

ADVICE TO FIREARMS OFFICERS POST SHOOTING INCIDENT

Officers who have fired shots will always be subject of an investigation for potential criminal offences and should be reminded of their rights (Ch.6, para 2.31, ACPO Manual).

Following an incident you must consider the fact that you may be treated as a suspect or a witness. This is a very fine line. It is in your interest that if you are being treated as a suspect you should say nothing until legal advice has been obtained. You have legal rights under the PACE Act 1984 and these should not be compromised. If however you are being treated as a witness then the following matters should be considered:-

Remember – All conversations are disclosable

- Ask the Post Incident Manager to contact the Police Federation, who can arrange legal advice and other support including contact with relatives, refreshment etc
- Initial notes should only be made subject to medical and legal advice
- The Manual of Guidance recognises that statements should only be made after officers have overcome any initial shock of the incident. Be guided as to when you are ready by medical advice, a solicitor or the Federation 'Friend'.
- If you are requested to make a 'duty statement', ask if you are being treated other than as a witness. It is advisable to include on such a statement the following 'I make this statement on the express understanding that it shall not be used or disclosed in any proceedings of whatever nature against myself'

- You can confer with officers involved in the same incident before making notes but seek advice from your federation friend first
- Ask to see the Force Psychologist/Welfare Officer
- During any de-brief, comments are disclosable. Other officers' accounts may influence or alter your own recollection of events. Try and recall your own, or use a Federation 'Friend' or solicitor as a reference point
- You may be asked to provide samples of blood, urine and DNA. In all cases seek advice from the solicitor or Federation 'Friend'

The Federation only provides legal assistance to those members who subscribe to the Federation funds.

You may be experiencing an understandable acute psychological reaction to the event commonly referred to as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Common symptoms include:-

- fearfulness
- crying
- shaking
- agitation
- patchy memory
- anger
- grief
- detachment
- difficulty concentrating
- depression or sense of unreality
- numbing or absence of emotion
- feelings of guilt or self recrimination

If you feel any of these symptoms you should speak to the Federation 'Friend', solicitor or Post Incident Manager for medical attention.

Remember – If you are on any medication, no matter how minor, eg; Aspirin/Lemsip/Night-nurse/ Hayfever, etc, be sure to declare it on weapons issue.