



# NPIA

National Policing  
Improvement Agency

MISSING PERSONS  
BUREAU

# thebureau

September 2008

Welcome to the  
first newsletter  
from the Missing  
Persons Bureau.

## In this issue

- our objectives
- what else do we do?
- who's who
- free to the police
- what's new
- what's planned
- our partners
- in development
- missing persons events
- about the NPIA

# 01





## Who's bringing this newsletter to you?

The Missing Persons Bureau is part of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA). It works with the police and related organisations to improve the services provided to missing persons investigations and to increase the effectiveness of the police response. The Bureau acts as the centre for the exchange of information connected with the search for missing persons nationally and internationally.



## A bit of background

The Bureau was launched in April 2008 within the National Policing Improvement Agency. The previous unit, the Police National Missing Persons Bureau (PNMPB), was located within the Metropolitan Police Service. The location of the Bureau within a central agency was brought about following recommendations by Sir Perry Nove in his review of the PNMPB. We have ensured that the Bureau is positioned alongside key operational, training and technology services within the NPIA organisation so it can offer UK police forces comprehensive support.

We serve all UK police forces in addition to international and overseas police agencies, though we don't have responsibility for conducting investigations.

We have links to NPIA's operational support services, who can help facilitate the operational response to high risk missing persons through a central point of expertise and reference. We also assist the triaging of suspicious missing persons cases to the NPIA's Crime Operational Support and the Specialist Operations Centre departments.



Don't forget to send the cancellations through when people reported missing to the Bureau have been found! This is just as important as the initial missing notification.

## Our objectives

The Bureau focuses on cross-matching missing persons with unidentified persons/bodies, with the aim of getting a positive match result. We maintain a database of:

- All persons missing in the UK for over 14 days, or sooner where the force feels the case warrants more urgent attention
- All foreign nationals reported missing in the UK
- All UK nationals reported missing abroad
- All unidentified bodies or persons found within the UK

We use this database to help match unidentified bodies/ persons to reports of missing persons.

## What else do we do?

- Maintain a dental index of ante-mortem chartings of long term missing persons and post-mortem chartings from unidentified bodies
- Manage the [www.missingkids.co.uk](http://www.missingkids.co.uk) website and maintain a separate database of persistent attention-seekers
- Facilitate workshops in relation to operational or procedural matters relevant to missing persons
- Conduct de-briefs of relevant cases
- Deliver, or assist with, the development of training
- Act as a point of reference for current good practice

## FREE to the police

The Bureau provides a free cross-matching service to police officers to assist with matching up details of missing persons cases with unidentified person or body cases across the UK. To use this service, all you need to do is submit details of the case using the Bureau's notification form. Additional information about this service, and copies of the forms, can be found on the Bureau's Genesis website:

**[www.genesis.pnn.police.uk](http://www.genesis.pnn.police.uk)**

Genesis is a Police Extranet which provides a range of information and guidance specifically for Police Officers/ Staff. Each force has its own point of contact for this service who can assist if you are having trouble accessing the site.

Call us on 01256 602979 or

email [missingpersons\\_bureau@npia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:missingpersons_bureau@npia.pnn.police.uk) and we'll send the necessary forms to you. Please submit comprehensive details of the case to us using the same email address or by fax to 01256 692571 to enable cross-matching searches to be carried out on your case.

## How can you help?

- Ensure you and your teams notify us of any 'mispers' and those found
- Ensure you and your teams regularly review longer-term missing persons cases
- Encourage full forensic sample collection including photographs and video clips as part of any missing person enquiry

## Who's who in the Bureau?

### Unit Manager – Joe Apps

Joe leads, develops and manages the national unit supporting missing person enquiries within the UK and is responsible for oversight of the national policy regarding this area, requiring extensive consultation with the ACPO lead, ministerial leads and other key stake-holders.

### Liaison & Support Officer – Charlie Hedges

Charlie acts as a seat of best practice expertise within missing person police investigations and maintains a network for missing persons contacts across the UK and internationally; he monitors the communications strategy of the unit ensuring the information provided is accurate and up to date. He is able to respond to queries relating to any of these matters.

### Strategic Analyst – Miranda Rouse

Miranda provides a strategic picture of the extent and nature of missing persons within the UK so that the phenomenon can be fully understood by ACPO and the Home Office and policies and legislation can be developed accordingly.

### Tactical Analyst – Louise Vesely

Louise carries out comparative case analysis on missing person cases, analyses trends and patterns in disappearances across the UK and provides operational support to missing person investigations.

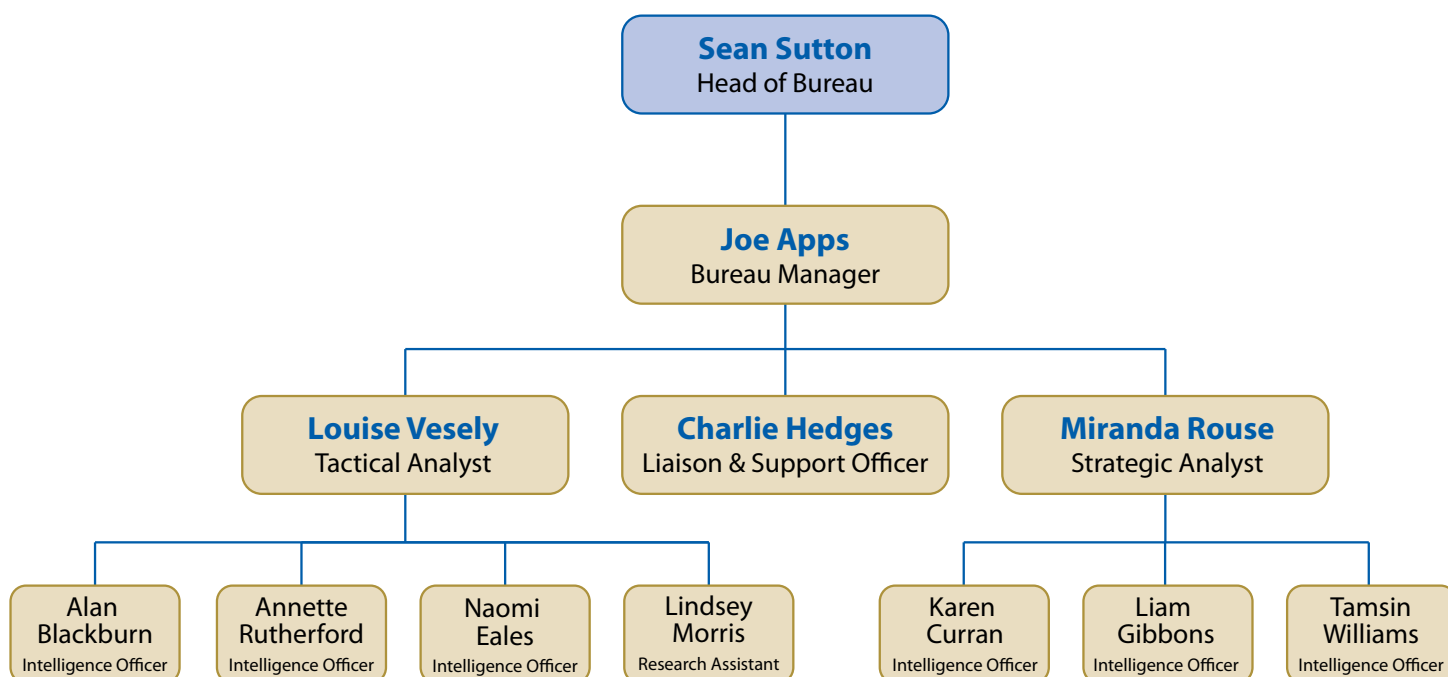
### Intelligence Officers

Our intelligence officers enter accurate and timely case details onto the national database of missing persons and match these cases with reports of unidentified persons as and when they are reported.

### Research Student – Lindsey Morris

Lindsey provides support to other members of the bureau, as well as conducting research into various aspects of the missing person phenomenon.

## NPIA Missing Persons Bureau Organisational Chart



## What's new?

- The Bureau is establishing itself with forces and other agency partners. We were represented at both the Police Federation conference (exhibition) at Bournemouth and the recent ACPO/APA conference in Liverpool
- We're exhibiting at the National ACPO Children and Young People's Conference in Bristol on the 24th and 25th of this month
- Work continues to examine the protocols for the capture, storage and matching of DNA in missing persons cases. NPIA is assuming responsibility for the national missing persons DNA database. An international missing person DNA database already exists within Interpol
- We're establishing better links with other NPIA Specialist Services using a triage process to highlight specific cases worthy of special attention. This rationalisation of resources has been commented upon by the Cabinet Office's Transformational Government programme as an example of good practice in data sharing
- The Bureau has worked closely with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) towards the development of an Action Plan on Young Runaways. We will address many of the issues raised by the Action Plan – see fuller explanation later
- The volume of parliamentary business and correspondence relating to missing persons has increased dramatically since the launch of the Bureau. So, the NPIA is working with key stakeholders to prepare media lines and other associated briefing material. As soon as we're able, we will publish key statistical information relating to missing persons
- Operationally, the Bureau has assisted a number of forces with unidentified bodies, for example the burnt corpse found at Dummer in Hampshire and the exhumed remains of a headless corpse in Norfolk
- We will manage and co-ordinate the Child Rescue Alert Service with a view to establishing a national scheme



## What's planned?

We're working towards enhancing our investigative support service to ensure missing person investigations and reviews receive access to specialist in-house advice whenever needed.

Initial work has already begun on the enhancement of some additional areas to the service to ensure work is prioritised effectively. Some of the areas identified for enhancement include:

- Developing statistics to enable strategic assessment of the missing person phenomenon as a basis to formulate, develop and measure future policy initiatives
- Carrying out analysis of data to produce strategic and tactical assessments
- Reviewing the current state of unidentified body cases within forces and encouraging forensic reviews
- Raising awareness of missing persons generally
- Establishing an effective DNA strategy for missing person enquiries
- Supporting cold case reviews
- Developing a community of officers and force contacts, identifying and organising training opportunities for them, and developing an effective communication network so they can exchange ideas between themselves and overseas bureaux

**Our Partners** The Bureau co-ordinates its work with other related agencies such as the many charities and other non-profit organisations that carry out important work in this field. We have close links with a number of charities such as Missing People and PACT.



Missing People is a UK charity that works with young runaways, missing and unidentified people, their families and others who care for them. It provides confidential support, advice and guidance to families and works hard to publicise cases in the media.

In addition to its work around missing people, the charity offers a specialist identification service to support police, coroners, hospitals and social services to resolve cases of unidentified people, alive or not. The service provides specialist forensic artwork such as image enhancements, facial reconstructions and age progressions, to enable new publicity of both missing and unidentified people.

The Bureau shares case information with Missing People and ensures the specialist resources and services of each organisation are utilised fully by police.

Missing People has an award-winning website with comprehensive details of its services, appeals for missing children and adults and the only UK online database of unidentified cases at: [www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk)  
For all operational police enquiries please email [NPA@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:NPA@missingpeople.org.uk) or [cjsm.net](mailto:cjsm.net)



The Bureau also works closely with PACT – Parents and Abducted Children Together - an international, non-profit organisation registered both in the US and the UK, which aims to fight parental child abduction across borders, and to help the police locate and retrieve missing children. In addition to promoting the Child Rescue Alert Scheme and the Missing Kids website [www.missingkids.co.uk](http://www.missingkids.co.uk) (which will continue to be managed by the Bureau), PACT provides valuable assistance in initiatives such as:

- The funding of posters distributed through Tesco's featuring missing children in the UK
- Establishing and promoting "Missing Kids TV", a campaign with Electronic Health Media that features missing children on digital screens located in doctor's surgeries and hospitals
- Establishing the relationship with EMCOR Group UK which promotes the Missing Kids website by featuring missing children on its distribution vans

Full details of the work of the charity and their contact details can be found on their website: [www.pact-online.org](http://www.pact-online.org)



## National Guidance on the Management, Recording and Investigation of Missing Persons

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has produced guidance on the investigation of missing persons.

It's available on the Bureau's website here: <http://www.npia.police.uk/en/10237.htm>

The Guidance is due to be updated next year.

## In development...

### Police Code of Practice for Missing Persons

NPIA expects to be commissioned by the Home Office to write a police code of practice which will generate accurate and timely data for the Bureau's usage.

This data will be used to provide an accurate assessment of the numbers missing at any one time and to assist in the development of a National picture of the missing and associated problem profile. It will also provide data for the forthcoming national indicator on young runaways.

The Bureau is developing its IT system (Hermes) to enable automatic and electronic transfer of data from police forces to the Bureau and onwards to the charity Missing People.

### Young Runaways Action Plan

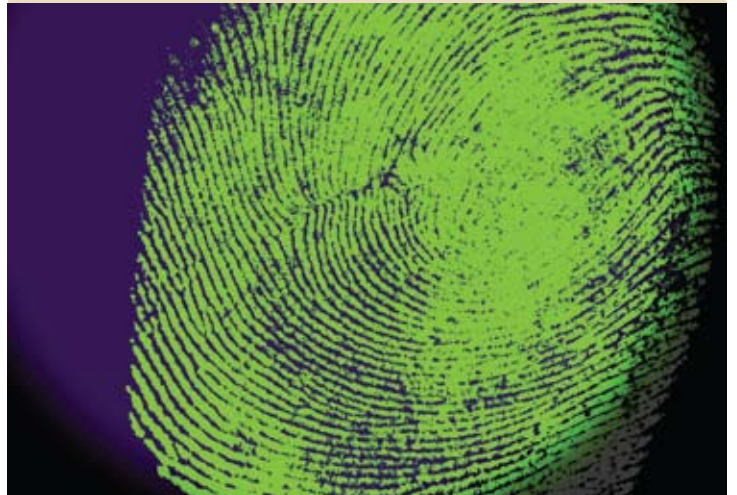
DCSF launched a cross-departmental working group on young runaways with the aim of improving support for children who go missing from care or home and young runaways, building on recommendations produced by The Children's Society (TCS) in various reports, notably 'Stepping Up' (2007).

The group first convened in January 2008 with four main aims:

- To drive forward the work around young runaways and develop an action plan
- To develop data collections to support a new indicator (NI71) as part of the National Indicator Set for the 2009-10 year
- To review the 'missing from care and home guidance'
- To review emergency accommodation provision

The DCSF Group developed a Young Runaways Action Plan which was launched on 16 June 2008 at No. 10 Downing Street by Kevin Brennan MP. The Government's Young Runaways Action Plan contains provision for a national indicator on runaways as part of the National Indicator Set for 2009-2010. This indicator (NI71) will help to secure effective joint working between children's services, the police and other local partners to ensure that necessary data about young runaways is collected. More details may be found at the DCSF website:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/runaways/>



### Unidentified Body Review Project

Our main remit is to maintain a database of missing persons and unidentified bodies or persons found within the UK and to match unidentified bodies or persons to reports of missing persons. As part of this work the Bureau is reviewing the current number of unidentified bodies and body parts within the UK with the aim of bidding for funds to carry out forensic reviews. The number of unidentified bodies and body parts held throughout the UK is currently unknown.

It's hoped a number of previously unidentified bodies can be linked to missing person enquiries and other serious crime enquiries and bring closure to the families and friends who have lost loved ones. However, in order to do so it is first essential to obtain a clear picture of the nature and scale of the problem.

The Bureau has already contacted all Her Majesty's Coroners for information and is in contact with police forces in order to obtain comprehensive details on the number of outstanding unidentified bodies currently held within the UK.

### National Missing Persons DNA Database

The NPIA is currently negotiating with the Forensic Science Service to obtain ownership of the current National Missing Persons DNA Database, which has been sitting alongside the main National DNA Database for a number of years, but has not been widely acknowledged. This move represents a wider commitment to developing guidelines and standards for all forces with regards to the collection and retention of DNA samples for missing persons cases. A key element of this database is the ability to store and search partial/virtual profiles obtained from family members. Once within the NPIA, work will begin to improve the database and increase awareness within forces of this additional resource.

# Missing Persons Events – why not come along?

## English Coalition for Runaway Children: 1st national workshop day

English Coalition for Runaway Children

**26 September 2008** Derby

**Contact: Sue Briggs**

01332 206773 or [sue.briggs@dcys.org.uk](mailto:sue.briggs@dcys.org.uk)

**Shaun Pollard:** 01773 583037 or [shaun.pollard@nch.org.uk](mailto:shaun.pollard@nch.org.uk)

## Safe & Sound? National Conference

Safe & Sound Derby in association with the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People

**22 October 2008** Derby

**Event hotline:** 01332 224504.

**Online booking form:** <http://www.kc-jones.co.uk/events/Safe--Sound-National-Conference-2008/6-Booking-Form.html>

## Joint National Missing Persons Conference

The second national missing persons conference, hosted by the NPIA Missing Persons Bureau and Missing People, is to be held on **29 & 30 April 2009** at NPIA's Ryton-on-Dunsmore site near Coventry.

**Contact:** [events@npia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:events@npia.pnn.police.uk) or [marketing@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:marketing@missingpeople.org.uk)

## About the NPIA

Since 1st April 2007, the functions of Centrex (police training) and other bodies, including PITO (Police Information Technology Organisation) were merged to form the National Policing Improvement Agency. The NPIA is a non-departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored and funded by the Home Office, with its executive leadership drawn from the police service. Many of its employees are seconded police officers.

As a policing organisation, the NPIA acts as a central resource to ACPO and police forces, working with authorities and the Home Office to help improve the way policing works.

The NPIA aims to make a contribution to improving public safety by:

- driving improvement and leading-edge practice where it matters, fostering self-improvement and helping to shape the future of policing
- delivering and developing critical essential services and infrastructure to support policing day-in and day-out
- providing accessible, responsive and joined-up solutions, enabling the police services to put more time into front line police work

## Contact us

Missing Persons Bureau, Foxley Hall, Bramshill, Hook, Hampshire RG27 0JW

**Phone:** +44 (0)1256 602979

**Fax:** +44 (0)1256 692571

**Email:** [missingpersons bureau@npia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:missingpersons bureau@npia.pnn.police.uk)

**Missing Kids Freephone:** 0808 100 8777