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Armed policing

This module provides:

- guidance on the appropriate issue and use of firearms and related less lethal options within the police service.
- a basis for the training of all relevant police staff in matters relating to the operational use of firearms. This includes command issues at strategic, tactical and operational levels.
- guidance on command structures, tactical options and operational issues associated with the deployment of Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs ()).

This APP () Armed Policing Module does not seek to be prescriptive in terms of its content, however, where the term 'must' appears, it is to be interpreted as follows:

A police force or an individual officer is under a positive obligation in law, or that given the gravity of the issue, the inclusion of the term 'must' has been approved by ACPO () Chief Constables' Council, thereby endorsing the need for this action to be completed. If a chief officer determines it necessary to issue separate instructions, due to the operational context or legal provisions appertaining in a specific jurisdiction, they should produce a documented audit trail explaining their rationale for doing so and this should be included within their force's Strategic Firearms Threat and Risk Assessment.

It is recognised that situations involving the deployment of AFOs (), by their very nature, often involve a set of circumstances which are constantly evolving. Nothing within APP () Armed Policing is intended to restrict police officers from taking innovative action to effectively resolve incidents in ways which are not included in this guidance.

A [full index](#) of the content of Armed policing APP () is available.

Armed policing APP () consolidates information from a number of decommissioned documents. For a full list of titles click [here](#).

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