in 2019, the 2020 version of the MP&UBHR SOPs contained greater detail regarding various investigative functions relating to these investigations. They also introduced several new processes, functions and tools including:
 - 3.1. The role and function of the MPR
 - 3.2. The introduction of the Missing Persons Coordinator at each PAC and PD
 - 3.3. The use of 'Live CAD' in missing persons investigations – In the event the missing person has a mobile device, enquiries are made with the telecommunications service provider to identify the location history of that device. The location information is only provided on the occasions the device is connected to the network and normally only provides the general area of the device in relation to the service provider's cell tower.
 - 3.4. Categories and associated risk factors that has been built into the Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS)
 - 3.5. A mandatory risk assessment process that has been built into the COPS system
 - 3.6. A greater emphasis on searching procedures including the use of specialist Land and/or Marine Search Coordinators
 - 3.7. Intelligence support for missing persons investigations, and
 - 3.8. Regular 'formal reviews' of all missing persons cases by the MPR

2021 version of the Missing Persons, Unidentified Bodies & Human Remains SOPs

4. In accordance with the newly established processes, the 2020 SOPs were reviewed and updated prior to being released in 2021.
5. The 2021 version of the SOPs were approved for release in December 2020 and released to the field on the 1st of January 2021 having been reviewed by internal and external stakeholders. The significant changes to the 2021 version included:
 - 5.1. Inclusion of a definition for a 'vulnerable person'
 - 5.2. Creation of generic 'corporate narratives' within COPS to assist officers taking reports of missing people
 - 5.3. Clearer guidance regarding what is required when children or young people in out-of-home care are reported missing
 - 5.4. Guidance regarding the relevance of Chapter 16A of the Children & Young People (Care & Protection) Act, 1998 and the importance of agencies sharing information to support missing person investigations
 - 5.5. Guidance on dealing with repeat missing young people and the use of Youth Action Meetings (YAMS) as a tool to help reduce the rate at which children or young people go missing
 - 5.6. Clearer guidance on who is responsible for preparing a Coronial brief when a death occurs in one command and the deceased was reported missing in another command
 - 5.7. Clearer guidance regarding the collection of fingerprint evidence for missing person investigations
 - 5.8. Clearer guidance regarding the collection of fingerprint evidence for UBHR investigations
 - 5.9. Clearer guidance regarding the attendance of Crime Scene Officers at UBHR incidents and post-mortem examinations
 - 5.10. Clearer guidance on the collection of DNA for missing person investigations
 - 5.11. Clearer guidance regarding access to medical samples, newborn screening (Guthrie) cards and medical records for missing person investigations
 - 5.12. Guidance on how relevant State, National and International DNA databases work to support MP&UBHR investigations
 - 5.13. Clearer guidance on transferring cases between NSWPF commands
 - 5.14. Clearer guidance on the capture, review, and use of CCTV for missing person investigations

- 5.15. Inclusion of Lightening Ridge as an example of the type of geography to be considered a 'high-risk' red flag when undertaking the risk assessment process (Coronial Recommendations from the Bennett Dominick Inquest)
- 5.16. Clearer guidance on who can officially sight missing people for them to be considered located by the addition of NSWPF civilian employees, including NSWPF Chaplains
- 5.17. Introduction of new 'Returned Home Interviews' for located children and young people
- 5.18. Guidance regarding the need to retain exhibits for long-term missing person investigations
- 5.19. Creation of a specific chapter relating to missing people from vulnerable communities (dementia, autism etc) incorporating Coronial Recommendation 3 from the Yousif Yousif Inquest.
- 5.20. Formal notification protocol for DNA links between missing people and unidentified bodies & human remains
- 5.21. A new streamlined application process for the use of the 'triangulation tool' to support high-risk missing person investigations and correct interpretation of s287 of the Telecommunications Act
- 5.22. A new streamlined application process for the use of Live CAD to support high-risk missing person investigations
- 5.23. Clearer guidance regarding the authority to release photographs and specifically, what to do when authority is not granted for missing person investigations
- 5.24. Introduction of the SMS geo-targeting tool via the Telstra Emergency Alert system to allow geographically targeted SMS messages to be sent to all mobile telecommunication devices within a defined area for high-risk missing person investigations
- 5.25. Clearer guidance on the use of social media to raise public awareness of missing persons, incorporating Coronial Recommendation two from the Yousif Yousif Inquest
- 5.26. Introduction of the State Crime Command podcast series as a tool to support long-term missing person investigations
- 5.27. Guidance on how to access Opal Card information and the importance of it when investigating missing person cases, and

- 5.28. A new 'single form' to obtain authority to publish photos, release information to the media and senior next of kin (SNOK) consent to collect medical records, medical samples, and business records, etc.

2022 version of the Missing Persons, Unidentified Bodies & Human Remains SOPS

- 6. The 2022 version of the SOPS was released on the 1st of January 2022 and contained updated information and guidance relating to:
 - 6.1. Considerations when deciding if a missing person report should be taken
 - 6.2. The Missing Persons Registry Response Team
 - 6.3. The Missing Person 'Watermark' within COPS
 - 6.4. Special considerations regarding children reported missing by their usual carer
 - 6.5. If the missing person suffers dementia
 - 6.6. If the missing person is a vulnerable person
 - 6.7. Use of the National Missing Persons and Victim System (NMPVS)
 - 6.8. Located deceased (full body) where identity becomes known
 - 6.9. Procedures for unidentified bodies, human remains and unknown remains
 - 6.10. Unknown Remains – (Bone or flesh that might be Human)
 - 6.11. Body/human remains obviously human or determined to be human by a Pathologist
 - 6.12. Review Process for UBHR cases
 - 6.13. Using mobile telephones to urgently locate someone at risk
 - 6.14. Emergency disclosure of social media & technology company information/data
 - 6.15. COPS updates after the finalisation of a Missing Persons Inquest
 - 6.16. What to do if a Coroner decides not to assume jurisdiction, and
 - 6.17. Annexure N – Diagrammatic flow charts for COPS workflows associated with MP&UBHR cases

7. The 2023 version of The SOPs were released in February 2023 and contained updated information and guidance relating to:
 - 7.1. Section 5 - Definitions of Doctor, Kidnapping, Repeat missing person, Mental Health Practitioner, Nurse, Unidentified bodies, Unidentified Human Remains, and Unidentified (Unknown) remains.
 - 7.2. Section 6 – Objectives:
 - 7.2.1. Notification of the Robbery and Serious Crime Squad (R&SCS) regarding suspected kidnappings / abductions.
 - 7.2.2. The first 24 to 72 hours of a missing person investigation being usually the most critical (HR MP).
 - 7.3. Section 6.1 – Considerations when deciding if a missing person report should be taken.
 - 7.3.1. Consideration of family tracing matters – incidents not meeting the definition of a missing person. Family tracing matters should be directed to the Australian Red Cross, Restoring Family Links Service (Chapter 26 of The SOPs).
 - 7.4. Section 7 – Key Time Frames:
 - 7.4.1. Reporting suspected kidnappings / abductions to the R&SCS.
 - 7.4.2. The first 24 to 72 hours of a missing person investigation being usually the most critical.
 - 7.4.3. Immediate actions.
 - 7.4.4. One Week – CCTV canvassing; COPS Case Management.
 - 7.4.5. Nine Months – Preparation of Coronial Brief; Nine-month review process.
 - 7.4.6. Twelve Months – Twelve-month review process.
 - 7.5. Section 8.1 – Grammatical and spelling errors.
 - 7.6. Section 8.2 – Immediate notification to the R&SCS regarding kidnapping and abduction incidents.
 - 7.7. Section 8.3 – Inclusion of the responsibilities of the R&SCS.
 - 7.8. Section 8.4 – Responsibilities of the PAC / PD Crime Manager – Notification of the R&SCS.
 - 7.9. Section 8.5 – Responsibilities of the PAC / PD Crime Coordinator – Allocation of case to an experienced investigator / designated Detective.

- 7.10. Section 8.6 – Responsibilities of the PAC / PD Duty Officer or Sector Supervisor –
 - 7.10.1. Commencement of an Investigation Log, including the explanatory ‘Note’ regarding recording decisions around not only what was done, but what was not done and why.
 - 7.10.2. Notification to the R&SCS regarding kidnapping / abduction incidents.
 - 7.10.3. Where land searches are active, ensuring records are maintained of daily briefing between Investigators and Land Search Coordinators.
- 7.11. Section 8.7 – Responsibilities of PAC / PD Shift Supervisor:
 - 7.11.1. Commencement of Investigation Log or similar.
 - 7.11.2. Explanatory ‘Note’ regarding recording decisions around not only what was done, but what was not done and why.
 - 7.11.3. Required to provide the NOK or Person Reporting their name and a reliable contact number at shift changeover.
 - 7.11.4. Notification of the R&SCS in cases of suspected kidnapping or abduction.
 - 7.11.5. Documentation of daily briefings between Land Search Coordinators and Investigators.
- 7.12. Section 9 – Responsibilities of Officers Taking Reports and OICs of Missing Person Investigations:
 - 7.12.1. Explanatory note that ‘Annexure A’ to The SOPS (Missing Person Checklist) is not an exhaustive list. If other enquiries are identified, conduct those enquiries.
 - 7.12.2. Explanatory note regarding note taking and requirements.
 - 7.12.3. Suggested inclusions of details Police should obtain about the missing person
 - 7.12.4. Where beneficial, utilise the assistance of Multicultural Community Liaison Officers, or Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.
 - 7.12.5. Conduct a CCTV and witness canvass within 72 hours of the missing persons ‘last ping’ (location identified from missing person’s mobile phone etc). As indicated in Chapter 7 – Key Time Frames
- 7.13. Section 9.1.1 What to do if a report hasn’t been made but a person fits the definition of a missing person.
 - 7.13.1. Explanatory note included where a person contacts ‘000’ stating they are lost and concerned about their own welfare. These people fit the definition of a missing persons and the need to address the immediate risk to that person’s safety by locating them.

- 7.14. Section 9.2.1 - Immediate responsibilities of the OIC for adult missing person cases:
 - 7.14.1. Documentation of daily briefings between Land Search Coordinators and Investigators.
 - 7.14.2. Notification of the R&SCS in suspected cases of kidnapping / abduction
- 7.15. Section 9.2.2 – Maximum investigation time frames for OIC – Commence CCTV canvass within 7 days.
- 7.16. Section 9.2.4 – If it suspected the missing young person or child may be exposed to harm if returned to parent / carers. Reference and link to Chapter 12.2.4 – ‘What to do if a young person refuses to go home’.
- 7.17. Section 10.2 – Transferring cases between NSWPF Commands. The inclusion of an explanatory paragraph should adjudication be required as to which Command should take carriage of an investigation. To be resolved by the Region Operations Manager, or consultation between two Region Operations Managers.
- 7.18. Section 10.8 – Collecting and reviewing CCTV for missing person investigations
 - 7.18.1. Explanatory note included regarding identifying, collecting and storing the last known CCTV footage of a missing person, as a matter of course, within the first 48 hours of the investigation.
- 7.19. Section 11.1.1 – High risk ‘red flag’ questions.
 - 7.19.1. The inclusion of the wording, ‘...severe mental health condition’.
- 7.20. Section 12.1 – Missing person aged 18 or above located alive (or accident / misadventure victim).
 - 7.20.1. Inclusion of ‘Multicultural Community Liaison Officers’ can be utilised as a ‘Sighting Authority’ to ‘sight’ a located missing person.
 - 7.20.2. The inclusion of notification to the Police Media Unit when a geo-targeted message or media release is utilised, and a missing person is located.
- 7.21. Section 12.2.1 – If the missing child or young person resided in Out of Home Care (OOHC) and is being sighted by the Case Management Agency.
 - 7.21.1. The inclusion of a paragraph explaining that the missing persons (child / young person) can be sighted by the ‘Case Managing Agency Case Practitioner’ being a position not associated with the day-to-day care of the young person.
 - 7.21.2. An explanation of the process that is to occur in these situations and a link to ‘Annexure L’ – Department of Community and Justice Casework Practice, the flowchart of the process.
- 7.22. Section 12.2.4 – What to do if a child or young person refuses to go home

- 7.22.1. The inclusion of a detailed explanation of the required process.
- 7.22.2. Attention drawn to requirements regarding Immediate Risk of Serious harm and Risk of Serious Harm and the option of physically removing the child or young person from the situation.
- 7.22.3. The inclusion of a link to Chapter 9.2.4 (If it is suspected the missing young person or child may be exposed to harm if returned to parents / carers), and reference to Section 43 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.
- 7.23. Section 12.3 Missing people avoiding location
 - 7.23.1. The inclusion of the ability to use a 'Facetime' call and the requirements that need to be met to utilise this option.
- 7.24. Section 15.1 Responsibility of initial attending Police (regarding unidentified bodies and human remain) (UBHR).
 - 7.24.1. The inclusion of links to Chapters 15.1.1, 2 and 3 for the procedures regarding the origin of the remains is unknown but possibly human.
- 7.25. Section 15.1.1 – Unknown Remains – Bones or flesh that might be human
 - 7.25.1. The inclusion of an explanatory note that only a Forensic Expert (Duty Pathologist) can make the assessment as to if the remains are human or not.
 - 7.25.2. The inclusion of the requirement to record GPS coordinates
 - 7.25.3. The required information to be recorded in COPS, including an explanatory note in the instance an Event has already been started, and to update the 'Further Classification' of the Incident in COPS.
 - 7.25.4. The inclusion of a link to Chapter 15.1.3 'Suspected Aboriginal Remains'
- 7.26. Section 15.1.3 – Suspected Aboriginal Remains
 - 7.26.1. A detailed explanation of the investigative process if apparent ancient Aboriginal remains are uncovered
- 7.27. Section 16 – Land and Marine Searches
 - 7.27.1. The inclusion of explanatory notes regarding the NSWPF being the Search and Rescue coordinating authority as determined by the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Search and Rescue Response Arrangements.
 - 7.27.2. Explanatory note describing NSWPF is responsibilities in Coordinating Land Search and Rescue in respect to people and vehicles on land, and aircraft in certain circumstances.
- 7.28. Section 16.1 – Land Searches

- 7.28.1. The inclusion of a requirement to immediately notify the State Coordinator, State Coordination Unit, and the Rescue and Bomb Disposal Unit (RBDU).
 - 7.28.2. Explanatory note regarding the allocation of a qualified NSWPF Land Search and Rescue Coordinator and a Land Search and Rescue Controller.
- 7.29. Section 16.1.1 – Land Search and Rescue Coordinator Notification
 - 7.29.1. The inclusion of the circumstances when a land search and rescue coordinator will attend the location.
- 7.30. Section 16.1.2 – Suspension of Search
 - 7.30.1. The inclusion of an explanatory note of requirements that no land search and rescues operations will be suspended, postponed or discontinued without first consulting with either the Operations Coordinator or Officer in Charge of RBDU.
- 7.31. Section 17.10 – Emergency disclosure of social media and technology company information / data.
 - 7.31.1. The inclusion of an explanatory sentence that not all service providers have time limits on information or data, and that requests should be submitted as soon as possible.
- 7.32. Section 18.3 – Submission of Coronial Briefs of Evidence to the MPR at nine months.
 - 7.32.1. The inclusion of an explanatory note regarding the review of the brief by the MPR and a representative from the Coronial Advocates (Specialist Advocacy Unit).
 - 7.32.2. The requirement for the nine-month review
- 7.33. Section 18.4 – Ongoing review of long-term missing person investigations
 - 7.33.1. An explanatory note regarding the submission of the P79B to the Coroner within 12 months of the initial report being made.
 - 7.33.2. Explanatory note in the event the OIC does not believe the missing person is deceased at the 12 month point of the investigation. The requirement to have a meeting with representatives of the MPR, the OIC and the Coronial Advocates (Specialist Advocacy Unit) and determine if a P79B should be submitted to the Coroner.
 - 7.33.3. An explanatory note in the event the Coroner decides not to assume jurisdiction if they are not satisfied the missing person is deceased, the matter remains with the OIC to further investigate.
- 7.34. Section 20.0 – Release of information to the public / media

- 7.34.1. The inclusion of a reminder 'Note' to notify the Police Media Unit (PMU) when a missing person is located, and the PMU assisted in notifying the public for assistance.
 - 7.35. Section 20.1.2 – What do do if a Senior Next of Kin (SNOK) refuses to sign an authority for publicity.
 - 7.35.1. The inclusion of a paragraph advising what Police are to do in these circumstances and a brief explanation of supporting advice from the NSWPF Office of General Counsel in support of that process.
 - 7.36. Section 20.9 – Seeking assistance from Sydney Trains if you believe the missing person is using the rail network.
 - 7.36.1. The inclusion of an instructional paragraph and the information required by Sydney Trains to assist in locating the missing person.
 - 7.37. Annexure 'A' Initial response – Missing Person Checklist
 - 7.38. The checklist has been updated to reflect the updates to the above-mentioned sections when relevant to the actions investigating Police should take.
8. In each version of the SOPs from 2020 to 2023, they contain a detailed table of contents identifying the section name and number; the section sub-heading and relevant number; and the page number. The SOPs are very detailed and are designed as a 'one-stop' for the investigation of MP&UBHR investigations. As such, for the sake of ease, when opened on a computer, the document is searchable and the headings and subheadings in the contents are actively linked to the specific section of the SOPs (meaning, if the user clicks on the title in the contents, they are taken directly to that section or subsection).
 9. The SOPs undergo an annual review and include amendments generally based on updates in technology, the sciences, investigative practices, enhancements to computer systems, and coronial recommendations.

Comparison of the 2014 MP SOPS with the current 2023 MP&UBHR SOPS

10. Both sets of SOPS contain a 'Table of Contents'. The contents of each set of SOPS show, at a high level, the differences between the two documents. Reviewing the Table of Contents alone shows the difference in content and that the 2023 version of the SOPS contains more information.
11. Generally, the 2023 version of the SOPS:

- 11.1. Provide detailed instruction for an accountable, thorough, detailed, and transparent investigation.
- 11.2. Provide specific ownership and responsibilities to those involved in the investigation including the Officer taking the report; the Officer in Charge; the Supervisor; the MPC; the Crime Manager; the Crime Coordinator; the Duty Officer / Sector Supervisor; and the MPR.
- 11.3. Provide specific detail and instruction with regard to investigative functions; procedures when a missing person is located alive; responsibilities when finalising a missing person investigation; when locating a deceased (full body) and the identity becomes known; procedures for unidentified bodies, human remains, and unidentified human remains; Land and marine searches; using technology to locate missing persons; the review process for long-term missing persons; placing matters before the Coroner; the release of information to the public / media; guidance regarding the management of financial affairs of missing persons; sources of information available to investigators to locate missing persons; intelligence / analytical support for missing person investigations; counselling and external support for the families of missing persons; details of associated policies and SOPS; a more detailed contact list; and 16 attachments containing instructional material relevant to missing persons and unidentified bodies and human remains.
- 11.4. The 2023 SOPS contain an advanced risk assessment process, including the Red Flag questions, Vulnerability questions, Situational / Contextual questions, and Other questions. The red flag questions identifying specific vulnerabilities which includes children and age vulnerabilities.
- 12. Having compared the SOPS in place as at 2014, relevant to missing persons investigations, with the current MP&UBHR SOPS. The comparison and changes I have identified are detailed in the below table. **Bold text** are used where the SOPS refer or relate to children and young people.

Identified changes from the 2014 NSWPF Missing Persons SOPS to the 2023

MP&UBHR SOPS

Relevant section of 2014 Missing Persons SOPS	Relevant Section of the 2023 MP&UBHR SOPS	Remarks on how 2023 SOPS differ
Section 1: Purpose and Context	Section 1: Purpose and Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further detail and explanation • The inclusion of UBHR • Stronger emphasis on supervision at various levels within the Command • Roles and responsibilities of the MPC
Section 1.1: Scope	Section 2.0 Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option for individual Commands to 'strengthen or enhance' the procedures relating to the SOPS at a local level is no longer an option. • The MPR is the Responsible Command. Any suggested improvements or enhancements to the SOPS are provided to the MPR for consideration in the following year's version of the SOPS which are endorsed by relevant stakeholders and ultimately, the Commissioner's Executive Team.
Section 2: Missing Person Policy	Section 3: Missing Persons & Unidentified Bodies and Human Remains Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inclusion of unidentified bodies and human remains. • Definition of MP removed and included in a specific 'Definitions' section (Section 5, p12) • Removal of 'Objective' and created a specific Section 6 'Objectives' (Section 6, p16)
	Section 4: Categories of missing persons 4.1: Missing Person Categories 4.2: Associated Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New section • Requirement a COPS entry must be made containing a MP Incident <p>4.1 Missing Person Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of eight MP Incident categories <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Missing Child – Aged 0 to 10 2. Missing Youth – Aged 11 to 17 3. Missing Adult – Aged 18 and over • Creation of classifications for each incident type <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abduction 2. Immigration related 3. Los, victim of accident / misadventure 4. Missing Interstate 5. Missing overseas 6. Solved homicide 7. Suspected unsolved homicide

		<p>8. Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.2 Associated Factors to be considered and selected within the Incident <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aged care facility related 2. Bias motivated crime related 3. Care and protection orders 4. Domestic violence related 5. Employment / education issues 6. Financial issues 7. Health related 8. Mental health facility related 9. No associated factor 10. Organised crime related 11. Other vulnerability 12. Overseas tourist / backpacker 13. Pandemic related 14. Sex worker related 15. Significant family conflict / abuse 16. Youth / foster care related
	Section 5: Definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abducted child • Amber alert • Child • Doctor • High-risk MP • Homicide • Immigration case • Kidnapping • Involuntary missing • Long-term missing person • Lost, Victim of accident / misadventure • Mental Health Practitioner • Missing Person • Nurse • Parental child abduction • Remains • Repeat missing person (use of term 'recidivist' no longer used) • Risk assessment • Risk of harm • SNOK • Skeletal remains • Suspected homicide • Suspicious circumstances • Unidentified bodies • Unidentified remains • Unidentified living person

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unidentified (unknown) remains • Voluntary missing • Vulnerable person • Young person
Section 2: Missing Persons Policy (p1)	Section 6: Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x further objectives included • Specific mention of homicide (considerations) and immediate notification of the Homicide Squad • If suspicion the MP has been abducted / kidnapped – immediate notification to the Robbery & Serious Crime Squad • The first 24-72 hours of a MP investigation being most critical • Ensure detailed records are kept of all information gathered, enquiries conducted, and investigative functions undertaken
	Inclusion of Section 7, p18: Key Time Frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three major stages of a MP investigation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial report 2. Investigation 3. Finalisation • Timeframes identified and agreed to by both the NSWPF and the State Coroner. Including the creation of Annexure A regarding routine investigative functions • Timeframes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immediate: Report taken; notifications based on risk; submission of requests for information (RFI); and creation of Annexure K 2. One Week: Case in COPS; CCTV canvass requirements; and COPS case transferred to an experienced investigator 3. Two Week: Relevant RFI checks submitted; and enquiries commenced to obtain medical records 4. Six Weeks: Investigation transferred to E@gle.i, with investigation plan. 5. Three Months: Long-term MP; ID evidence obtained; submit signs of life checks; submission of Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) form, and Ante Mortem (AM) form; AFP NMPCC provided relevant information for long-term MP; and three-month formal review. 6. Six Months: Repeat signs of life checks, and conduct Six-month review. 7. Nine Months: Coronial brief to be completed and forwarded for review and formal nine-month review 8. Twelve Months: Formal Twelve-month review and completed Coronial Brief submitted

<p>Section 3: Key roles in managing MP matters</p> <p>3.1 SCC Homicide Squad</p> <p>3.2 Investigating Officer</p> <p>3.3 Supervisor</p> <p>3.4 Duty Officer</p> <p>3.5 Crime Coordinator</p> <p>3.6 Investigations Manager</p> <p>3.7 Crime Manager</p> <p>3.8 Local Area Commander</p> <p>3.9 The Missing Persons Unit</p>	<p>Section 8, p20: Key Roles in Supervising MP&UBHR investigations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.1 (p21) Responsibility of the MPR <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As detailed in para 25 of Statement 2. Description of the MPR Response Team • 8.2 (p22) Responsibility of the PAC / PD MPC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MPC position created (2021) 2. As detailed in para 37 of statement • 8.3 (p22) Responsibilities of the Homicide and Robbery and Serious Crime Squads, SCC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suspicious circumstances to MP incident or the locating of UBHR 2. Continual risk assessment throughout the investigation • 8.4 (p23) Responsibility of the PAC / PD Crime Manager <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing specific ownership and responsibilities of the investigation. 2. Ensuring specific oversight • 8.5 (p24) Responsibility of the PAC / PD Crime Coordinator • 8.6 Responsibility of the PAC / PD Duty Officer / Sector Supervisor <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Importance of investigative records / rationale • 8.7 (p25) Responsibility of the PAC / PD Shift Supervisor <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Importance of investigative records / rationale
<p>Section 3 (p3) Key roles in managing MP matters (including 3.2 to 3.8)</p> <p>Section 9 – Special Missing Person Types</p> <p>9.1 Mental health patients</p> <p>9.2 Children</p>	<p>Section 9 (p27) Responsibility of Officers Taking Reports and OIC of MP investigations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1 Responsibility of Officer who receives the report <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 9.11 What to Do If a Report Hasn't Been Made but a Person Fits the Definition of a Missing Person • 9.2 Responsibility of the Officer in Charge (OIC) of an Investigation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 9.2.1 Immediate Responsibilities of the OIC for Adult Missing Person Cases 2. 9.2.2 Maximum Investigation Time Frames for OIC 3. 9.2.3 Additional Responsibilities if the Missing Person is a Young Person or Child 4. 9.2.4 If it is Suspected the Missing Young Person or Child May Be Exposed to Harm if Returned to parents / carers 5. 9.2.5 If the Missing Young Person or Child was in the Care of the State

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. 9.2.6 Exchange of Information Between the NSWPF and Other Agencies Relating to Missing children or age people 7. 9.2.7 Repeat Missing Young People and Youth Action Meetings (YAMs) 8. 9.2.8 Parental Abductions 9. 9.2.9 Special Considerations Regarding Children Reported Missing by their Usual Carer 10. 9.2.10 If the Missing Person is a Mental Health Patient 11. 9.2.11 If the missing person suffers dementia 12. 9.2.12 If the MP is a vulnerable person 13. 9.2.13 If the MP is suspected of being lost or involved in an accident or misadventure 14. 9.2.14 If the MP is an Australian resident missing overseas 15. 9.2.15 If the MP is a resident of another Australian State or Territory and is reported missing the NSWPF or if the person is a NSW resident and is reported as missing in another State or Territory 16. 9.2.16 If the MP is deemed to be an illegal immigrant 17. 9.2.17 If the person is a resident of another country and is reported missing in NSW 18. 9.2.18 Unidentified persons suffering memory loss
<p>9.4 Interstate or overseas MP (p24)</p> <p>10.3 (p29) DNA Collection Program</p> <p>Annexure 5 (p37) Forensic procedures information sheet - volunteer</p>	Section 10 (p47) Investigative Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.1 Transferring case interstate • 10.2 Transferring cases between NSWPF Commands • 10.3 Who is responsible for brief preparation when a MP is located deceased in a different command • 10.4 Collecting fingerprint evidence for MP investigations • 10.5 Collecting DNA for MP investigations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10.5.1 New-born screening cards (Guthrie) 2. 10.5.2 Hospital / Pathology / Medical samples 3. 10.5.3 How do DNA databases work for MP investigations • 10.6 Collecting dental records for MP investigations • 10.7 Collecting medical records for MP investigations • 10.8 Collecting and reviewing CCTV for MP investigations • 10.9 Use of the National Missing Persons and Victim System
<p>5.2 (p8) Conduct Risk Assessment</p> <p>Annexure 2 (p32): Missing</p>	Section 11 (p54) Risk Assessment Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11.1 MP risk assessment questions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 11.1.1 High Risk Red Flag questions 2. 11.1.2 Vulnerability questions 3. 11.1.3 Situational / Contextual questions 4. 11.1.4 Other questions

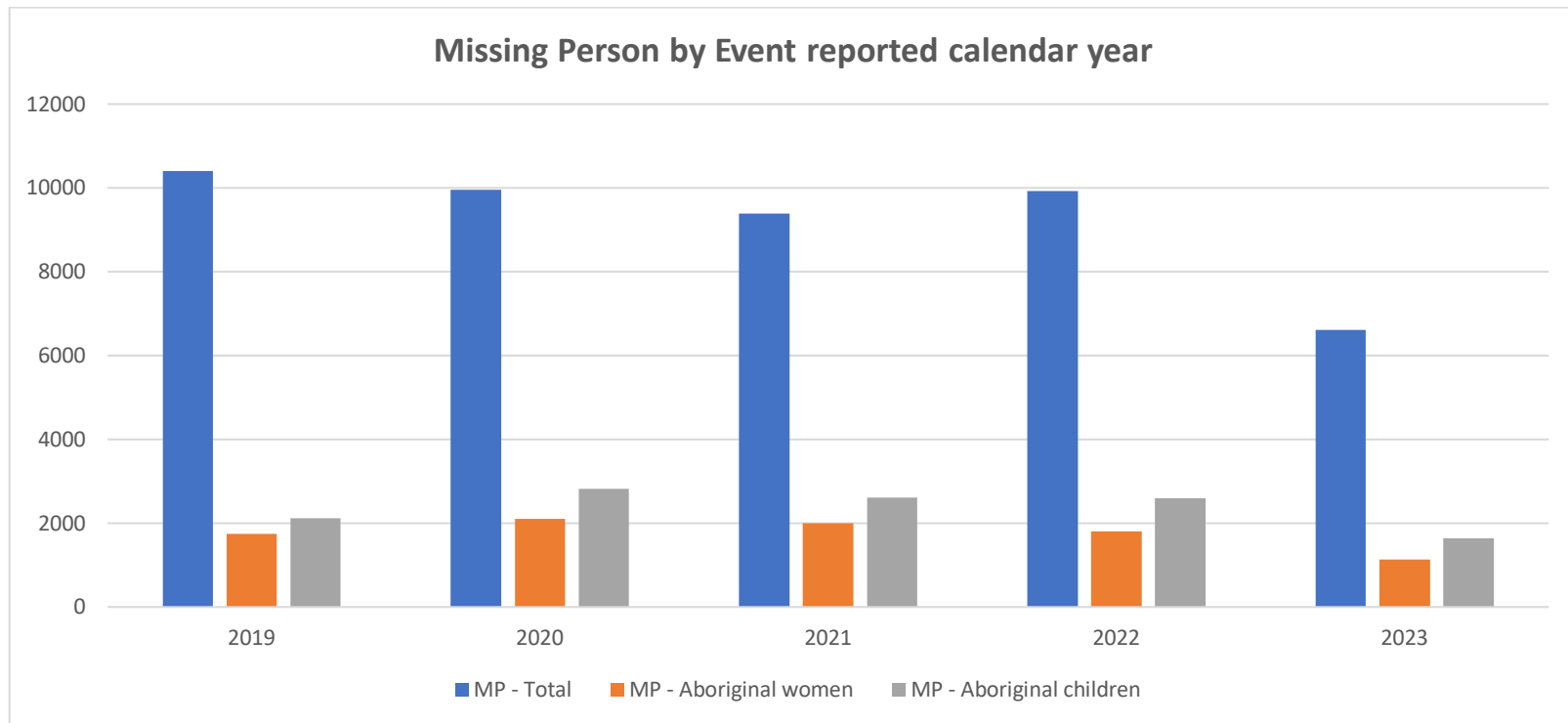
person – Risk assessment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11.2 Description of Risk Ratings for MP • 11.3 COPS Free Text Box <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 11.3.1 Responsibility of person taking report 2. 11.3.2 Responsibility of Supervisor
Section 7 (p17): Finalisation	Section 12 (p57): Procedures for a MP located alive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12.1 MP aged 18 or above located alive (or accident / misadventure victim) • 12.2 If the MP located is under the age of 18 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 12.2.1 If the missing child or young person resided in out of home care and is being sighted by the Case Management Agency 2. 12.2.2 If the missing child or young person is being sighted by police, or other authorised person (other than the Case Management Agency) 3. 12.2.3 Located Interviews for children and young people 4. 12.2.4 What to do if a child / young person refuses to go home • 12.3 Missing people avoiding location
Section 7 (p17): Finalisation	Section 13 (p61): Responsibilities when finalising a missing person investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13.1 Responsibility of the OIC • 13.2 Responsibility of the Supervisor / Duty Officer / Sector Supervisor • 13.3 Responsibility of the MPC • 13.4 MP exhibits
Section 6.2 (p15) Placing matters before the Coroner	Section 14 (p63): Located deceased (full body) where identity becomes known	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.1 Responsibility of the OIC when circumstances are not suspicious
Section 8 (p18): Unidentified bodies and remains	Section 15 (p63): Procedures for unidentified bodies, human remains and unknown remains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.1 Responsibility of initial attending Police <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 15.1.1 Unknown remains – (bone or flesh that might be human) 2. 15.1.2 Body / human remains obviously human or determined to be human by Pathologist 3. 15.1.3 Suspected Aboriginal remains • 15.2 Responsibility of the OIC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 15.2.1 When an identification is made 2. 15.2.2 When an identification has not been made 3. 15.2.3 Review process for UBHR • 15.3 Responsibilities of the MPR
Section 5.3 (p9) Land Search Guidelines	Section 16 (p70) Land and Marine Searches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16.1 Land searches • 16.2 Marine searches <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 16.2.1 Marine search and rescue operations 2. 16.2.2 Marine Area Command mandatory incident notification 3. 16.2.3 Suspension of search 4. 16.2.4 Police Divers 5. 16.2.5 Requests for assistance

	Section 17 (p73): Using mobile phones to urgently locate someone at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.1 Telecommunications Act 1997 (Commonwealth) – Section 287 • 17.2 Things to consider prior to a request • 17.3 When to use a s287 request • 17.4 Triangulation updates • 17.5 Inactive handsets • 17.6 Discontinuation of triangulations • 17.7 Other considerations • 17.8 Use of Live 'CAD' via s287 in MP investigations • 17.9 Application flow chart for Live CAD applications • 17.10 Emergency disclosure of social media and technology company information / data <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 17.10.1 Facebook / Instagram 2. 17.10.2 Snapchat 3. 17.10.3 TikTok 4. 17.10.4 Google 5. 17.10.5 WECHAT 6. 17.10.6 Apple 7. 17.10.7 Twitter • 17.11 Use of mobile phone RFI requests to help locate a MP
Section 6.2 (p15) Placing matters before the Coroner	Section 18 (p81): Review processes for long-term MP investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18.1 Three-month review for MP investigations • 18.2 Six-month review of MP investigations • 18.3 Submission of Coronial Brief of evidence to the MPR at nine-months • 18.4 Ongoing review of long-term MP investigations
Section 6.2 (p15) Placing matters before the Coroner	Section 19 (p83): Placing matters before the Coroner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19.1 Coroners Act • 19.2 Why are MP matters reported to the Coroner • 19.3 How do I report a MP to the Coroner • 19.4 What does the Coroner have to consider in a MP matter • 19.5 How do I get help with my coronial brief • 19.6 Relevant powers under the Coroners Act • 19.7 Missing person Inquests <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 19.7.1 COPS updates after the finalisation of a MP Inquest • 19.8 What to do if a Coroner decides not to assume jurisdiction
Section 6 (p11) Investigation Annexure 1 (p31) Authority for Publicity	Section 20 (p87): Release of information to the media / public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.1 Releasing photographs of a MP <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 20.1.1 Authority to publish photographs 2. 20.1.2 What to do if a SNOK refuses to sign an Authority for Publicity • 20.2 Geographic targeting of SMS • 20.3 Amber alerts • 20.4 Restrictions on releasing information to the media • 20.5 Family Law matters

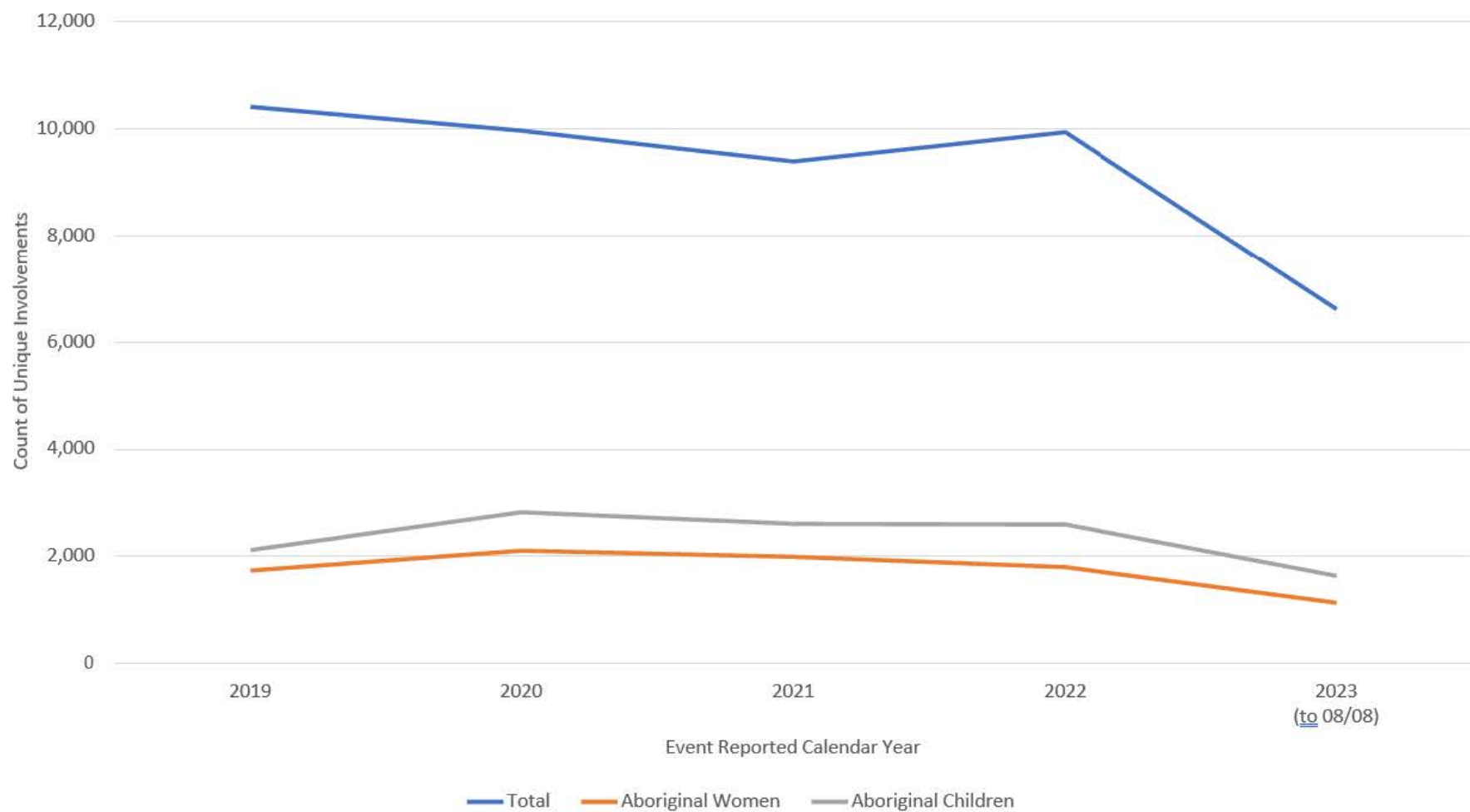
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20.6 Use of Facebook and other social media releases <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20.6.1 to 20.6.5 Use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Weibo, and NSWPF website for the release of information 20.7 use of SCC Podcast series 20.8 Officer should liaise with MP's parents / guardians / relatives / carers 20.9 Seeking assistance from Sydney Trains if you believe the MP is using the rail network
	Section 21.0 (p92): Managing the financial affairs of a MP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20.1 NSW Trustee and Guardian Act 2009 20.2 Assisting families considering an application to manage the financial affairs of a MP
	Section 22.0 (p93): RFI Requests for MP Investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22.1 Signs of life checks 22.2 Obtaining Opal card information 22.3 Obtaining information from Service NSW 22.4 Other potential sources of information
	Section 23.0 (p94): intelligence support for MP investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23.1 Real Time Intelligence Centre 23.2 MPR Intelligence support 23.3 Enquiries to establish if the MP is 'Onshore' 23.4 Facial ageing tool for MP investigations
Section 5 (p7) Initial Report – 5.1 Take initial details	Section 24 (p97): Counselling and external services for families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24.1 Families and Friends of MP Unit
	Section 25 (p97): Associated policies and standard operating procedures	
	Section 26 (p98) Contact List	
	Section 27 (p100) Attachments	<p>Annexure A. Initial Response - Missing Persons Checklist</p> <p>Annexure B. Initial Response to Unidentified Bodies & Human Remains Checklist</p> <p>Annexure C. DNA Collection Instructions</p> <p>Annexure D. Letter to Dentist / Ante Mortem Dental Records Checklist</p> <p>Annexure E. Authority for Publicity / Release of Records Consent Form</p> <p>Annexure F. Coronial Briefs – Missing Persons - Checklist</p> <p>Annexure G. Australians Missing Overseas</p> <p>Annexure H. Located Interview</p> <p>Annexure I. NSWPF/NSW Health MOU – Chapter 3.4.7</p> <p>Annexure J. Police Information Sheet</p> <p>Annexure K. RFI checklist</p>

		Annexure L. DCJ Casework Practice Policy Annexure M. Absconded Patient – Report to Police Annexure N. COPS Workflows Annexure O. FETSC Examination Notes/Sketch Annexure P. Nemesis Message Template
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Event Reported Calendar Year					
Category / Total	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (to 08/08)
Missing Persons - Total	10,406	9,961	9,385	9,932	6,611
Located Missing Persons - Total	10,269	9,890	9,294	9,865	6,489
Outstanding Missing Persons - Total	46	20	30	20	106
Aboriginal Women					
Missing Persons - Aboriginal Women	1,739 (17%)	2,109 (21%)	1,995 (21%)	1,803 (18%)	1,139 (17%)
Located Missing Persons - Aboriginal Women	1,734	2,105	1,995	1,803	1,123
Outstanding Missing Persons - Aboriginal Women	1	0	0	0	16
Aboriginal Children					
Missing Persons - Aboriginal Children	2,118 (20%)	2,827 (28%)	2,608 (28%)	2,595 (26%)	1,639 (25%)
Located Missing Persons - Aboriginal Children	2,108	2,825	2,608	2,595	1,624
Outstanding Missing Persons - Aboriginal Children	0	0	0	0	15



Missing Persons by Event Reported Calendar Year



The Risk Assessment Process (Section 11 – 2023 SOPS)

1. In missing persons cases, the Risk Assessment is used to determine the urgency of investigative functions. The assessment and categorisation of risk and the circumstances of the case should shape the police response, forming the investigative and search strategies.
2. The risk assessment is a dynamic and challenging process. It is subject to an on-going review by the involved Police, based on information known at a specific time in an investigation. The risk is re-assessed as information evolves, is updated, confirmed, or negated and the response is escalated and de-escalated based on the on-going review of the risk.
3. The formal risk assessment is completed and recorded in the COPS system and is part of the OIC's initial actions having responded to the incident. Once the Officer has completed the assessment, including their rationale, it is reviewed by their Supervisor. They review the Event and the Risk Assessment and consider the responses to the questions before indicating the risk as either 'High', 'Medium' or 'Limited'. The Supervisor then records their rationale in the free text field and how they intend to respond to, and manage, the risks identified.
4. Currently, more emphasis is placed on the on-going review of the risk as Officers are automatically prompted to update the risk assessment and rationale when the Missing Person Event is updated in COPS.
5. To assist in identifying and properly assessing the risks, there are specific questions for Officers to answer. The questions fall under four headings of High Risk Red Flag Questions, Missing Person's Vulnerabilities, Situational / Context Questions, and Other Relevant Questions. These assessment questions are:

5.1. High Risk 'Red Flag' questions:

- 5.1.1. *Is there evidence to suggest the missing person is suicidal? (Consider: reported stated intent, history of previous attempts, suicide note found etc)?*
- 5.1.2. *Is there evidence of a homicide? Are the circumstances of the disappearance suspicious? (Consider: possible victim of crime e.g., abduction etc)*
- 5.1.3. *Did the MP leave with child in their care?*

- 5.1.4. *Is the missing person particularly vulnerable due to age / disability? (e.g., child, elderly, dementia, autistic, severe mental health condition), and*
- 5.1.5. *Is the missing person missing in weather conditions or in geographical area that would seriously increase risk to health and/or safety? (e.g., missing in snow, dense bushland, the type of geography surrounding Lightning Ridge with opal mines, last seen in/near body of water etc)?*
- 5.2. Questions regarding the missing person's vulnerabilities:
 - 5.2.1. *Does the missing person need essential medication or treatment that is not likely to be available to them? (e.g., mental health, diabetic etc)*
 - 5.2.2. *Does the missing person have a mental health diagnosis? Are they currently unwell and/or taking medication?*
 - 5.2.3. *Is there a history of addiction: drug/alcohol dependence, gambling? Were they intoxicated when last seen?*
 - 5.2.4. *Was the missing person recently exhibiting behaviour that is considered out of character?*
 - 5.2.5. *Is the person in youth/foster care, special accommodation, aged care facility, or other care facility?*
- 5.3. Situational / Context Questions:
 - 5.3.1. *Did the missing person fail to complete their last known intended action/keep intended appointment?*
 - 5.3.2. *Has the missing person left behind personal belongings/items required for a period of absence?*
 - 5.3.3. *Is there a recent history of serious family conflict/abuse? (DV, child or elder abuse, victim, or perpetrator)*
 - 5.3.4. *Has there been any other recent issues of significance? (Prompt: education, relationship, employment, financial issues, bullying or harassment [physically/social media] issues?)*
 - 5.3.5. *Has the missing person been involved in a recent confrontation? (consider violent, homophobic and/or racist incidents)*
 - 5.3.6. *Has the missing person been involved in a civil or criminal court matter as a witness/defendant/victim? (consider also current AVOs, child custody issues)*

- 5.3.7. *Is the missing person an overseas student/tourist who has disappeared without any notice?*
- 5.3.8. *Has the missing person been sighted at a point of departure?*
- 5.3.9. *Has the missing person acquired new friends or relationships recently? (Consider also online acquaintances)*
- 5.3.10. *Has the missing person been reported missing by a person other than someone they normally reside with/not the logical reporting person?*
- 5.3.11. *Is the missing person a sex worker, and*
- 5.3.12. *Is the missing person likely to raise media/political interest? (overseas tourist etc)*

5.4. Other relevant questions:

- 5.4.1. *What do you think may have happened?*
- 5.4.2. *Is there any other reason for the person to go missing or any other information you would like to give?*
- 5.4.3. *If we need to, who else could we approach that may be able to provide relevant and recent information about the missing person? (e.g., friends, co-workers etc).*
- 5.4.4. *Are there any other factors that the Officer or Supervisor believes should be taken into consideration? (including factors that may mitigate risk).*

6. Once the risk assessment questions have been addressed using the COPS risk assessment tool, which includes the Officer's rationale, a decision is made as to the appropriate risk rating. The below guide is provided in the SOPS for consideration when making the risk determination.

High Risk	
The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing the missing person is in danger. They might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there are suspicious circumstances the behaviour is out of character there are indications of a criminal offence answers to any of the 'Red Flag' questions (See 11.1.1) indicate a high risk 	This category requires immediate notification to a Supervisor/Duty Officer/Sector Supervisor. Ensure appropriate crime scene/forensic response. If the missing person is lost, an immediate search and rescue response is required. Immediate consideration should be given to utilising all investigative tools to locate the missing person.
Medium Risk	
Where the missing person potentially poses a risk to themselves or others.	This category requires an active and ongoing response by police and other agencies in order to locate the missing person. All investigative tools should be considered to locate the missing person.

Limited Risk	
There is no indication of a threat of danger to either the missing person or others.	This category requires an active and ongoing response until the missing person is located.