

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme					
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Title:	Homicide and Unexplained Death Policy - Roles and Responsibilities				
Summary:	This document explains the roles and responsibilities for those involved in the initial response and investigation of all homicides and unexplained deaths.				
Branch / OCU:	Specialist Crime & Operations 1 - Homicide and Major Crime.				
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Key Roles and Responsibilities

Uniformed officers/First responders

The five investigative building block principles should be adhered to. For more detail please refer to [General Investigation Toolkit](#)

Uniformed supervisors

To support constables, a uniformed supervisor must attend scenes and demonstrate clear leadership. The supervisor must ensure that decision making is recorded with relevant rationale and endorsement. Where a sergeant is the initial investigator of a death, then an inspector will supervise their actions.

Duty officer

The duty officer is responsible for attending all deaths where there is clear evidence of a crime, suspicion that a crime may have been committed, suicides, unexplained or work-related death, fatal fires and sudden unexplained death of infant (SUDI). The duty officer is responsible for overseeing all initial action including the key areas identified by the five building block principles. The calling of any support services does not remove the duty officer's responsibility for the incident.

Borough CID officers

On being informed of a sudden death where a medical practitioner is unable to issue a death certificate, a substantive CID officer (preferably of sergeant rank) will go to the scene and assess the situation. If there is the slightest doubt, then the event will be dealt with as a suspicious death. In the event of any doubt about whether a death is suspicious or not, the advice of the BOCU DI will be sought to resolve the issue.

Detective Inspector

In relation to homicides or suspicious unexplained deaths the BOCU DI should:

- attend the scene and take charge of the investigation where practicable.
- authorise the call out of the Homicide Assessment Team (HAT)
- consult with SC&O1 duty SIO
- authorise the call out of the crime scene manager (in consultation with HAT)
- authorise the call out of the SO3 photographer (in consultation with HAT)

If the incident occurs during the night this role will be carried out by the on call Cluster DI. Whilst this should be the standard response it is appreciated that a DI may not be available in some circumstances and as such any inspecting rank can authorise the aforementioned resources if necessary.