

INTERVIEW HINTS FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION

PREPARATION

Before an interview, find out from the journalist or HQ Press Office:

- if the interview is live or pre-recorded
- likely questions/what the *first* question will be
- if anyone else is taking part and their viewpoint or allegation
- if it's an in-depth interview, or for a soundbite for a news bulletin.

If you know you can't answer a specific question, say so before the interview starts, to save awkwardness during the interview.

Before the interview, collect your thoughts and make *brief* notes of your key points.

If you're appealing for information, have the relevant phone numbers handy, and make sure the phones are manned.

Be aware that the interview could be broadened to talk about related force policies, eg you may agree to be interviewed about an RTC involving a police vehicle, then also be asked about force policy on driver training.

For TV interviews on police premises, remove anything inappropriate or confidential from desks or noticeboards. Put a sign on the door asking for quiet/not to be disturbed. Divert your phone.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

If the interview is pre-recorded and you make a mistake, stop, and ask to start again. The journalist will understand. It's as much in their interest as yours to have a fluent interview.

Keep your answers short. If your answer is too lengthy, it may be edited. Most news bulletins will only use 10 to 30 seconds.

During a TV interview, look directly at the interviewer. Don't look straight into the camera unless you're asked to.

Don't use police jargon, such as IP, ACR or RTC.

Use time references like 'today', 'yesterday' or 'lunchtime' rather than '1300 hours on the 13th of this month'.

Consider visual aids, such as the gun used during a crime, or an item of clothing similar to that worn by the missing person.

Don't fidget, sway or slouch.

Check your appearance – hair tidy? Tie straight? Food on your face?! Try to avoid wearing 'loud', checked or striped clothes on TV.

Treat all microphones as 'live'. Don't make jokes about sensitive issues either before or after an interview – the camera or sound recording could still be running.