Category C

A homicide or other major investigation where the identity of the offender(s) is apparent from the outset and the investigation or securing of evidence can be achieved easily.

The categorisation does not determine the resources that should be provided to the investigation. The nature of the requirements of every case must be considered. Once the facts of the incident are clear, a detailed assessment of the resource requirements should take place in accordance with the guidance set out in *ACPO (2005) Guidance on Major Incident Room Standardised Administrative Procedures (MIRSAP).*

Chief officers must ensure adequate financial provision is made for each investigation and, where possible, a suitable work environment is provided for officers working on the investigation. They should also regularly review the resources allocated.

3.3.3 GOLD GROUPS

Where an incident falls within the definition of a critical incident, the nominated chief officer (or other chief officer as appropriate) must declare the matter a critical incident and ensure that the investigative team know this. The chief officer should then arrange a Gold Support Group.

The functions, membership and content of a Gold Support Group will inevitably vary according to the nature of the major crime under investigation.

Membership of this group includes essential members; other members are included at the discretion of the chair.

Figure 16 Potential Membership of Gold Support Group

ESSENTIAL	DISCRETIONARY
ACPO Chair	Independent Advisory Group (IAG) Member(s)
Media Adviser	Specialist Adviser(s)
Line Supervisor of SIO	Forensic Adviser
The SIO or IO	Force Legal Department
BCU SMT Member	Crown Prosecution Service
Staff Associations	Specialist Lay Advisers
	Other Emergency Services
	Other Key Community Members
	Local Authority Officers

Terms of reference for the group should be to:

- Develop a gold strategy;
- Identify and address any risks or potential areas of criticism regarding the incident, matters leading up to it or matters since it occurred;
- Address risks with regard to the investigation;
- Consider issues for the victims or suspects, family or families and community or communities through family liaison strategies and community impact assessments;
- Consider impacts to or from any other agency or public body;
- Consider the media requirements of the force;
- Oversee, advise and, if necessary, direct the investigation and ensure access to expert advice;
- Consider the needs for resources to match the demands and meet appropriate requests;
- Identify any points for learning or change in policy (for debrief);
- Keep to the agenda – once agreed and set;
- Ensure full records are kept of any meetings or decisions;
- Satisfy the requirements for disclosure;
- Consider emerging legal issues.

The agenda for the meetings of such a group will depend on the situation, but a suggested agenda is:

1. Attendees/apologies;
2. Agreement of the agenda;
3. Terms of reference (to be agreed and regularly reviewed for fitness);
4. Minutes of previous meetings;
5. Actions from previous meetings;
6. Investigation update (from SIO);
7. Critical issues;
8. Forensic update;
9. Family/families update;
10. Community/communities update;
11. Issues for partner agencies;
12. Resources;
13. Media;
14. Issues regarding ethics (for consideration by the ethical group);
15. AOB;
16. Date of next meeting.

Although the Gold Support Group may be in place, the chief officer should ensure that the SIO has direct access to specialist investigative support. This could include peer support from within or outside the force (or the Police Service). In many forces the SIO achieves this within an SIO's Management Team while other forces' requirements are achieved through an Investigative Support Group.