
Guidelines for police and media at incidents

1. The media has a legitimate role to play in informing the public and they will attend the scene of incidents. The presence of a photographer or reporter at an incident does not of itself constitute any unlawful obstruction or interference.

2. Journalists need to collect information about an incident as quickly as possible. Some of this information may seem irrelevant, unimportant or improper to an officer. However, as long as the journalist does not break the law, or interfere with an investigation, or cross a cordon, the police officer should not impede the reporter. Journalists who break the law will be dealt with in the same manner as any other offender.

3. A crime scene remains closed to the media whilst evidence is being gathered and detailed forensic examinations take place. The reasons for denial of access should be explained to the journalist and access granted as soon as possible with permission from the Senior Investigating Officer.

4. Journalists have the right to photograph and report events that occur on public property. The police may invite journalists on to private property where an event of public interest has occurred **and they have the permission of the owner**. They should enter peacefully and not cause any physical damage or attempt to alter any details for photographic purposes. The rights of an owner of private property should be respected and may lead to journalists being asked to leave. If the owner of the property does not give permission then any attempt to gain access would be trespass.

5. Any journalist should be able to show relevant media identification if asked. At the scene of an incident this identification should be visible at all times.

6. Police officers should not restrict journalists from taking pictures or asking questions of other parties, even though the officer may disagree with the journalist's purpose. It is not a police officer's role to be the arbiter of good taste and decency. It is an editor's role to decide what to use.

7. Police officers do not have the authority to prevent a person taking a photograph or to confiscate cameras or film, and such conduct could result in criminal, civil or disciplinary action.

8. In the event of a distressed or bereaved individual making a specific request for the media to leave them in peace the officer should pass this information on to the journalist. However, this is advice on which journalists and their editors must base their own decisions. If the situation becomes an identifiable Breach of the Peace then journalists, as any other citizen, have a duty to disperse if asked to do so.

9. Journalists should not park their vehicles in a way that will obstruct other traffic or hamper emergency vehicles or officers carrying out their lawful duty.

0115 9672080

If you would like more information or advice on a specific issue please call Nottinghamshire Police Corporate Communications on

**These guidelines have been sanctioned by
Chief Constable Steve Green and the
National Union of Journalists.**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
POLICE**

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MEDIA AT INCIDENTS**