

# Victoria Police Manual

General Category – Operations

Topic – Operational Safety

## VPM Instruction

### 101-1 Operational safety principles

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[Update History](#)

## 1. Policy

Apply the following philosophy, including occupational health and safety considerations, to the planning, implementation and evaluation of police operations:

"the success of an operation will be primarily judged by the extent to which the use of force is avoided or minimised".

## 2. References

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- Operational Safety and Tactics Training Manual

## 3. Definitions

There are no specific definitions for this Instruction. Refer to the general [VPM Dictionary](#).

## 4. Principles

When responding to incidents or planning operations that may involve any potential use of force, apply the following principles:

- **Safety first** – the safety of police, the public and offenders or suspects is paramount
- **Risk assessment** – is to be applied to all incidents and operations
- **Take charge** – exercise effective command and control
- **Planned response** – take every opportunity to convert an unplanned response into a planned operation
- **Cordon and containment** – unless impractical, adopt a "cordon and containment" approach
- **Avoid confrontation** – a violent confrontation is to be avoided
- **Avoid force** – the use of force is to be avoided
- **Minimum force** – where use of force cannot be avoided, only use the minimum amount reasonably necessary
- **Forced entry searches** – are to be used only as a last resort
- **Resources** – it is accepted that the "safety first" principle may require the deployment of more resources, more complex planning and more time to complete.