



The guidelines for officers on the other side of this card are issued by the Metropolitan Police. These media guidelines are issued jointly by The BPPA, CIOJ and NUJ. They have been agreed at senior level by all parties. Please use them in a spirit of mutual professional respect to resolve any problems.

**Guidelines for reporters, photographers and news crews for dealing with police at incidents.**

We are the eyes and ears of the public. The role of the police is to act as the law enforcement executive of that same public. It is our role to report on matters of public interest. This guide has been designed to help you in dealing with the police at scenes of incidents.

1. Only use the new guidelines as a tool for constructive negotiations with police officers. Be polite, know your rights and should you have a problem, make sure that you seek out the senior officer involved as he/she will be aware of the new guidelines, as should all officers.
2. Remember that the start of major incidents officers will not always have the time to help you until a press officer arrives.
3. If asked by officers to identify yourself always be prepared to show your UK Press Card. The police do have a verification line to check this against your press card PIN. It is your responsibility to make sure that you know your PIN. It is not necessary to tell police which publication, station or agency you are working for or if you are freelance. However, a polite, cheerful conversation goes a long way to promote good relations.
4. If you feel you are being prevented from doing your job in contravention to the police guidelines the, show them to the officer concerned. If this fails to resolve the matter ask to speak to a senior officer or a police press officer if there is one on scene and try to solve any problems that way.
5. If this facility is refused or is unavailable make sure that you get the shoulder number of the officer(s) concerned. In the case of plain clothed officers ask for name and rank. Always remain polite and un-confrontational.
6. With the above information contact your news or picture desk or your member organisation's liaison office and seek further help.



## **Guidelines for MPS staff on dealing with media reporters, press photographers and television crews.**

Members of the media are not only members of the public; they can influence the way the Metropolitan Police Service is portrayed. It is important that we build good relationships with them, even when the circumstances are difficult. They have a duty to report many of those things that we have to deal with - crime, demonstrations, accidents, major events and incidents. This guide is designed to help you take the appropriate action when you have to deal with members of the media.

Members of the media have a duty to report from the scene of many of the incidents we have to deal with. We should actively help them carry out their responsibilities provided they do not interfere with ours.

Where it is necessary to put cordons in place, it is much better to provide the media with a good vantage point from which they can operate rather than to exclude them, otherwise they may try to get around the cordons and interfere with police operations. Providing an area for members of the media does not exclude them from operating from other areas to which the general public have access.

Members of the media have a duty to take photographs and film incidents and we have no legal power or moral responsibility to prevent or restrict what they record. It is a matter for their editors to control what is published or broadcast, not the police. Once images are recorded, we have no power to delete or confiscate them without a court order, even if we think they contain damaging or useful evidence.

If someone who is distressed or bereaved asks for police to intervene to prevent members of the media filming or photographing them, we may pass on their request but we have no power to prevent or restrict media activity. If they are trespassing on private property, the person who owns or controls the premises may eject them and may ask for your help in preventing a breach of the peace while they do so. The media have their own rules of conduct and complaints procedure if members of the public object.

To help you identify genuine members of the media, they carry identification, which they will produce to you on request.

Members of the media do not need a permit to photograph or film in public places.

To enter private property while accompanying police, the media must obtain permission, which must be recorded, from the person who owns or is in control of the premises. We cannot give or deny permission to members of the media to enter private premises whether the premises are directly involved in the police operation or not. This is a matter between the person who owns or is in control of the premises and the members of the media.

Giving members of the media access to accident or incident scenes is a matter for the Senior Investigating Officer. The gathering of evidence and forensic retrieval make access unlikely in the early stages and this should be explained to members of the media. Requests for access should be passed to the Senior Investigating Officer who should allow access in appropriate cases as soon as practicable.

Advice and assistance in dealing with members of the media is available 24 hours a day via the Press Bureau at New Scotland Yard.