

# Annex A: ACPO's Statement of Risk Principles

**Principle 1:**

The willingness to make decisions in conditions of uncertainty (i.e. risk taking) is a core professional requirement of all members of the Police Service.

**Principle 2:**

Maintaining or achieving the safety, security and well-being of individuals and communities is a primary consideration in risk decision making.

**Principle 3:**

Risk taking involves judgment and balance, with decision makers required to consider the value and likelihood of the possible benefits of a particular decision against the seriousness and likelihood of the possible harms.

**Principle 4:**

Harm can never be totally prevented. Risk decisions should, therefore, be judged by the quality of the decision making, not by the outcome.

**Principle 5:**

Taking risk decisions, and reviewing others' risk decision-making, is difficult so account should be taken of whether they involved dilemmas, emergencies, were part of a sequence of decisions or might appropriately be taken by other agencies.

**Principle 6:**

The standard expected and required of members of the Police Service is that their risk decisions should be consistent with those a body of officers of similar rank, specialism or experience would have taken in the same circumstances.

**Principle 7:**

Whether to record a decision is a risk decision in itself which should, to a large extent, be left to professional judgment. The decision whether or not to make a record, however, and the extent of that record, should be made after considering the likelihood of harm occurring and its seriousness.

**Principle 8:**

To reduce risk aversion and improve decision making, policing needs a culture that learns from successes as well as failures. Good risk taking should be identified, celebrated and shared.

**Principle 9:**

Since good risk taking depends upon quality information, the Police Service will work with partner agencies and others to share relevant information about people who pose risk or people who are vulnerable to the risk of harm.

**Principle 10:**

Members of the Police Service who make decisions consistent with these principles should receive the encouragement, approval and support of their organisation.