

Manual

Policewomen, Community Policing
Squads and Sexual Offences Squad
43.7—43.9

(5) The community policing squads are to be consulted as soon as practicable in all cases where child maltreatment comes to the notice of any member of the Force. (See S.O. Para. 5.5 [7].)

(6) When necessary, applicants for appointment to any position in the community policing squads will be considered by a board of selectors nominated by the Assistant Commissioner (Operations), to whom the recommendations of the board will be submitted. The object of the board will be to select members who have demonstrated ability or potential for this type of duty.

SEXUAL OFFENCES SQUAD

43.7 The Sexual Offences Squad comprises detectives who are specially trained in taking the initial complaints of woman and children who have reported being the victims of serious sexual offences.

43.8 Squad members shall provide an effective response capability to reports of serious sexual offences. Their duties include—

- (a) providing a 24-hour service in metropolitan districts to attend, on request, to the initial complaints from women and children who have reported being the victims of serious sexual offences (excluding indecent exposure matters);
- (b) interviewing, counselling and supporting women and children who have reported being the victims of serious sexual offences and, where appropriate, female witnesses present during such offences;
- (c) assisting, as required, during the investigation of serious sexual offences against women and children;
- (d) assisting such victims and witnesses during court hearings and trials. Where practicable, the interviewing member shall provide this assistance;
- (e) liaising with the police surgeons and the staff of sexual assault clinics, hospital facilities and other specialist community support services assisting women and children who have been the victims of sexual offences; and
- (f) maintaining records of and providing advice about community trends in serious sex offences and related matters including victim compensation.

43.9 Where a member of the squad is not available to assist or interview a woman or child who has reported a sexual offence, a member who knows the importance and relevance of the evidence, has an understanding of the traumatic situation and displays a sensitive approach to the victim should perform these duties. If the victim specifically requests that a policewoman perform these duties, efforts must be made to obtain one.

(Reprinted to incorporate Amendment No. 8)

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43.10 The Sexual Offence Preliminary Interview guide (form No. 284) has been designed to assist members in the preliminary interview of sexual offence victims.

43.11 It is of paramount concern that women and children who report sexual offences are treated as sensitively and professionally as possible, consistent with the police responsibilities to properly investigate crime and to ensure that the best evidence is presented to the court.