

NATIONAL POLICING COMMUNITY SECURITY PRINCIPLES

ABSTRACT:

This document provides all National policing and its partners with a clear set of information security principles, which are the foundation to all information security activity.

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POLICY VALIDITY STATEMENT This policy is due for review on the date shown above. After this date, policy and process documents may become invalid. Policy users should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the documentation.	

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Introduction

Principles are general rules and guidelines, intended to be enduring and seldom amended, that inform, support, and prioritise the way in which national policing decides which ideas, initiatives and/or opportunities are to be progressed (and warrant investment) and those that are not.

These principles are a fundamental part of the National Policing Community Security Policy Framework and provide a foundation upon which a more consistent and structured approach to the design, development, and implementation of information security capabilities can be assembled. The primary focus of these principles is to provide the starting point for setting the policy, standards, and control objectives, which support the Community Security Policy Framework.

The audience, scope, objectives, and governance for these principles are defined by the National Policing Community Security Policy Framework, which can be found on the National Standards platform.

For clarity, these principles are approved by the Police Information Assurance Board (PIAB) and apply to all members of the 'Community of Trust' as defined by the National Policing Community Security Policy Framework, and any suppliers and partners that have access to, store and/or process police information, to provide services to policing.

Principles Structure

The principles described within this document will be structured in the following way:

- Name:** Clear, precise, and easy to remember.
- Statement:** Generally, one or two sentences in length. Clearly tells the reader what the principle is.
- Rationale:** Explanation of why the principle is important and how it will benefit national policing.
- Implications:** Usually in the form of a list to describe what is required to successfully carry out the principle and how it could potentially impact policing and those who supply to them.

Principles

PRINCIPLE 1: Accountability

Statement: National policing is accountable for how it complies with the legislation and regulations governing the protection of the information assets it collects, processes, stores and transmits. National policing must have appropriate measures and records in place to be able to demonstrate its compliance.

Rationale: Clear accountability provided through a top-down information security and risk management structure and mechanism for coordinating security and risk activity and supporting information security governance will significantly improve policing's ability to have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and to manage its controls effectively and proportionally. This also enables auditability, which provides assurance to the Community of Trust.

Implications:

- Information assets, risks and their owners must be identified promptly and maintained to enable effective decision making.
- Information asset and risk owners are required to be adequately trained and competent to carry out their responsibilities in relation to information security and risk.
- Well defined and appropriate measures and the ability to collect accurate and timely management information to report against those measures is required for effective decision making.
- For policing to defend as one, members must seek to collate their measures and records, to enable a national view, to enable those with accountability to make informed decisions that benefit all of policing.

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PRINCIPLE 2: Governance

Statement: National policing will establish and maintain an information security and risk governance structure, with commitment demonstrated by policing's governing bodies.

Rationale: Robust governance supported by policing's governing bodies will ensure effective management of information security and risk. Policing will benefit from a good understanding of its risk exposure and the ability to effect mitigation through effective oversight.

Implications:

- Senior stakeholders from the National policing information assurance and technical communities need to demonstrate commitment to the governance processes.
- Information security and risk control data, both locally and nationally, is required for the effectiveness of the governance.
- Governance processes are required to identify, log, and manage (mitigate, track and report) information risks, controls to address, and their effectiveness.
- A coherent set of policies, standards, and controls to manage risks to its information assets, facilitating control and direction of National policing's approach to security are required.
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities, for both accountable individuals and governance committees, are essential.

PRINCIPLE 3: Risk Based Security

Statement: The implementation of policy, standards, and controls for National policing must be set at the appropriate level of risk appetite.

Rationale: Designing controls to mitigate inherent risks to within a defined risk appetite, rather than following a prescriptive control manual, with a one size fits all approach, will ensure more cost effective and useable security solutions.

Implications:

- Adopting a risk-based approach requires the involvement of key stakeholders from the National policing information assurance and technical communities, throughout the lifecycle of policing systems.
- Controls defined and implemented must be commensurate with the level of risk being addressed, and the appetite for risk, set by the risk owners.
- Threat levels and risk levels are required to be continuously monitored and prompt action taken to remediate increases in risk, outside of appetite.
- Security investment must be based upon levels of risk exposure, providing clearer return on investment.

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PRINCIPLE 4: Confidentiality

Statement: National policing must ensure the information assets, with which it is entrusted are only accessed by those with the appropriate authority and need to do so, and necessary and proportionate controls are in place to prevent unauthorised access or misuse.

Rationale: Policing information needs to be protected from unauthorised access. Policing data is subject to both legal and regulatory requirements for its protection. Protecting this data from unauthorised access will significantly reduce policing information risk.

Implications:

- People, process, physical and technological controls are required to be designed, documented, and implemented for both national and local systems, to ensure confidentiality.
- Regular testing should be conducted to ensure confidentiality is maintained.
- Nationally agreed policy, standards and controls are required to help members achieve consistency of confidentiality across policing systems, contributing to the community of trust.
- Due to emerging threat of quantum computing and related harvest now and decrypt later attacks, it is highly encouraged to identify data susceptible impacted, related risk and controls available.

PRINCIPLE 5: Integrity

Statement: National policing must ensure the information assets with which it is entrusted, can only be modified by those with the appropriate authority and need to do so, and that suitable controls are in place to prevent unauthorised or accidental modification.

Rationale: Integrity provides the assurance that policing data is accurate and reliable. Without integrity, the value of the data and outputs from that data cannot be trusted.

Implications:

- People, process, physical and technological controls are required to be designed, documented, implemented and maintained for both national and local systems, to ensure integrity.
- Regular testing should be conducted to ensure integrity is maintained.
- Nationally agreed policy, standards and controls are required to help members achieve consistency of integrity across policing systems, contributing to the community of trust.

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PRINCIPLE 6: Availability

Statement: National policing must ensure appropriate controls are in place to maintain the resilience of policing operations.

Rationale: System resilience is critical to ensure the continued availability of authorised access to policing data through, and beyond, severe disruptions to its critical processes and the IT systems which support them, to ensure policing and its partners can continue to deliver policing operations.

Implications:

- People, process, physical and technological controls are required to be designed, documented, implemented, and maintained for both national and local systems, to ensure availability requirements are met.
- Regular testing should be conducted to ensure required levels of availability are maintained.
- Nationally agreed policy, standards and controls are required to help members achieve consistency of availability across policing systems, contributing to the community of trust.

PRINCIPLE 7: Detection

Statement: National policing must have the ability to identify the occurrence of confidentiality, integrity, or availability events promptly and accurately.

Rationale: Timely detection of accidental or malicious events in policing information systems is critical to the ability to respond to those events. Failure to detect the event can and will lead to increased impact on policing information systems and therefore policing's ability to carry out its operations.

Implications:

- An organisation wide culture of logging security related events and reporting suspected or actual security incidents or breaches is required.
- A robust detection capability requires significant investment in people, process, and technology.
- Continuous monitoring requires 24 by 7 coverage.
- Regular testing should be conducted to ensure event detection capability is maintained.

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PRINCIPLE 8: Response

Statement: National policing must have appropriate plans in place to act, in the event of a detected security incident, increasing the ability to contain the impact in a timely manner.

Rationale: Without effective and well tested incident response plans, policing increases the time that adversaries can disrupt policing operations or the time that internal errors persist in the policing environment, increasing the impact on policing operations.

Implications:

- Comprehensive and well tested incident response plans must be in place for information security events, both nationally and locally.
- Incident response plans should take into consideration supply chains on which policing operations are dependent.
- Availability of accountable individuals for the management of local and national information security incidents is essential.

PRINCIPLE 9: Recovery

Statement: National policing must ensure appropriate plans are in place to recover any capabilities or services that are impaired due to a security incident.

Rationale: Following a security incident, policing systems or services must be restored promptly to minimum recovery objectives, to allow policing operations to continue, and vulnerabilities remediated to prevent similar incidents from reoccurring.

Implications:

- Business Continuity plans are required to be in place and regularly tested for both local and national systems.
- Disaster Recovery plans are required to be in place and regularly tested for both local and national systems.
- Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans are required to be incorporate end to end dependencies including third party suppliers and partners.

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PRINCIPLE 10: Secure by Design

Statement: The security of national policing information assets must never be an afterthought; security should be built in from the ground up. National systems will be assured against this principle.

Rationale: Building security into each phase of the lifecycle of a policing system, from concept to decommissioning, ensures more effective security, resulting in reduced risk, improved resilience, and increased trust across the policing community.

Implications:

All new national systems must be built and assured following a secure by design methodology.

- The development of local systems are required to follow secure by design principles.
- Information Asset and Risk Owners must be engaged throughout the system development lifecycle.
- Development, deployment or usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), or Large Language Models (LLM) based solutions shall adhere to the NPCC AI covenant, College of Policing ethical use of data and existing, relating policies.

PRINCIPLE 11: Culture

Statement: The first line of cyber defence for any organisation is its people. National policing must develop and embed a security focused culture; through continual education and training of its personnel in best practices, to both protect themselves and the systems they develop and use, from cyber threats.

Rationale: Inadequately trained and educated personnel across policing, increases the risk of employee action or inaction, resulting in a security breach, impacting the confidentiality, integrity or availability of policing systems and information. Well-educated and trained National policing personnel will result in reduced information risk.

Implications:

- All personnel are required to regularly participate in fundamental information security awareness and training activities, aligned to their respective roles.
- All personnel must be able to easily report security weaknesses, suspected incidents, or breaches.
- Senior Information Risk Owners (SIROs) and Information Security Officers (ISOs) should participate in training specialized for their roles.
- Information Asset and Risk owners should participate in advanced information risk training, with continual professional development.

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PRINCIPLE 12: Third Party Risk

Statement: National policing is often dependent upon non-policing suppliers and partners. National policing must ensure that the National Policing Community Security principles, policy, and standards, are adhered to by the suppliers and partners that collect, process, transmit and store information assets on their behalf.

Rationale: Weaknesses in the security controls of suppliers, partners, and their downstream suppliers, will eventually surface as incidents for policing when those weaknesses are exploited. Identification and management of those weaknesses to prevent exploitation will be beneficial to policing in reducing this risk.

Implications:

- Policing is required to maintain robust and consistent third-party risk management processes and procedures.
- Policing must have a clear understanding of how their information is processed, stored, and transmitted by third party suppliers and their supply chains.

Review Cycle

These principles will be reviewed at least annually (from the date of publication) and following any major change to Information Assurance (IA) strategy, membership of the community, or an identified major change to the cyber threat landscape. This ensures IA requirements are reviewed and that the principles continue to meet the objectives and strategies of the police service.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Document Location:

<https://knowledgehub.group/web/national-standards/policing-standards>

Revision History

Version	Author	Description	Date
V1.3	PDS Cyber Services	Annual review	30/06/23
V1.4	PDS Cyber Services	Annual review and move to new template	24/07/24
V1.5	PDS Cyber Services	Annual Review	12/06/25

Approvals

Version	Name	Role	Date
1.0	Police Information Assurance Board	Approving authority for National Community Security Policy & Principles	23/09/22
1.4	NCPSB	National Cyber Policy & Standards Board	26/09/24
1.4	Police Information Assurance Board	Approving authority for National Community Security Policy & Principles	01/10/24
1.5	Police Information Assurance Board	Approving authority for National Community Security Policy & Principles	25/09/25

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Document References

Document Name	Version	Date
ISF - Standard of Good Practice (for Information Security)	v2024	2024
ISO 27002:2022 - Information security, Cybersecurity and privacy protection – Information security controls	v2022	02/2022
CIS Controls	v8	05/2021
NIST Cyber Security Framework	v2.0	26/02/2024
National Community Security Framework	v1.5	2025
NPCC Covenant for Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Policing	v.1.1	2025