



Rewards Offered in Cases of Murder and Serious Crime Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (327/2026)

Abstract

This policy details when and how rewards can be offered to assist in investigations of Murder and Serious Crimes.

Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out Surrey Police and Sussex Police's (hereafter referred to as the Forces) response to offering and paying financial rewards to any source, whether a person, organisation, company, or family friend of a victim in order to progress the investigation and prosecution of murder and other serious crime enquiries.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy covers rewards offered by the Forces, third parties, external organisations and Crimestoppers.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 By adhering to this policy, the Forces ensure the use of rewards is monitored and the use is consistent, lawful, justifiable, proportionate, and does not interfere with justice.

Procedure

1. Use of a Reward

1.1 The use of a reward to progress an investigation can only be made if the offence meets one of the following serious crime criteria:

- That the offence is one in which a person who has attained the age of twenty-one and has no previous convictions could reasonably be expected to be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of three years or more or
- That the conduct of the offence involves the use of serious violence, results in substantial financial gain or is conducted by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose or

- That in considering the particulars of the offence, the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) and Head of Major Crime or Head of Crime for either Force agree that it must be treated as if it were so specified, in that it is a serious enough offence to merit a reward as a failure to progress the investigation could damage the confidence of the general public in the Forces.

2. Disclosure

2.1 The offer of a financial reward is obviously relevant to the way in which a court may regard the credibility of a witness, and the prosecution has an obligation to disclose rewards under *R v Rasheed (Abdul)* (1994) and *R v Rosemary West* (1996).

2.2 Also, under the [Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996](#) it is essential that the existence of any reward offer is disclosed, whether claimed or not, to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) at an early stage in proceedings. The disclosure officer will then be guided by the prosecutor and counsel. Great care must be taken in circumstances where sensitive material is involved.

2.3 To comply with these responsibilities, it is essential that the following procedure is adhered to in all cases where the payment or offer of a financial reward is proposed.

3. Where Authority to Offer a Reward is sought by the Forces or Privately Funded

3.1 The type of offence where the advertisement of a reward may be considered as an additional tactic must meet the above serious crime criteria. The authority of the SIO must always be sought before application is made to the Head of Major Crime or Head of Crime for either Force for authority to advertise any reward.

3.2 The Head of Major Crime or Head of Crime for either Force will ultimately decide on the level and whether the advertisement of a reward is a suitable course of action.

3.3 Consideration of the use of an advertisement must only arise if the investigation is stalled and there is a reasonable chance of encouraging witnesses to come forward through the offer of a reward. The SIO must believe that the offer of a reward can be reasonably anticipated to achieve at least one of the following outcomes:

- Generate new lines of enquiry,
- Produce new intelligence,
- Identify and encourage new witnesses to come forward or
- Otherwise support an identified investigative strategy.

3.4 It is not considered appropriate to dictate exact amounts for specific crimes; however, the amount must both reflect the seriousness of the offence and be balanced with the need for the appeal to be effective. The Head of Major Crime and/or Head of Crime for either Force will respond to suggestions of amounts and will be the final arbiter.

3.5 Redacted text.

4. Reward Offered by a Third Party

4.1 Where the relatives of a victim make an offer of a reward, the SIO will need to discuss the issues carefully with the Family Liaison Officer (FLO), the relatives or their representative and the CPS. Once this has been done approval must be sought from the Head of Major Crime or Head of Crime for either Force.

4.2 In such cases, the reward money offered must be lodged with the Forces via BACS. This is retained on behalf of the family who will receive the money back after an agreed review period should it not be claimed.

4.3 When another agency wishes to offer a reward with the Forces, the SIO needs to ensure that the agency's motives are both ethical and professional. In this instance approval must be sought from the Head of Major Crime or Head of Crime for either Force.

4.4 Special care needs to be taken if the media offer a reward for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of offenders for a specific offence. In most of these circumstances the Forces will not also offer a reward.

4.5 When a reward is offered by a third party through either Force, Legal Services will need to be consulted, and a contract drawn up covering their commitment to pay.

4.6 It is the expectation of the Forces that funds sufficient to meet the cost of paying the reward, together with a reasonable sum to cover the cost of advertising, will be lodged via BACS in the favour of the Forces. The funds will be held by the relevant Force Financial Accountant until the monies are to be paid out or returned to the sponsor.

4.7 The Forces will ask the company's representative to agree and sign a Memorandum of Understanding specifying the responsibility of each party to the agreement. This must be agreed and signed by a senior representative of the company making the offer and will deal with the wording of advertisements, determination of reward levels and administration of funds.

4.8 It is essential that the Forces retain the final responsibility for determining the level of the reward.

4.9 Officers reviewing murder or other serious crime investigations must always consider the advertisement of a reward as an option.

4.10 The source of any reward or proposed reward must be identified in any application report submitted to the Head of Major Crime and/or the Head of Crime for either Force. This must include a proposed time period for the advertisement to be valid before requiring a review based on information submitted to the Head of Major Crime or the Head of Crime for either Force by the SIO.

5. Where a Reward is Advertised

5.1 The size of any reward offered must be clearly specified. It must also indicate how much is likely to be paid out and whether the amount paid will likely vary, for instance, where the amount of payment depends on the outcome of the case. The timescales / validity of a reward must also be mentioned.

5.2 Where a reward is advertised, the source of the reward must be clearly shown unless the source specifically requests not to be publicly identified. It must be made clear to them, however, that in the event that their offer of reward leads to a prosecution, their identity will be revealed to the CPS and that their involvement is likely to be disclosed at subsequent Court proceedings.

5.3 No money should normally be paid until the conclusion of court proceedings.

5.4 Recommendations for payment of a reward must be made on the basis that the information has progressed the inquiry or the evidence had a significant impact on the case.

5.5 It is not intended that this procedure implies to people that 'payment is upon conviction only'. If, as a result of any such appeal, a witness comes forward in pursuit of a financial reward and it is tested to the satisfaction of the courts, then favourable consideration will be given to the payment of a reward provided no untoward motive is discovered and their evidence is not discredited. Such reward may be paid solely by the Forces together with relatives of victims of crime or together with another interested party.

5.6 Before paying a reward the respective Force Professional Standards Department (PSD) Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) are to be notified and asked to complete intelligence checks to ensure there are no corrupt practices associated with the payment i.e., an officer giving information to an associate in order to claim reward.

6. Risk

6.1 A person receiving a reward may be at risk of reprisals, and consideration must be given for the need to have a payment plan in place to mitigate the risk, particularly where the informant does not want to become a witness at court.

7. Prosecution where rewards have been offered

7.1 Every case where a reward has been paid out or an offer of a reward has been made must be promptly and clearly identified to the CPS because such action will have disclosure implications for any subsequent trial.

7.2 This must be done by way of a comprehensive report detailing all of the surrounding circumstances to the offer or issue of any reward payments. Any specific criteria attached to a notice offering a reward must also be clearly stated (that is, payment for arrest as opposed to payment for conviction and so on).

7.3 The exact circumstances in which the witness came forward to police must be clearly set out.

7.4 Redacted text

7.5 Redacted text

7.6 Where a reward has been paid out, or offer of a reward made, the source of that reward must be revealed to the CPS. This applies whether or not the reward source requested no publicity.

7.7 Any other relevant information that becomes apparent to the reporting officer must also be drawn to the attention of the prosecutor. For instance, if a witness has previously given no information or wrong information but has now produced evidence after the reward has been offered.

8. Crimestoppers Rewards

8.1 The Crimestoppers Scheme will pay a case reward (up to £1,000) to a Crimestoppers informant who gives information anonymously, through the Crimestoppers free telephone number 0800 555 111, which subsequently leads to an arrest and charge.

8.2 Apart from the police recommendation to pay the reward, there is no further police involvement in the process. The reward payment is undertaken anonymously through the registered charity, Crimestoppers Trust.

9. Enhanced Rewards

9.1 Crimestoppers Trust may offer 'Enhanced Rewards' (redacted text) where information leads to arrest, charge and conviction. This offer is, however, only available for a few selected crimes where strict criteria apply.as the Trust has a national responsibility with extremely tight funds.

9.2 The SIO must only consider an application for a Crimestoppers Enhanced Reward where all other reasonable lines of enquiry have been exhausted and the only further viable avenue to the investigation is the cultivation of anonymous information.

9.3 Application for Crimestoppers Enhanced Rewards must be authorised by the SIO and submitted for consideration to the Head of Major Crime and/or the Head of Crime for either Force.

10. Rewards Offered by the Forces

10.1 Summary:

- Must be for a serious crime.
- Must have the SIO's approval and be authorised by Head of Major Crime and/or Lead for Specialist Crime Command (SCC).
- Redacted text.
- Must be a last resort, e.g., the investigation is stalled.
- CPS must be notified promptly.
- Legal Services must be consulted in the case of third-party reward offers.
- The size of the reward must be specified.

Official

- A risk assessment must be in place for the payment plan.

Team: Specialist Crime Command.