

Section 2: Recording equipment

This section provides advice about equipment used in conjunction with the questioning or recording of interviews with persons for indictable offences, non-indictable offences, and other matters. The section encompasses interview room equipment including portable DERIE equipment, field recording equipment, specification guidelines for portable recording devices (PRD) (regardless of whether the device is Service or privately owned), and management of equipment.

2.1 Interview room equipment (DERIE system)

The QPS has purpose built interview rooms with instructions and guidelines for the operation of the recording equipment can be found in the Operating Instructions for DERIE (available from the Radio and Electronics Section 'Equipment support' webpage on the Service internet).

The QPS digital electronic recording of interviews and evidence (DERIE) system records both audio and video information, resulting in two CDs (MP3 audio format) and two video DVDs of the interview. The process comprises of:

- (i) initialising the equipment;
- (ii) entering interview and occurrence data via the text keyboard;
- (iii) loading discs into the recording system;
- (iv) initiating the recording and conducting the interview;
- (v) concluding the interview and terminating the recording; and
- (vi) finalising the recorded discs.

At the conclusion of an interview session the equipment creates:

- (i) one master DVD (red) for archival and verification purposes;
- (ii) one interviewing officer DVD (blue) for presentation in court;
- (iii) one interviewing officer CD (black with audio only) for transcription; and
- (iv) one client CD (black with audio only) for the interviewee.

The DERIE system has a maximum continuous recording time of two hours. Upon finalisation, the metadata of each disc contains time, date, location and interview information. Both the DVD and CD can be replayed on QPS desktop and laptop computers and most commercial DVD or MP3 compatible CD players.

The DERIE/QPRIME interface (DERIE Plug-in) allows officers to upload metadata about the interview directly into QPRIME. The plug-in automatically populates relevant fields within a QPRIME Interview Report by extracting data entered onto DERIE discs at the commencement of an interview (see also 'DERIE Plug-in' Quick Reference Guide available on the QPRIME Online Gateway 'Quick Reference Guides' webpage on the Service Intranet).

POLICY

Whenever possible, only DERIE recording media should be used in conjunction with the DERIE system. In particular, the uniquely bar-coded red master disc is necessary for integration with QPRIME purposes.

The labelling and distribution of DERIE recordings is addressed in s. 5: 'Management of Recordings' of this Manual.

2.2 Field recording equipment

Field recordings are generally made by means of a portable recording device (PRD) (see SMD). The term PRD refers to any portable battery operated analogue or digital media recorder primarily used to record audio and/or video information.

Analogue formats refer to magnetic recordings where the recorded signal varies continuously and is analogous to the source acoustic or video signal waveforms. Typical analogue PRD formats include VHS-C, SVHS-C, Hi8 (video) and compact cassette or micro cassette (audio).

Digital PRD record audio and video signals as numerical values, saved as digital data in a variety of file formats. Typical digital PRD recordings produce AV formats such as Mini DV (digital tape), WMV, MP4, AVI and DVD, and audio only formats such as MP3, WAV and WMA.

Due to the obsolescence of the analogue format, digital PRD are the preferred option for recording field interviews and other matters.

2.3 Portable recording device specification guidelines

It is recognised portable recording devices (PRD) are used for a variety of purposes.

The following specification guidelines should be considered prior to approval and operational use of a PRD:

(i) the PRD unit should be capable of recording in a format, or being converted to a format, compatible with Service and other government department replay systems. Recommended recording formats include:

- (a) video (digital) – Video DVD or QPS compatible file formats (e.g. WMV, MP4);
- (b) video (analogue) – VHS;
- (c) audio (digital) – MP3, CDA or WMA formats; and
- (d) audio (analogue) – micro/compact cassette; and

(ii) where format conversion is necessary, it must be capable of being performed on regional computer equipment without the need for ongoing technical support;

(iii) the image resolution for PRD with video capability should be a minimum of 720p or 720i (1280 x 720 pixels);

(iv) the unit should be capable of recording audio in stereo mode and have a minimum quality setting of 128kbps and sample rate of 22 KHz;

(v) to simplify downloads, the unit should be capable of connecting with other devices via a digital link (e.g. USB/SD Card).

See also s. 4.2: 'Responsibilities of officers in charge of stations and establishments' of this Manual.

2.4 Responsibility for equipment

POLICY

The officer in charge of a station or establishment is responsible for the management of any electronic recording equipment and unused Service-issued recording media. Members are responsible for the security, care and condition of recording equipment issued to them or under their control and the reporting of any loss, damage or defect to the equipment (see s. 14.22: 'Responsibility for Service Equipment' of the Operational Procedures Manual).

Officers responsible for conducting station inspections are to ensure station security arrangements for the storage of equipment and recording media are adequate.

2.5 Equipment maintenance

Any equipment faults identified in a DERIE recording device must be reported to the relevant Radio and Electronics Section who are responsible for all repairs and maintenance to the system.

POLICY

A member or any other person will not carry out repairs or make adjustments to Service electronic recording equipment unless:

- (i) the member or other person is qualified to perform such work; and
- (ii) is authorised to perform such work by the Commissioner.

All electronic recording equipment should be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and recommendations. All maintenance should be documented and performed by authorised technicians.