

# STRATEGIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN

## MISSING PEOPLE

### AND

## ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS (ACPO)

### Background

It is estimated that in the region of 250,000 reports of missing persons are made to police forces throughout the United Kingdom each year<sup>1</sup>. Whilst the majority are resolved relatively quickly, some disappearances continue for prolonged periods of time. Guidance on the police response to missing persons is published by ACPO, and revised at regular intervals.

Missing People is a UK charity which seeks to provide support for missing and vulnerable people of all ages, as well as their families left in limbo. We do this through our helplines, publicity and advocacy work, and by working in partnership with the police and other statutory and voluntary sector organisations. Missing People has in the region of 1,000 open enquiries on missing people at any single point in time.

In 2006 Missing People established a National Protocol Agreement with ACPO governing the transfer of missing person cases between police forces and the charity. The agreement expired in 2009, following the opening of the Missing Persons Bureau at the National Policing Improvement Agency, and the removal of automated processes to transfer case data.

This Strategic Agreement recognises the continuing synergies, areas of cooperation and mutual dependencies between police forces and Missing People in responding effectively to missing incidents.

### Aim

This Strategic Agreement provides a framework to sustain cooperation and communication between Missing People and police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The aim is to ensure that all parties work together to ensure the safety of people who go missing, and to minimise the distress caused to the families left behind.

This Strategic Agreement should be a catalyst and a reference point for officials to stimulate more effective working between the parties. The primary aims of the Agreement are to:

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<sup>1</sup> Home Office (2010) *The Missing Persons Taskforce: A Report with Recommendations for Improving the Multi-Agency Response to Missing Incidents*. London: Home Office.

- establish a shared view of priority tasks and ensure that they are successfully delivered together
- provide more effective identification and delivery of opportunities to develop and promote better services for those who go missing, are at risk of becoming missing, and those left behind
- provide early warnings of potential tensions where we need to work closer together to resolve issues quickly
- add value to existing relationships by strengthening our collective understanding of missing people

### Principles and values of working together

The parties will aim:

- to understand the needs and concerns of each other;
- to work collaboratively to achieve respective goals;
- to be open and honest with one another;
- not to avoid difficult issues and
- to learn from experience and build on successes

### Reviewing and Updating the Strategic Agreement

The Agreement will be reviewed annually from the date of signing.

Signed: 

Date: 10/7/12.

CC Patrick Geenty  
Association of Chief Police Officers

Signed: 

Date: 16/7/12

Martin Houghton-Brown  
Chief Executive  
Missing People