

Witness Name: Johnathan Speeden

Statement No: WITN0407001

Dated: 17 February 2026

## THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

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### FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF PC JOHNATHAN SPEEDEN

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I, PC JOHNATHAN SPEEDEN will say as follows:

1. I am a police constable currently serving with Derbyshire Constabulary.
2. This witness statement is made to assist the Nottingham Inquiry (the “**Inquiry**”) with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 (the “**Request**”).

#### **My Background**

3. I joined the Police Service, Warwickshire Constabulary, in March 2001 and have always been a uniformed officer on frontline policing. I have worked on response teams responsible for attending all emergency graded

incidents and high priority incidents. I also worked on a safer neighbourhoods team for a period.

4. In May 2016, I completed an initial firearms course, and I have been an Authorised Firearms Officer (AFO) since that date and have worked on the Armed Response Unit (ARU) since completing that course. Being an AFO I must attend, complete and pass numerous mandatory training sessions during the year which covers all the tactics that we conduct and pass qualification shoots on the weapon systems that we use. As an AFO we are always double crewed with another AFO in a police vehicle. The police vehicle can either be plain with no police markings with discrete emergency lighting or a marked police vehicle that is highly visible with Battenburg signage and a blue light emergency light bar.
  
5. The role definition of an AFO from the College of Policing (NGPF0010383) states as follows:
  - An authorised firearms officer (AFO) is a firearms position within the operational support sector of policing.
  - An AFO is a police officer who has been selected, trained and accredited by their Chief Officer to carry a firearm operationally.
  - The College of Policing role definition lists the Key Responsibilities of the role as: Responding to conflict situations using a range of tactical options, assessing the threat to

determine a proportionate response in line with legislation, policy and guidance.

- Assessing the immediacy and proximity of threat to make operational decisions for the protection of life.
- Applying the national decision model (NDM) to manage their response to a situation in a reasonable and proportionate way.
- Justifying the proportionate and lawful use of force in line with legal accountabilities.
- Understanding their role within the context of the wider police operation to support the achievement of operational strategies and priorities for action.
- Gathering and handling information and intelligence from a variety of sources, to assess threat in line with legislation, policies and guidance to take the appropriate action.
- Providing public reassurance when deployed within communities, responding quickly to emerging threats and thereby keeping the public safe.
- Providing medical aid commensurate with training as required to preserve life.

6. We carry a lot of additional equipment on an armed response vehicle compared to that carried in a standard response vehicle. In the gun safe we have:

- a. two loaded carbines (compact rifle) and extra magazines containing ammunition for this firearm. The carbine we class as our primary

weapon system as it can be used for threats at greater distances due to the barrel size, ammunition type and the sighting system on it. The carbine is the firearm we will use when an authority to arm has been granted.

- b. An AEP (Attenuating Energy Projectile) launcher which is a less-lethal weapon system. It fires a soft-nosed projectile designed to reduce severe injury while managing violent threats.
- c. Percussion grenades used for distraction.
- d. Smoke grenades used for creating smoke screens, allowing for concealment.
- e. We have method of entry equipment to assist getting into buildings that includes a rip saw, hooligan bar, enforcer, bolt cutters and lock snapping kit.
- f. There are ballistic shields and further personal protection equipment in our kit bags that will contain ballistic helmets and additional ballistic plates to put inside of our body armour.
- g. A medic bag which contains equipment to assist in providing medical assistance.

- 7. Each AFO carries in a holster on their leg a loaded self-loading 9mm pistol and an additional magazine (a container that holds additional 9mm rounds) on their body armour. We are given a standing authority to overtly carry our pistols by a chief officer. Our pistols would be drawn from their holsters in such circumstances as we deemed an immediate threat had presented itself to us; this would be classed as self-authorising, or when we had a stoppage

with our carbine (an unintentional interruption in a firearm's firing cycle, malfunction, failure with the gun). The College of Policing APP on Armed Policing (NGPF0010384) states on self-authorisation:

- “Should AFOs encounter a situation where they believe that the criteria for deployment of AFOs have been met, and delay in seeking authority to deploy would be detrimental to public or officer safety, officers should deploy and take the necessary and proportionate action in accordance with their training.
- Where this occurs, the AFOs should inform the force control room as soon as practicable so that a TFC can be informed.
- The TFC should assess and review the actions of the AFOs in line with the National Decision Model and determine whether continued deployment is appropriate.
- The TFC should also consider what further resources may be required and inform a SFC as soon as practicable”.

8. In May 2021 I attended and passed an Operational Firearms Commander (OFC) course, and I regularly perform the role of an OFC when on duty. I am also required to complete OFC annual refresher training to remain qualified in this role.

9. An OFC leads armed officers on the ground during firearms incidents, commanding a group of AFO's to execute tactics set by a Tactical Firearms Commander (TFC). Focusing on immediate tactical deployment, managing

risk, and applying proportionate force in dynamic, high-pressure situations, ensuring actions align with national standards and legal frameworks. An OFC can be a police constable, as I am and was on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023, and is not a role that has to be of a certain ranking. You need to be qualified and competent in the role to undertake the responsibility. The role of an OFC is taken in turn on a day-to-day basis so to remain operationally competent in that role. If more than one OFC is on duty at the same time, one OFC will take command of the shift at the start of duty even if they are a PC and a sergeant is on duty.

10. The College of Policing APP (NGPF0010385) states that a TFC:

- “must assess and develop the available information and intelligence and develop an appropriate threat assessment and working strategy for ratification by the SFC where practicable.
- must consult a tactical advisor as soon as practicable.
- is responsible for developing and coordinating the tactical plan in order to achieve the working strategy, within any tactical parameters set.
- is responsible for ensuring that officers and staff are fully briefed.
- should consider the provision of medical support.
- should be so located as to be able to maintain effective tactical command of the operation.
- should ensure that all actions and decisions are recorded in accordance with national minimum standards, where practicable, in order to provide a clear audit trail.

- should ensure that an operational risk assessment is undertaken prior to deployment.
- provides the pivotal link in the command chain between strategic and operational firearms commanders.
- must constantly monitor the need for the continued deployment of AFOs.
- must review and update the tactical plan and ensure that any changes are communicated to the OFCs and, where appropriate, the SFC.
- should consider and, where appropriate, conduct a community impact assessment(s).
- should consider declaring and managing the event as a critical incident.
- should consider the number, role and function of the OFCs.
- should consider the wider community, public safety and evidential implications of the use of specialist munitions, pyrotechnic devices or irritants.
- should ensure that after all deployed staff are appropriately debriefed, operational and organisational learning takes place”.

11. The College of Policing APP (NGPF0010385) states that an OFC :

- “must have knowledge and clear understanding of their role and the overall aim of the operation.
- must, where practicable, ensure that their staff are appropriately briefed.

- should be located where they are able to maintain effective command of their area of responsibility.
- ensures the implementation of the TFC's tactical plan within their territorial or functional area of responsibility.
- carries out an operational risk assessment, where practicable, prior to deployment.
- updates the TFC, as appropriate, on current developments.
- makes decisions within their agreed level of responsibility, seeking approval for any variation in agreed tactics within their area of responsibility (where practicable and time permitting).
- must ensure clear communication channels exist between themselves, the TFC and those under their command.
- should consider declaring and managing the event as a critical incident.
- should be available to those under their command, however, they should allow them sufficient independence to carry out their specific role in accordance with the working strategy and tactical plan.
- should ensure decisions taken are recorded, where possible, to provide a clear audit trail".

12. In February 2025 I attended and completed a Firearms Instructors course.

The role of a Firearms Instructor is to develop and deliver training to

maintain an effective operational armed policing capability and to ensure that the training provided is compliant with the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum (NPFTC) and APP (Authorised Professional Practice) Armed Policing (NGPF0010086) .

13. I am currently a member of Derbyshire Constabulary as a Police Constable on the Armed Response Unit (ARU) and as a firearms instructor.

### **My involvement on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

14. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2023, I was working a night shift on the Nottinghamshire Police ARU. I was the OFC for that shift. Every firearms shift needs to have an OFC working, as they have overall management of their assets/crews during the shift and on the ground if a firearms deployment occurs. I was double crewed in an unmarked police vehicle in company with PC 1978 Goddard. I was using the call sign OF41.

15. At approximately 0405hrs over my personal radio I was made aware that a person had been stabbed and the location was on Ilkeston Road, Nottingham. It was reported that the subject had walked away from the scene, heading up Ilkeston Road towards the city centre. Just prior to my arrival at scene I recall hearing on the vehicle radio, this was set to another radio talk group that local police officers would be on, that there were actually two people that had been stabbed and they both had multiple stab wounds. Armed officers use talk group 1199 on the radio and different

policing areas within Nottinghamshire use other radio talk groups. Armed officers change the talk group channel on their car set to listen to the geographical policing area they are in at that time. At this time there were three double crewed ARVs (armed response vehicles), with a total of six AFOs on duty. The OFC vehicle which I was in had callsign OF41 covering the city area, callsign OFZ4 covering the city area and callsign OF48 covering the northern areas of the county.

16. At approximately 0412hrs I arrived at the scene. At this time my body worn video was recording; this recording was saved. On arrival at the scene there was already another armed response vehicle (ARV) in attendance, callsign OFZ4 containing PS Hallam and PC Graham, numerous local police officers and ambulance staff. From where we had come to a stop, I could see police officers including PC Graham and ambulance staff providing medical assistance to a person in the road, who I now know to be Barnaby Webber.

17. Other police officers including PS Hallam and medical staff were providing medical assistance to a person located within a small front yard area of 316 Ilkeston Road, Nottingham. I now know this person to be Grace O'Malley Kumar. This yard was surrounded by a stone wall and there was an alley way to the right of the dwelling. I made my way to where Grace was located together with PC Goddard and provided staff with another medic bag from our vehicle should any further equipment be required.

18. Having handed out pieces of medic equipment I was not required to assist with any medical assistance. I now wanted to have an overall view of the area as I was concerned as to the whereabouts of the suspect.

19. I could see a large amount of blood on the front door of 316 Ilkeston Road, which was the address that Grace was outside of and I was concerned that the suspect or any other victims could be within this dwelling. I remember thinking: 'has Grace come out of the building, is the offender in there, is there another victim in there?'

20. Due to this I grabbed some method of entry equipment from my police vehicle; a hooligan bar and a rip saw. I went to the rear of the address, used the hooligan bar to spike a hole in the top of the door and then used this hole to assist the start of cutting open the door using the rip saw. I gained entry to the dwelling and other officers, I do not know their identity, followed me into it. I searched the building for persons and found that there were no persons within it, no signs of a disturbance and no blood. I updated the control room with this information.

21. At 0411hrs, I believe I had already asked the Force Incident Manager (FIM) if he would be authorising the deployment of firearms officers, this was not given. Whilst this incident was taking place, I asked several times if there would be an authority for the deployment of firearms officers. I can remember that I had asked at the time of initially travelling to the incident

and then when I updated the FIM that there were two victims, not one victim as originally reported, and that both had multiple stab wounds.

22. I had asked for the deployment as from what I had heard from the initial report, the initial attending officers update and from what I had later seen at the scene, that the subject had inflicted serious wounds to the victims, the subject must have been in possession of a lethal weapon to have inflicted those injuries and I deemed him as dangerous. In my opinion the criteria to arm had been met. The criteria for the deployment of AFO's is where the officer authorising the deployment [NGPF0010086] has 'reason to suppose' that officers may have to protect themselves or others from a person who (College of Policing APP Armed Policing) (NGPF0010086):

- "is in possession of, or has immediate access to, a firearm or other potentially lethal weapon, or
- is otherwise so dangerous that the deployment of armed officers is considered to be appropriate, or
- as an operational contingency in a specific operation (based on the threat assessment), or
- for the destruction of animals which are dangerous or are suffering unnecessarily."

23. When firearms officers are given an authority to arm we have access to the full range of equipment we are trained to use; carbines which are our primary weapon, AEP (Attenuating Energy Projectiles) (which is a less lethal use of

force option that can provide us with more space and time) and percussion grenades which we can use as a distraction when entering a building or part of a building. Since an authority to arm was not granted, if an immediate threat had appeared, I only had access to my pistol (side arm) which I would have had to self-authorise to use, a taser, incapacitant spray and baton. When deployed we are also trained as a team in numerous tactics to safely deal with dangerous individuals.

24. Whilst at the scene I was concerned that the whereabouts of the subject was unknown. The last update I had been given about the subject was whilst travelling to the scene and that information was that the subject had walked up Ilkeston Road towards the city centre and there had been no further sightings of him. I had travelled in along that route to the scene and the subject was not there which made me believe the subject must have taken a route off the main road or gone into a building. Whilst at the scene there was a lot of staff around from different agencies and members of the public, everyone was concentrating and providing the best medical assistance they could to the victims and would not have been aware of their surroundings and any potential threat. I was concerned that the subject could at any point come out of a building or alley way and attack anyone in the immediate area.

25. Due to this I was conscious of my 360-degree view and wanted to have an overview of the area so that I could protect anyone should I need to do so. At that time, I felt I could not protect anyone adequately or engage with the subject, should he be seen, in the safest possible way because an authority

to arm had not been granted and I did not have immediate access to all of my firearms equipment. I wanted to do the job I was trained to do. As stated previously in my opinion the criteria to arm had been met.

26. When I asked for the firearms deployment and was told 'the victims are our priority at the moment', I was fully aware of that but surprised at the reply. Three AFOs from my team were assisting with medical treatment to the two victims. This did not mean that we could not be deployed with all our additional equipment; it just meant that I could get fully kitted, get my carbine and AEP out from the gun safe and so could the third double crewed ARV (Armed Response Vehicle), OF48, that was travelling to the area from North of the county.

27. The AFOs providing medical assistance at this time would have continued doing this until a suitable time that they could kit up with their additional equipment. It would have meant that we had some AFOs ready to deal with the subject if he had appeared in our location or there was a sighting of him anywhere in the immediate area or city area and there would not be a time delay.

28. If the authority had been granted and there was sufficient medical staff at the scene I would have got the AFOs released quicker as they now had another role to perform and we would have commenced an armed area search for the subject. I will refer to the radio transmission as NGPF0004732.

29. When we are deployed on a firearms incident, the TFC will develop a threat assessment and a working strategy by assessing and developing information and intelligence. The victims/ future victims/ members of the public would have all been detailed on the threat assessment and a firearms deployment wouldn't have changed how we had initially dealt with the victims at the scene. We would have simply been ready to respond to any threat.

30. At that time, I was annoyed/ frustrated at the decision that no authority for a firearms deployment had been given, after my duty had finished for the day and still to this day as I believe the criteria to deploy was met. It is the TFC that holds the risk when making these decisions however I believe that we were not maximising the safety to all staff at that time or minimising the risk to the public.

31. At 0425hrs I was returning to my police vehicle with the method of entry equipment that I had used to gain entry to 316 Ilkeston Road. At this time, I asked the control room if they had an update on the subject, I was wanting to know if there was any further information known about the subject or any sightings of the subject. They replied, "No negative." I will refer to this radio transmission as NGPF0004748. I asked this as I wanted to make sure that I hadn't missed any information being passed over the radio whilst I had been busy forcing entry to 316 Ilkeston Road.

32. At 0426hrs I asked OF48 to complete an area search for the offender. I didn't have any further information to pass to them other than what they already knew. I reiterated to them that the last sighting of the subject was along Ilkeston Road towards the City Centre. OF48 replied that they would commence the area search from the Canning Circus area. I will refer to these radio transmissions as URN NGPF0004749, NGPF0004750 and NGPF0004752.

33. At the time of my attendance at the incident I am not aware that there was anything further known about the subject, only a description and direction of travel. I asked one of my officers after he had finished assisting with medical treatment to establish if a doorbell camera near the scene had captured the incident so that it could help provide a better description of the subject, method of attack, weapon etc. He was provided with a view of the footage by the homeowner and relayed this over his radio and to me in person. He described the attack as frenzied.

34. In relation to the area search for the offender, I do not know who had overall control of it. I was committed at the scene for a period. I do believe that if it had been a firearms deployment, the FIM and I would have had control of the search and it would have been run on a single channel, our firearms channel, and I would have requested that other officers/ teams would have been patched into our talk group. The first things I would have asked for would have been for CCTV checks to be completed, drone assistance and NPAS (National Police Air Service).

35. Areas would have been designated for officers to search so as not to duplicate and cover a greater area. I can recall that when they were available, I separated my team to cover areas of the city and be ready to respond should local officers have a sighting but there wasn't a sighting. I can remember a discussion with PC Goddard as he was about to drive me away from the scene and commence an area search. I said to him something like; "IF I SEE THIS MALE I WILL BE SELF AUTHORISING WITH MY PISTOL AS THERE IS NO WAY I'M GETTING CLOSE TO HIM WITH ONLY MY TASER IN CASE IT'S NOT EFFECTIVE." PC Goddard agreed with me and said that he was about to say the same to me.

36. Later, there was a report of a person screaming and I recall that the FIM was concerned that it may have been related to the original incident and requesting that AFOs, without an authority to arm, go to assist local officers that were attending. This incident was established to be unrelated.

37. I do not know that if the authority for a firearms deployment had been given if the search for the subject would have been successful. All I know is that I would have got firearms officers released from the medical assistance they were providing as soon as was practicable and we would have been ready to deal with any type of threat posed.

38. I have been involved in other similar incidents where fatalities have occurred from a stabbing. As per the above points, these incidents have been

completed having had the authority to arm and deploy granted whilst area searches and tactics have been completed. These were then coordinated and managed by the firearms team and FIM on the firearms channel with support from local officers. All officers being patched on to the same channel. Local officers would have been given a stay safe message instructing them to describe and report back what they see e.g. the subject; this will then allow the firearms team to attend and deal with the threat. They would only be asked to intervene should there be a threat to life, therefore maximising their safety.

39. Op Plato was declared later that morning, this therefore instigated a firearms deployment for which I was the OFC and a Multi-Agency response. I managed the search and detention of the subject and the subsequent deployment of all AFOs from within Nottinghamshire Police that were on duty and subsequently came on duty and the mutual aid that was supplied by other neighbouring police forces.

40. At approximately 0619hrs I was sat in my police vehicle at Theatre Square, Upper Parliament Street, still deployed on the Op Plato. I received a phone call from the firearms Tactical Advisor (TA).

41. A Tactical Advisor (from the College of Policing APP [NGPF0010386]):

- advises on the capabilities and limitations of the AFOs and other police resources being deployed
- advises the SFC or TFC on the implication of any tactical parameters which have been set

- advises on the viable tactical options for consideration by the SFC and TFC within the existing working strategy and any tactical parameters set
- advises the firearms commanders on the tactical considerations, contingencies and implications for each tactical option
- should be in a position to assist and advise the TFC at all stages of the operation
- assists the TFC in developing the threat assessment where appropriate
- provides tactical advice reflecting the existing threat assessment
- ensures that advice given is recorded.

42. The role of a tactical advisor is to advise and not to make command decisions. The responsibility for the validity and reliability of the advice lies with the advisor, but the responsibility for the use of that advice rests with the commander.

43. The TA was PC Wilkinson; he was wanting an update on matters. During this phone call I supplied him with information he was unaware of, we discussed considerations and debriefed some points. I explained to him that the Op Plato had been called and it was all linked to the earlier stabbings where no authority to arm had been given. I stated that the TFC had given us the brief to use any firearm tactic to stop the suspect, which I agreed with

as the situation was very dynamic and fast moving. I explained that all firearms cars were now static at various positions within the city and I was waiting on any further developments on information that I could act on and direct my team accordingly. I further explained to him that I was concerned that further action was potentially required at the address where the stolen van had come from, the registered keepers address, as there could have been further victims there. Also, action was potentially required at any addresses linked to the suspect as there could have been victims there or potential further offenders who were part of the attacks. I believe I had already raised these points with the TFC. PC Wilkinson had to end the call quickly due to other commitments.

44. At approximately 0622hrs I believe I was updating firearms officers that were coming on duty over my personal radio.

45. At approximately 0624hrs the TA, PC Wilkinson, called me back to carry on with our conversation. He stated that he had spoken with the TFC and told him that we needed to get the suspect on a 'Livescan' machine to gain his identity. This is a machine that takes fingerprints of a person and if they are already known in the police database it will provide information as to who that person is based on their fingerprints. He also stated that he had suggested that Special Branch should be spoken to once the identity of the suspect was known. We acknowledged that at this time the TFC would be extremely busy in the control room. PC Wilkinson and I spoke briefly around

the actions of the suspect in the van and how the van was stopped by firearms officers.

46. At approximately 0626hrs I asked PC Wilkinson if he was ok to talk about a few debriefs points that I wished to raise. I knew that there would be a full structured debrief at some point in the future but I felt as though I needed to talk about them then. I stated to him that at the time of the double stabbing being confirmed that we were not provided with an authority to arm by the TFC and I discussed with him the points that I have stated earlier in this statement, including the fact that I was concerned about an unknown offender walking around, possible future victims and the offender returning to the scene. Also I mentioned the response I got from the TFC, that "our main priority is the victim". I stated to PC Wilkinson: "WELL OBVIOUSLY, IT ALWAYS IS THE VICTIM AS THEY ARE TOP OF OUR WORKING STRATEGY, IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE CAN'T DO OUR ARMED CAPABILITY AT THE SAME TIME. MY THOUGHT ALWAYS IN MY HEAD WAS, HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THIS ISN'T JUST A STRANGER ATTACK AND THIS PERSON ISN'T GOING TO GO AND WANDER OFF AND DO IT TO SOMEONE ELSE? WHICH IS WHAT HAS ENDED UP HAPPENING."

47. At some point between the initial stabbings and Op Plato being declared, my team and I all raised our frustration to each other about there being no authority to arm initially granted and I stated this to PC Wilkinson.

48. I then went on to say to him: "I FEEL, MMMM NOT LET DOWN BUT I FEEL..." PC Wilkinson then interjected and said, "YOU'VE KIND OF HAD YOUR SUSPICIONS PROVED RIGHT." I went on to say, "IT'S NOT ABOUT THE OP PLATO AT ALL AS NO ONE CAN ENVISAGE THAT BUT IF SOMEONE'S GOT THE INTENT TO CAUSE SERIOUS HARM AND ACTUALLY KILL TWO PEOPLE, IF YOU WERE EVER GOING TO HAVE AN AUTHORITY THAT'S IT. JUST BECAUSE IT'S A KNIFE I DON'T UNDERTSAND WHY THE AUTHORITY WASN'T ON FROM THE START. THEN EVEN IF WE WERE DOING FIRST AID, WE WOULD HAVE HAD THE CAPABILITY TO RESPOND TO SOMETHING AND THAT OFFENDER COULD HAVE COME BACK TO THE SCENE."

49. I said that I would raise the matter and that the team would. This was all discussed in the subsequent firearms debrief.

50. Looking back at this body worn footage and listening to the conversation with PC Wilkinson it is clear to see that I was frustrated at some of the decisions made.

51. I was also present in the firearms debrief that was conducted sometime after the incident. I along with my team that were on duty on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 raised our concerns around the reasons that were given for a firearms authority not being granted.

52. I completed a Pocket Notebook entry in relation to this incident. I have since moved Police forces and enquiries have been carried out to locate it without success.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe the content of this statement to be true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed **GRO-B**

Date 17/02/2026

**Index to First Witness Statement of Jonathan Speeden**

No.	URN	Document Description
1		Body Worn Video Footage for PC Speeden [ <b>Not Uploaded - Contains Graphic Images</b> ]
2	NGPF0004732	Recording reference 20230613-031129000000- 677000003- 3029- 1
3	NGPF0004748	Recording reference:

		20230613-032406000000- 677000003-3029-1
4	NGPF0004749	Recording reference 20230613-032430000000- 677000003-3029- 1
5	NGPF0004750	Recording reference 20230613- 032553000000_677000003_3029- 1
6	NGPF0004752	Recording reference 20230613-032650000000- 677000003-3029- 1
7	NGPF0010383	Para 5 Authorised firearms officer_College of Policing.pdf
8	NGPF0010384	Para 8-23 deployment-of- authorised-firearms-officers-afos— 1770632409.pdf
9	NGPF0010385	Para 11-12 command— 1770632837.pdf
10	NGPF0010386	Para 40 command--1770795745.pdf
11	NGPF0010086	College of Policing APP for Armed Policing