

## RDG Guidance Note: Post Incident Management of Personal Effects

RDG-OPS-GN-025  
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# About this document

## Explanatory Note

The Rail Delivery Group is not a regulatory body and compliance with Guidance Notes or Approved Codes of Practice is not mandatory; they reflect good practice and are advisory only. Users are recommended to evaluate the guidance against their own arrangements in a structured and systematic way, noting that parts of the guidance may not be appropriate to their operations. It is recommended that this process of evaluation and any subsequent decision to adopt (or not adopt) elements of the guidance should be documented. Compliance with any or all of the contents herein, is entirely at an organisation's own discretion.

Other Guidance Notes or Approved Codes of Practice are available on the [Rail Delivery Group \(RDG\) website](#).

## Executive Summary:

This Guidance Note provides advice on how personal effects recovered from incident sites should be managed. It addresses both the logistics of collecting, storing and identifying such items and the challenges associated with their return. The latter, particularly in the event of a fatality, may be extremely emotive for family members and hence needs to be handled with appropriate sensitivity.

It does not address recovery, management and return of property left behind when passengers are evacuated from trains that have become stranded – guidance on this is provided within the joint RDG/Network Rail Guidance Note RDG-OPS-GN-049: Meeting the Needs of Passengers Stranded on Trains.

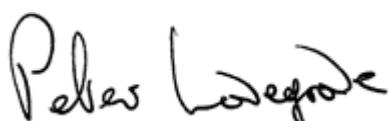
## Issue Record

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Issue	Date	Comments
1	March 2015	Original version
2	October 2017	Updated following periodic review and also reformatted as an RDG document
3	February 2022	Updated following periodic review and reformatted to comply with latest RDG template. Title changed from 'Post Incident Management of Personal Property' to 'Post Incident Management of Personal Effects'.
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This document is reviewed on a regular 3 yearly cycle.

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# 1 Introduction, purpose and scope

## 1.1 Introduction

Any major rail incident will result in those involved potentially being separated from their personal [items and property which are generically referred to within this document as personal](#) effects. This may be as a result of being removed from the site in an injured state by the emergency services, the need to leave the scene quickly and unhindered by belongings to get to a place of safety, having items such as jewellery removed prior to medical treatment or items simply becoming lost. Other personal effects will be found on or with those who have died.

It is recognised that each transport undertaking operates differently (albeit there will be similarity in the way tasks are approached and managed) and this Guidance Note does not seek to provide a definitive direction or obligation on how an individual organisation manages this task.

However, there are particular issues regarding personal effects and their return which should be recognised. Other organisations, such as the British Transport Police (BTP), have certain obligations in relation to such items and, beyond this, they and other investigatory bodies may have an interest where items have the potential to provide evidence or intelligence relevant to any investigation.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Guidance Note is to provide basic information to transport undertakings on the principles to be adopted for the return of personal effects to owners, their next of kin or legal representative once they have been recovered from site in the aftermath of a rail incident.

The starting point for this needs to be an appreciation of the challenges presented in such cases.

In part, these comprise the logistical challenges associated with the recovery, storage and identification of what may be a large number of such objects, some of which may be extensively damaged or soiled. It is recommended that processes be established to manage these elements, including the provision of appropriate resources, and that these be documented or referred to within company emergency plans. These are discussed further in Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this Guidance Note.

The subsequent return of personal effects to their owners or, in the case of fatalities, next of kin, presents a further set of challenges. In many cases, particularly if personal effects are required by the authorities to be retained as evidence to support a criminal prosecution or incident investigation, their return will be significantly delayed - a year or more is not uncommon. There may also be issues in identifying who the rightful recipient is, for example if two or more families claim the same item. Indeed, the process of returning personal effects is fundamentally linked to the process of determining those involved in the incident (whether alive or fatally injured) and/or their families. Without knowing who may be entitled to claim, the process for returning personal effects cannot be initiated.

In all cases, it should be acknowledged that returning personal effects may evoke strong emotions on the part of or feel like an additional invasion of privacy for the owner or next of kin during an already very difficult time. This is particularly the case for bereaved families, for whom receiving an item a loved one had with them at the moment of their death is likely to be especially poignant. The vast majority of transport undertakings have in place Incident Care Teams which comprise teams of specially selected volunteers who provide practical and emotional support to those whose lives have been changed as a result of major rail incidents. Incident Care Team members have received special training in how to handle such situations with sensitivity to the needs and wishes of those concerned and it is highly recommended that they be involved in the process for returning personal effects in all cases where the incident was traumatic and hence there is the possibility of triggering an emotive response.

For incidents involving rail replacement road services, the same principles should be applied to the extent possible, recognising that close liaison with the operator of the road service will be required, the police role will be performed by a Home Office force and such organisations fall entirely outside the scope of this Guidance Note.

As stated in Section 1.1, it is not the intention of this guidance to provide a definitive way in which transport undertakings should organise and action the return of personal effects but to highlight the more important aspects to be considered when planning for this task.

### 1.3 Scope

This Guidance Note is produced for the benefit of all transport undertaking members of RDG.

Those parts of it concerning the recovery, storage and identification of personal effects (Sections 5, 6 and 7) are of particular relevance to those responsible for emergency planning while Section 8 on return of personal effects is particularly targeted at those with responsibility for the humanitarian assistance elements of the incident response (as provided by Incident Care Teams). It is, however, recommended that both audiences familiarise themselves with the full content of the document.

## 2 Definitions

For purpose of this guidance document the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition in the context of this document
<b>Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)</b>	The processes and procedures for recovering and identifying deceased persons and human remains, along with the support given to family and friends during the identification process. The term 'disaster' in the context of Disaster Victim Identification should be taken as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>any incident involving a large number of casualties; and</li><li>where a Disaster Victim Identification Coordinator has been appointed.</li></ol>
<b>Incident Care Team (ICT)</b>	A team, comprising specially selected and suitably trained individuals, able to be quickly activated in the event of a major accident or other incident involving customers for the purpose of providing practical and emotional care and support for those affected.
<b>Investigatory Body</b>	Any organisation that has regulatory authority to carry out investigations. In the majority of rail incidents this is likely to be the British Transport Police (BTP) but also includes Home Office police forces, the Health and Safety Executive, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB).
<b>Personal Effects</b>	All items recovered following an incident from the site or elsewhere and which are likely to be owned or otherwise associated with any of those involved. These include electronic data held on laptops, mobile phones, iPods and other electronic devices, etc. (such as documents, music files, images etc.). Such items may have different values to different stakeholders, for example as evidence, for GDPR or security related purposes, for sentimental reasons or for purely financial reasons (or any combination of these).
<b>Police Family Liaison Officer (FLO)</b>	Police officer designated to facilitate an investigation into people believed to be missing and to assist the coroner to make an identification by collecting ante-mortem data.
	The primary purpose of a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) is that of an investigator. Their role is to gather evidence and information from the family to contribute to the investigation and preserve its integrity. The FLO also provides support and information in a sensitive and compassionate manner and secures the confidence and trust of families. FLOs will liaise with families of victims of crime (primarily homicide), road fatalities, mass fatality or other critical incidents, ensuring family members are given timely information in accordance with the needs of the investigation. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the National Police Chiefs' Council's 'Practice Advice – The Roles and Structure of Family Liaison' dated November 2020.

<b>Transport Undertaking</b>	Any person or organisation that operates a vehicle in relation to any infrastructure. For the purpose of this Guidance Note, use of the term applies exclusively to passenger rail transport undertakings, i.e. TOCs.
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## 3 Overview

### 3.1 Categorisation and status of personal effects

For the purpose of this guidance, personal effects will fall into one of two basic categories.

- i. **Evidential:** Personal effects which may be seized and retained by ~~an investigatory body~~ as having evidential significance to them as part of the investigation / evidence process.  
There are a variety of classifications of incidents which may result in the recovery / seizure of personal effects: crime scenes, suspicious fatalities, non-suspicious fatalities, unexplained fatalities, work-related deaths, as well as non-fatal incidents which may result in life threatening or life changing injuries.
- ii. **Non-Evidential:** Personal effects that have no evidential significance (interest) to an investigatory body and are not required by them for investigation / evidence purposes. Note that in the majority of incidents, 'Non-Evidential' items may not be identified as such at the time and all personal effects may be seized - it is only through investigation that items will be considered to be 'Non-Evidential'.

The incident site will automatically be declared a scene of crime when the incident is suspected to have involved a criminal act of some description (including terrorism). It may also be so declared in cases of 'unexplained' fatalities, work-related deaths or until it has been confirmed that there was no criminal negligence on the part of a transport undertaking, infrastructure manager or individual member(s) of their staff.

Otherwise, the incident will be regarded as non-suspicious with personal effects regarded as 'Non-Evidential', i.e. having no link to the cause or nature of the incident. However, in cases where there are fatalities, it may still be necessary for the police to initially retain personal items to assist with the identification of the deceased on behalf of the coroner prior to their subsequent return.

In the initial stages of any incident, it should be assumed that it is a scene of crime until the police advise otherwise and no personal effects should be removed from the scene under any circumstances without their agreement. In the event that any item has been removed, the fact that it has should be reported to the police with details of time / date / location and by whom, as well as the rationale for the removal.

It should be remembered that personal effects may come from a variety of sources, for example at the incident site or gathered by third parties (emergency responders, security staff, bystanders), and may only later come to light for return while they may also be recovered from anyone deceased at a hospital or mortuary.

## 4 Key responsibilities

### 4.1 Incidents in which personal effects are 'Evidential'

As all items from the incident scene may potentially constitute evidence, the BTP or other investigatory body will lead the recovery, secure storage, identification and repatriation of personal effects.

As this task may be resource-heavy, depending on the number of people affected and number of personal effects involved, the investigatory body may request assistance from the transport undertaking or infrastructure manager to provide support in terms of staffing and transport. It is important that transport undertakings recognise this and are prepared to provide such assistance by making suitably trained and competent staff who have volunteered and suitable vehicles available.

## 4.2 Incidents in which personal effects are confirmed as ‘Non-Evidential’

Where the incident site is declared not to be a scene of crime by the BTP and personal effects are not required as evidence by other investigatory bodies, their retention will not be necessary as part of any investigation (though may still be needed to help with identification of anyone who has died or has been severely injured). In this case, the lead for the recovery, secure storage, identification and final return of such items lies with the owning transport undertaking which should have in place contingency plans to cover this eventuality, though it should be noted that the BTP may assist in this task. A risk assessment will be required before work begins to ensure safety and staff should be briefed on the controls required.

# 5 Recovery from the scene

## 5.1 Liaison with investigatory bodies

Close liaison with the BTP or any other investigating body involved is essential for both incidents in which personal effects are ‘Evidential’ and those in which they are not.

## 5.2 Recovery by transport undertaking staff

Where transport undertaking staff are responsible for or otherwise involved in recovering personal effects from the scene they should be:

- i. Appropriately briefed (including to treat all items with both care and respect and what to do if they come across contaminated or specific items) by suitable trained personnel.
- ii. Provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the role, i.e. both the recovery of items from a potentially hazardous site and the handling of potentially contaminated items.
- iii. Provided with a means of systematically recording the exact location from which items have been recovered and supporting continuity which may be helpful in reuniting them with their owners.

Suitable numbers and types of vehicles and staff should be mobilised to the scene to collect and securely transport recovered items to a secure storage facility.

Section 10 addresses support and welfare provision for staff involved.

# 6 Storage

## 6.1 Responsibilities of transport undertakings

Where transport undertakings are responsible for or otherwise involved in storage of personal effects recovered from the incident site, they should ensure the following arrangements / facilities are identified and activated:

- i. A location for storage of personal effects. In addition to providing security against unauthorised access, this should also provide an environment that prevents as far as possible deterioration of items recovered.

- ii. Consideration should be given to what to store items in. In particular, as a general rule wet items should not be stored in plastic as this can lead to further damage via mould - paper bags are recommended as an alternative. All clothing should also be put in paper bags as it is likely to contain moisture. Ideally wet items should be dried as soon as possible.  
  
Boxes or containers of various sizes as may be needed should be provided along with items such as ziplock style bags. These may need the ability to be locked or sealed.
- iii. A secure electronic inventory of all recovered personal effects items should be set up and used to log what items have been recovered (sizes, description, colour, markings, condition, from where recovered, photo) and by whom they have been logged and photographed along with their storage location and any previous exhibit numbers and related agency. It should also have a provision for recording when the item was claimed and how the Person Elected to Receive Effects (see Section 8.1) wishes the items to be processed / returned. Staff should work in teams of two to provide reassurance that items being both received into and removed from secure storage are being correctly recorded.
- iv. A secure system and process for identifying owners of personal effects (see Section 7).
- v. A secure system and process to facilitate return of personal effects once identified and in line with the wishes of those who are to receive them (see Section 8.4).

## 7 Identification of personal effects

### 7.1 Categorisation of items

Personal effects can be divided into two categories 'Associated items' and 'Unassociated items'.

### 7.2 Cataloguing of items

To facilitate the return of personal effects recovered from an incident site to their owners or next of kin, catalogues should be produced for both 'Associated items' and 'Unassociated items'. While these are separate from the inventory used for internal purposes (see Section 6 iii)), the information contained within them will be a subset of that recorded in the inventory – description, photo, identifying markings, from where recovered, etc. A single catalogue should be used to list all 'Unassociated items' while a separate catalogue will be required for each individual for whom 'Associated items' have been recovered.

The primary purpose of the catalogue of 'Unassociated items' is to aid the identification of items and to whom they belong.

This is not necessary for 'Associated items' as their owner has already been identified, however the catalogue will still play an important role in documenting what items have been recovered for the individual concerned and allowing them/their next of kin to determine if and how they want the items returned (see Section 8.4).

### 7.3 'Associated items'

These are items that can be easily and unambiguously linked to a particular individual. They include personal items such as passports, bank cards and other forms of ID, items containing very clear names, data or images - such as documents, photographic or video recording equipment, mobile phones, laptops (where linkable to an individual) and similar - or readily identifiable items such as jewellery. Items such as these with clear ownership identifiable features may be returned much earlier than 'Unassociated items', investigations permitting, and could also include personal effects recovered from the mortuary or hospitals.

## 7.4 'Unassociated items'

By definition, these items will not have any readily identifiable markers relating to individuals and a system should be employed to match such personal effects with their owners. Such items include luggage, bags, rucksacks, etc. without labels, laptop computers (if not linkable to an individual), iPods, electronic devices, money and children's toys.

In order to sort / investigate / identify / mark and record / return the items being stored, the following should be considered.

- i. A secure location for sorting the items.
- ii. PPE assessment and supply of appropriate PPE, as some items may be contaminated with blood and other fluids / contaminants.
- iii. Staff and training to carry out the identification process.
- iv. A system to record and collate unidentified items and match them with potential owners – see Section 6 iii) and 7.2.
- v. A system / process to ensure the items handed back are genuinely the personal effects of the recipient (for example, demonstration of proof of ownership) and, if not being returned directly to them, then are being returned to someone confirmed as their chosen or legal representative or next of kin.

Suggested good practice is to open an 'Unassociated items' catalogue for 60 – 90 days during which time family members can submit claims for items. No items should be processed until the closure of the catalogue in case of dual claims. It is typically only in the event that two individuals are claiming an item that proof of ownership is required. If no resolution can be found between the two individuals, the item(s) should be securely stored with the issue to be resolved in court / mediation until a final decision is reached. Kenyon's<sup>2</sup> experience is that typically where two separate families are involved, one family will give first refusal to the other family. Where there tends to be more protracted arguments is when two members of the same family want the same item.

It should be assumed that the return of belongings to either the owner or their representatives may take many weeks if not months to achieve. In certain circumstances, some 'Unassociated items' may have to be disposed of. This may be because they are of a perishable nature, due to the scale of the incident or the level of damage, or because they remain unclaimed after all those involved in the incident have had a chance to claim them. However, this should be considered as a 'last resort' option with no decision made until all reasonable avenues to trace owners have been exhausted and after liaison with the BTP and / or any other investigatory bodies.

It is recommended that as a minimum, items should be retained for a minimum of 24 months (unless perishable), noting that there may be exceptions to this.

It follows from all the above that transport undertakings should be prepared for such an eventuality and have in place arrangements robust enough to accommodate a long-term commitment.

## 8 Return of personal effects

### 8.1 Handling of items – the need for sensitivity

The return of personal effects, in particular property which belonged to anyone now deceased, should be treated with utmost care and attention, remaining sensitive to the situation. Each individual or family group will react differently to the prospect of receiving items which have a direct, and often personal, link with the deceased.

<sup>2</sup> Kenyon International Emergency Services are an international company specialised in responding to emergencies (whether natural or 'man-made') and with whom RDG has worked closely.

Therefore, the method to be used to return items should never be assumed. The recipients should be fully engaged with the process, and their feelings and wishes taken fully into account.

It is recommended that families be asked to nominate a Person Elected to Receive Effects (PERE), as the sole person charged with any decisions regarding personal effects. This allows all correspondence and discussion relating to personal effects to be channelled through one individual per family. This is the approach successfully adopted by Kenyon.

## **8.2 Explaining why return of items may be delayed**

As already noted, it may be necessary to retain certain items for some considerable time to provide evidence for investigations such as inquests, health and safety inquiries, civil prosecutions and criminal trials. While there is no reason why efforts should not be made to identify owners of personal effects while such investigations are underway, their return may have to wait until these have been concluded. Survivors and families / next of kin, who are unlikely to have any prior knowledge of such matters, will understandably find such delays frustrating. Therefore, it is important that the process – and reasons for the retention of particular items – are explained to them. While it is reasonable to expect that the investigatory body- will lead on this matter, it is good practice for transport undertakings to check that it has been done and that the explanations have been sufficiently understood.

For incidents in which personal effects are ‘Evidential’, when the investigatory body is ready to return personal effects, its representative will contact the owners and / or their relatives or legal representative to make the appropriate arrangements.

In the case of a suspicious death, child death or work-related death, the BTP will appoint a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) who in turn will appoint a FLO. However, the BTP does not deploy a FLO at every rail fatality – only certain incidents as per their Fatality Management Policy. In all non-suspicious fatalities, a Fatality Investigator from A-FIT (BTP’s A Division Fatality Investigation Team) will be the officer-in-charge and it is more than likely they will be responsible for the return of any personal effects. Otherwise, there will be an investigative team working on the incident and the transport undertaking should assign a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to liaise with this team to co-ordinate return of personal effects items.

## **8.3 Return of ‘Non-Evidential’ items**

For incidents in which personal effects are ‘Non-Evidential’, an investigatory body may still take primacy dependent upon classification and nature. Otherwise, the return of personal effects falls to the owning transport undertaking. Support, advice and guidance can be provided by the BTP should this be required, dependant on the scale of the incident and the number of items involved.

## **8.4 Return of items – respecting the wishes of individuals**

As noted in Section 1.2, the return of personal effects to the owner or next of kin may be a highly emotional experience. It is therefore recommended the use of trained colleagues, such as those within Incident Care Teams (see Section 1.2), should be considered for this. Every step should be taken to ensure that the wishes of the owner or next of kin are known, understood, recorded and acted on to the extent possible and in general promote and support choice and control on their part. In particular:

- i. Do they wish to be involved in the return of personal effects? Not everyone involved in the incident will.
- ii. What personal effects the owner / family wishes to have returned from the produced catalogues of both the ‘Associated’ and ‘Unassociated’ items. If people are asked what items they want without the catalogue / photographs they may ask for items that have not been recovered.
- iii. In what state they want the personal effects to be returned, e.g. cleaned, restored to original condition, boxed, etc. (cleaned and pressed for clothing) or left as found, e.g. uncleaned.

- iv. In respect of ii) and iii) above, Kenyon have the following standard options for the return of personal effects, emphasising that it is important that wishes are recorded in writing:
  - 1. Returned as Is (uncleaned, providing the item does not present a biohazard).
  - 2. Cleaned (including boxing / presentation of items such as jewellery).
  - 3. Destroyed (not all families will want items back as a result transport undertakings will need a mechanism to securely destroy items in accordance with relevant legislation).
  - 4. Restoration of jewellery (restoration is only offered for jewellery up to an approved budget as there will be some items that just cannot be restored and offering carte blanche restoration is therefore not recommended).
- v. For health and hygiene reasons it may not always be possible to comply with requests for items to be returned uncleaned - in such cases, this will need to be explained sensitively.
- vi. Policy decisions about items that are not going to be returned, such as food, should be clearly communicated to all involved to help set expectations.
- vii. All items should be properly and sensitively packaged and presented. It is vitally important that all recipients are clear about what items are being returned so they are not surprised in the unboxing.
- viii. Whether they wish to collect items or have them delivered.
- ix. If collected, when, from where and how they wish this to be done, noting that a suitable location for this will need to be identified.
- x. If delivered, when, where and how they wish this to be done. While delivery options include by post / courier, there is a risk that the item could go missing, therefore it is recommended that delivery should be in person wherever possible, with consideration given to this being by an Incident Care Team member, either of the transport undertaking concerned or of another as part of the mutual support arrangements. Where a courier is chosen, this should be a trusted supplier who can guarantee items will not be lost. They need to be briefed about the situation and ensure items are handed over sensitively.
- xi. Who they wish to be present when items are delivered / collected (both from the transport undertaking / rail industry and for personal support, e.g. family members, friends, members of faith communities).
- xii. Any police or court exhibit tags have been removed.
- xiii. In cases where the investigatory body- is responsible for returning items, there may still be a request for assistance in the return of belongings from the transport undertaking (due to geographical constraints) but this will be under the direction and accompaniment of a resource from the investigatory body as described in section 8.2.

To avoid the need for families to have to liaise with multiple agencies, all personal effects should ideally be handled centrally so that all items returned are treated the same and go through the same process to ensure continuity and consistency. It may be that the BTP FLO or other investigatory body -resource (as described in section 8.2) provides items to the transport undertaking for processing with them then being handed back to the FLO to return.

- xiv. A system / process to transport possessions overseas to foreign countries.
- xv. Where owners or next of kin choose to have items returned in person by a member of the transport undertaking's staff, including by a member of the Incident Care Team, the person delivering them should ask if the recipient(s) wishes them to stay while they open the package or whether they prefer them to simply drop the item(s) off.
- xvi. In cases where the preference is for the item(s) to be dropped off, consideration should be given to making a follow-up phone call the next day.

## 8.5 Return of items – receipt

In all cases when personal effects are returned, they should be accompanied by two copies of a form / document (printed or digital) setting out details of the item(s) being returned, the date on which and method by which they are being returned and providing a space for the recipient to sign and date confirming receipt. One copy of the signed form should be retained by the recipient, who should be asked to hand the other back to the deliverer (if delivery is in person) or return it by post (in which case a stamped addressed envelope should be provided) or electronically if the item has been returned to them by post / courier. The receipt itself should be retained for a minimum of seven years.

It should, however, be noted that not all recipients will be happy to sign for receipt. In such cases it may be necessary to p.p. signature, documenting that the recipient did not want to sign for the item for the record.

# 9 Alternative arrangements

## 9.1 External assistance

It may be beyond their scope and resources of some smaller transport undertakings to set up and manage the process of identifying and returning personal effects from anything other than the smallest of incidents. It may be the case that even larger organisations would find resourcing and managing these tasks in respect of a large-scale incident beyond their capabilities, or else would prefer to have these elements managed by other means.

As part of the national Incident Care Team initiative, RDG contracts on behalf of its transport undertaking members with a major disaster management company which is very experienced in this type of work and able to provide all the logistical / administrative / recording keeping / management processes and resources, etc. needed to lead any / all stages of the process from recovering personal effects from the incident site, through storage and identification, to their ultimate return or disposal, liaising as necessary with the appropriate authorities.

This service can be activated through the agreement in place between RDG and the supplier and would be charged at the current rates to the owning transport undertaking.

Other external commercial organisations may also be able to provide this service.

# 10 Supporting staff involved in handling personal effects

## 10.1 Impact on staff

The handling of personal effects recovered from incident sites presents challenges for the staff involved. Some of these relate to the nature / condition of items, which may be contaminated (see Sections 5.2 and 7.4) where provision of suitable Personal Protective Equipment should be made. Staff should work in teams of two so that they can corroborate the actions taken with any item.

Beyond this, all those involved in the management of such items, from initial recovery through storage and identification and most particularly if personally involved in the returning of items to survivors / family members, may be significantly emotionally affected by the circumstances.

Support mechanisms, including advice on what reactions staff might expect to experience (i.e. what is 'normal') and when to seek help should be put in place.

Prior to being engaged in recovery and management of personal effects, staff should be proactively encouraged to make use of such support mechanisms and take the opportunity to discuss their experiences. Putting such arrangements in place from the outset may prevent the need for professional counselling further down the line.

Chain of Care arrangements should also be put in place both during and after deployment to monitor such staff, for example by asking line managers to be alert for signs that special support may be needed (such as anxiety, being easily distracted or short tempered, over-emotional, etc.), and make available to them access to qualified counsellors.

## 11 Keeping and retaining records

### 11.1 Record keeping

It is recommended that records of all catalogued items and details of when, to whom and by whom they were returned (or otherwise disposed of) should be retained for a minimum of seven years from the date of the incident.

## 12 Further information

### 12.1 Additional sources of information

Attention is drawn to the following:

- i. British Transport Police – Family Liaison Officer team – contact via BTP Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC). As of the date of this Guidance Note, the national BTP FLC role is performed by DCI Steve May (0161 256 5163 / 07818 010458 [stephen.may@btp.police.uk](mailto:stephen.may@btp.police.uk))
- ii. [Disaster Action](https://disasteraction.org.uk/support/) and specifically their leaflet *The Return of Personal Property* (available from them on request via <https://disasteraction.org.uk/support/>)
- iii. [Kenyon International Emergency Services](#)

# ***Rail Delivery Group***

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