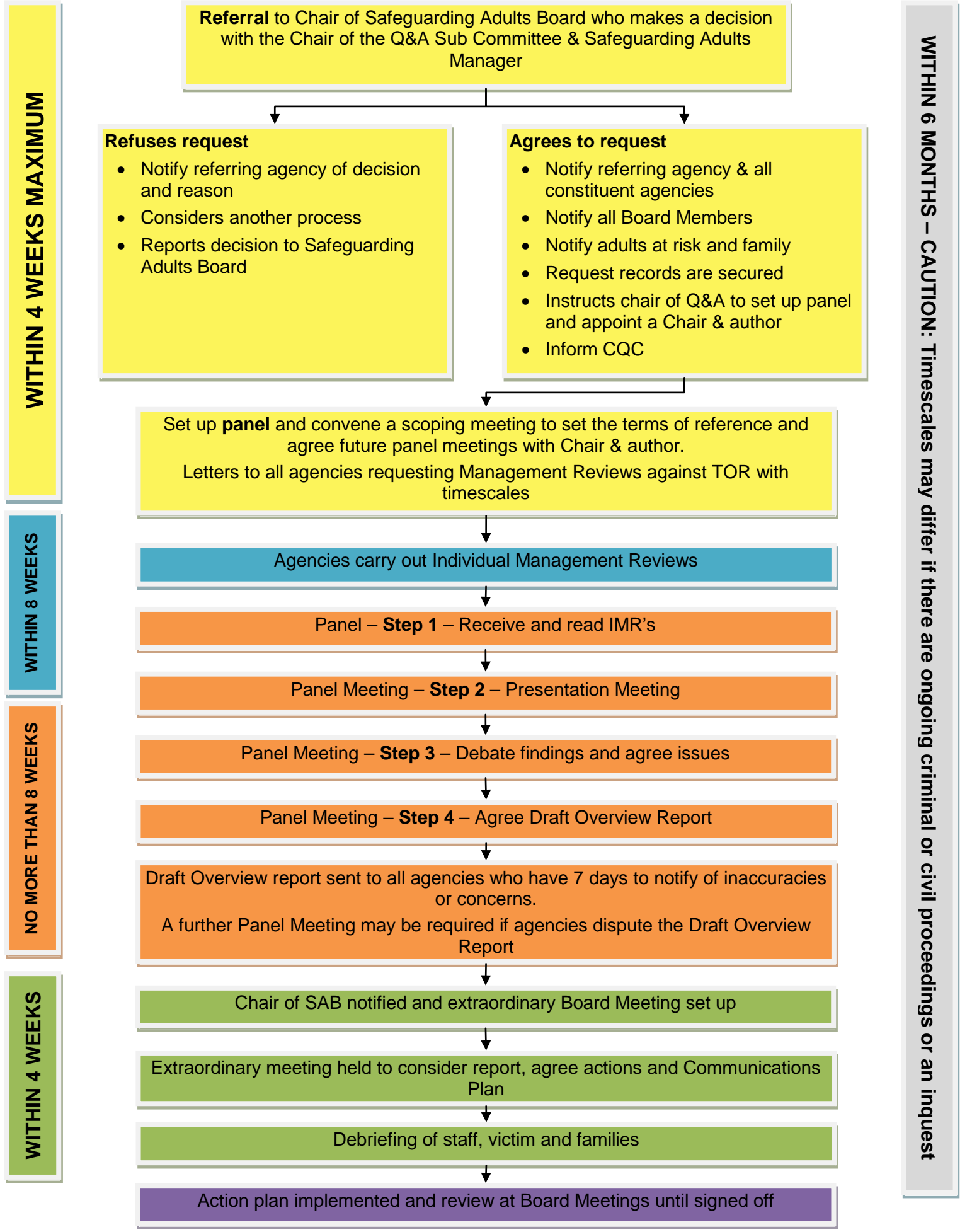


SERIOUS CASE REVIEW FLOWCHART



WITHIN 4 WEEKS MAXIMUM

WITHIN 8 WEEKS

NO MORE THAN 8 WEEKS

WITHIN 4 WEEKS

WITHIN 6 MONTHS – CAUTION: Timescales may differ if there are ongoing criminal or civil proceedings or an inquest

Referral to Chair of Safeguarding Adults Board who makes a decision with the Chair of the Q&A Sub Committee & Safeguarding Adults Manager

- Refuses request**
- Notify referring agency of decision and reason
 - Considers another process
 - Reports decision to Safeguarding Adults Board

- Agrees to request**
- Notify referring agency & all constituent agencies
 - Notify all Board Members
 - Notify adults at risk and family
 - Request records are secured
 - Instructs chair of Q&A to set up panel and appoint a Chair & author
 - Inform CQC

Set up **panel** and convene a scoping meeting to set the terms of reference and agree future panel meetings with Chair & author.
Letters to all agencies requesting Management Reviews against TOR with timescales

Agencies carry out Individual Management Reviews

Panel – **Step 1** – Receive and read IMR's

Panel Meeting – **Step 2** – Presentation Meeting

Panel Meeting – **Step 3** – Debate findings and agree issues

Panel Meeting – **Step 4** – Agree Draft Overview Report

Draft Overview report sent to all agencies who have 7 days to notify of inaccuracies or concerns.
A further Panel Meeting may be required if agencies dispute the Draft Overview Report

Chair of SAB notified and extraordinary Board Meeting set up

Extraordinary meeting held to consider report, agree actions and Communications Plan

Debriefing of staff, victim and families

Action plan implemented and review at Board Meetings until signed off

Serious Case Review

9.1 The purpose of a serious case review is not to reinvestigate or to apportion blame, it is to:-

- Establish whether there are lessons to be learned from the case in which local professionals and agencies work together to safeguard adults at risk.
- Identify what those lessons are, how they will be acted upon and what is expected to change as a result within a given timescale; and as a result to improve practice.
- Inform and improve local inter agency working
- Review the effectiveness of procedures (both multi agency and those of individual organisations) and make recommendations for improvement.
- To prepare or commission an overview report which brings together and analyses the findings of the various reports from agencies in order to identify the learning points and make recommendations for future action.

Serious Case Reviews are not enquiries into why an adult dies or who is culpable. These are matters for the Coroner's Court, Criminal Courts and employment procedures as appropriate.

Serious Case Reviews are not disciplinary proceedings and should therefore be conducted in a manner which facilitates learning and appropriate arrangements must be made for support of those staff involved.

Serious Case Reviews can uncover evidence that has not come to light during other investigations and the Serious Case Review Panel may need to decide how this new evidence will be addressed.

The Serious Case Review process has been divided into the following 4 stages

9.2 STAGE 1 - Criteria for Serious Case Review

The Safeguarding Adults Board has the lead responsibility for conducting a serious case review. A Serious Case Review should be considered if the following criteria are met.

- When an adult at risk experiencing abuse or neglect **dies** (including suicide), or it is suspected that abuse or neglect contributed to or was a factor in their death. In such circumstances the Safeguarding Adults Board should always conduct a review into the involvement of agencies and professionals associated with the adult at risk.
- When a adult at risk has sustained a potentially **life threatening** injury through abuse, neglect, sexual abuse or sustained serious or permanent impairment of health or development through abuse or neglect, and the case gives rise to concerns about the way in which local professionals and services work together to safeguard adults at risk.
- In circumstances involving the abuse and neglect of a **large number** of adults at risk or by multiple people causing harm. With regard to institutional abuse there must be clear evidence that standards of care are so low that all or the majority of service users are at risk.
- Where a case(s) gives rise to concerns about the way in which local professionals and services work together to safeguard adults at risk.
- Any case(s) where there are public interest issues and where the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board agree there is a specific need to carry out a review.

9.3 How to make a Referral

Any agency or professional can request a Serious Case Review by written representation to the Chair of the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board with a copy to the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Manager (the case must meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review). The referral must include all relevant details about the adult(s) at risk and the particular circumstances giving rise to the request. A SCR Referral form is available in the Appendices.

The Chair of Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board with the Chair of the Quality and Audit Sub Committee and Safeguarding Adults Manager will consider the circumstances and can make the following decisions:-

1. The criteria has not been met and the request denied.
2. The Serious Case Review criteria has been met and should proceed.

9.4 Referral Denied

In the event of a request being declined, the reasons need to be recorded in writing and shared with the referrer and the Safeguarding Adults Board. In such circumstances, the Chair of Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board could request a service to conduct a Management Review relating to the case/situation.

Management reviews are reviews undertaken by a single agency/organisation and are a critical analysis of that organisation's management of the case. Management reviews must also always identify lessons the organisation has learnt from the review and the actions they intend to take to address them. Management reviews will be reported through the Safeguarding Adults Quality and Audit Sub Committee.

9.5 Referral Accepted

In the event of a request being accepted, the Chair of Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board will:-

1. Notify the referring agency and all constituent agencies.
2. Notify all Board members, a Serious Case Review has been accepted.
3. Instruct the Quality & Audit Sub Committee to set up a Panel and appoint an independent Chair/Author.
4. Organise for all records, from all agencies involved, to be secured.
5. Where applicable notify the adult at risk and/or their family as appropriate.
6. Inform Care Quality Commission.
7. Notify other Safeguarding Adults Boards who have an interest in the case that Solihull is conducting a Serious Case Review.

Once a Serious Case Review has been accepted, no member agency should comment publicly upon the case without the express agreement of both their senior management and the Chair of the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board.

9.6 Serious Case Review Panel

The Panel should be selected on the basis of independence of the immediate management of the case under review. The Panel should be made up of a minimum of four senior officers from statutory agencies,

e.g. Solihull Adult Social Care
SMBC
Police
Health
Probation.

The Serious Case Review Panel (SCRCP) will have the following responsibilities from the outset:-

- Establishing individual terms of reference
- Setting timescales in line with these procedures
- Identify the agency reports required and notify the Chief Officers of those organisations.
- Identify the “evidence” required from each organisation/agency
- Identify the author of the Overview report (this will normally be the Chair of the Panel)
- Secure administrative support
- Identifying whether there are any other processes ongoing or planned and notify the relevant individuals/bodies or the plan to initiate a serious case review.
- Establish links with Police, CPS and/or Coroners where parallel investigations might be taking place/will need to take place.
- Set future Panel meeting dates and times.
- Agree the nature and extent of legal advice required, in particular; Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Human Rights Act.
- Develop and co-ordinate a Communications Strategy to ensure that the lessons learned can be shared and made public.
- Ensure an overview report is completed within agreed timescales which will require presentation at a Safeguarding Adults Board meeting.
- Consider how families can be involved in the case review. Each case is unique and it is therefore important that careful consideration is given to the best means of achieving this.

9.7 Terms of Reference

Better outcomes can be achieved if all the individual management reviews address the same questions and issues relevant to the case review being undertaken.

Time spent on this part of the process is crucial and will affect the quality of the individual management reviews and ultimately the overview report.

The terms of reference must be robust and SMART. It is important that all agencies are very clear about the scope of the review and key issues to be investigated with specific timescales.

The terms of reference should identify:-

- What appears to be the most important issues to address in trying to learn from this specific case.
- Which agencies and organisations are needed to contribute and who else should be asked to submit reports or contribute to the process.
- The means by which non-professionals should contribute to the reviews.
- The time period - i.e. how far back should enquiries cover and what the cut-off point is.
- What family history/background will help better to understand the recent past and present.
- The evidence required to support the report.
- How decisions were made when, by whom and reasons for these actions.
- Policies and procedures required, does the agency have them and if they were followed.
- Training required, was it provided, when and by whom.
- What risk assessments were conducted, when and by whom.
- What assessments were carried out, how were assessed needs met
- Resource issues, the context and how resource issues were addressed.
- Any racial, cultural, linguistic or religious identity and how these were met.
- Senior management knowledge and decisions surrounding this case.
- Inter agency working.
- The need for a coordinated approach if other parallel enquiries, such as Coroner's Court, Crown Prosecution, Domestic Violence Homicide Review (DVHR) etc, are being conducted or if other Safeguarding Adults Boards have an interest.

ALL STAGE 1 MUST BE COMPLETD WITHIN FOUR WEEKS

9.8 STAGE 2 - Individual Management Reviews

Individual Management Reviews will be requested using a standard letter (available in the appendices) from all the organisations involved. The Individual Management Reports will be required to address all the issues within the terms of reference, including the timescales. The terms of reference will inform organisations of the information required.

The aim of Individual Management Reviews is to look openly and critically at individual and organisational practice to see whether the case indicates that changes could and should be made, and if so, to identify how those changes will be brought about. They must include a conclusion with identified lessons the organisation has learnt from the review and the actions they have taken or intend to take to address them.

Reports should be prepared by a senior officer and should provide a critical analysis of the organisation's management of the case. Where this creates difficulties, particularly for smaller organisations, they should make this clear in their IMR and document their efforts to provide some independence into the process.

The reports will be written using the template provided (see appendices). Using the template will make it easier for the Panel to compare information under the headings provided.

The report must include:-

- Background to the referral
- Individuals the organisation/agency liaised with during the period of the work
- A chronology (template in the appendices) of significant events highlighting any discrepancies.
- An analysis of the organisation's practices
- An assessment of whether procedures were followed
- The organisation's/agency's summary of findings
- Any initial and ongoing risk analysis of the case
- Any identified lessons the organisation has learnt from their review and the actions they have taken/ intend to take to address them.
- Recommendations.

Reports such as Health Trust 'Serious Incident Reports', complaint reports etc may be combined with the Individual Management Reviews so long as they are relevant to the Terms of Reference.

Individual Management Reviews must be signed off by the Chief Officer of each organisation.

9.9 Involving Victims/Families/Significant Others

The Serious Case Review Panel must have considered the degree to which victims/families will be involved in the review and how families will be informed of this review.

Normally victims/families (family members who have played a significant role in the life of the service user) should be notified that the case review is taking place. Involvement can be:-

- Formal notification only
- Inviting them to share their views in writing or through a meeting.

The timing of such notifications is crucial particularly where there are Police Investigations. Under these circumstances, the decision about when to notify needs to be taken in consultation with the police.

ALL STAGE 2 MUST BE COMPLETD WITHIN EIGHT WEEKS

9.10 STAGE 3 - Panel Meetings

The purpose of the Panel and its meetings is to:-

- receive individual management reports
- cross reference information within the reports
- identify any omissions or discrepancies between reports
- collate a comprehensive chronology
- examine and identify relevant action points
- form a view on practice and procedural issues
- agree the key points to be included in the overview report and the proposed actions.

The process will normally take four separate steps.

1. Receiving reports and reading
2. Report presentations
3. Debating the findings and agreeing the issues
4. Agree the overview report.

9.11 Step 1 – Receiving Reports and Reading

All Panel members will have two weeks to read all the individual management reports before the presentation meeting.

9.12 Step 2 – Presentation meetings

- Individual management review authors will present key findings.
- This meeting provides the opportunity for omissions to be clarified, discrepancies in reports to be addressed and any other questions to be answered.
- Panel members should take this opportunity to fully understand all the issues central to this review.
- It is the first point at which key inter agency practice issues begin to emerge.

9.13 Step 3 – Debating the findings and agreeing the issues

The purpose of this meeting is for Panel members to discuss and debate the findings and agree the overall issues and make recommendations. At the conclusion of this meeting, it is essential that the Chair is clear on the overview of the case, lessons learned and recommendations for the Board.

9.14 Step 4 - Agreeing the Overview Report

The purpose of this meeting is for the Panel to approve the draft overview report for presentation at the Safeguarding Adults Board.

A copy of the draft Overview report should be sent to all agencies involved in the process for them to comment on any inaccuracies or concerns within seven days. This is to ensure that contributing agencies are satisfied that their information is fully and fairly represented. If an agency/organisation disputes the contents of the report the Panel will need to be reconvened to consider their representation. If the Panel decides not to change the report a note must be made in the report of which organisation disagrees with the report, what they are disputing and why changes were not made to the final report.

9.15 Overview Report

The Overview Report is compiled using the template within the appendices on behalf of the Safeguarding Adults Board and:

- summarises the case
- identifies lessons to be learned
- sets out recommendations
- contains an Executive Summary

The Overview Report aims to bring together the management reports and critically analyse the information and judgements within those reports.

The Overview Report should provide sufficient information for the reader to understand the sequence of events. It is vital that the recommendations in the Overview Report are few, focussed, and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely). These should fundamentally be multi agency recommendations and the severity of the recommendations will be identified by the timescales.

9.16 Executive Summary

The Executive Summary will be a public document and must be short, anonymous and based on the Overview Report. It should contain

- Purpose and scope of review
- Outline of review process including organisations involved
- A brief outline of the circumstances which led to the review
- A succinct account of inter agency practice issues identified
- Intended actions

ALL STAGE 3 MUST BE COMPLETD WITHIN EIGHT WEEKS

9.17 STAGE 4 - Safeguarding Adults Board Meeting

It is the responsibility of the chair of the Panel to inform the chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board in advance when the overview report is likely to be final so that a Board meeting can be set up to consider the findings.

It is likely an Extraordinary Board Meeting will need to be set up to consider the report and agree actions.

It is the responsibility of the chair of the Panel to formally present the report to the Safeguarding Adults Board. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Adults Manager to translate the recommendations from the report into an Action Plan.

This meeting must allow sufficient time for discussions amongst Board members on the case and to secure their commitment to implementing the reports recommendations and action plan.

The Board will be responsible for considering and agreeing the action plan which should be endorsed at senior level by each agency. The action plan should indicate:-

- Who will be responsible for various actions
- Timescale for completion of actions
- The intended outcomes of various actions and recommendations

- The means of monitoring and review intended improvements in practice and/or systems.
- Clarify to whom the reports or parts of the report should be made available and indicate the means by which this will be carried out
- Dissemination of the report and/or key findings to partner agencies.
- The Safeguarding Board will ensure that all recommendations are actioned and will request updates from agencies.
- The action plan will remain on the Safeguarding Board Agenda until all actions have been implemented.

9.18 De-briefing

All organisations must arrange for practitioners directly involved in the case to receive feedback once the Safeguarding Adults Board has approved the report and action plan in advance of wider dissemination.

It is also important that the victim/family should be notified of the outcome even if they didn't want to be involved in the process initially.

ALL STAGE 4 MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN FOUR WEEKS

9.19 Communications Strategy

Safeguarding Adults Board should consider carefully who might be interested in the outcome of reviews – elected members, staff, victims and their families, the public and media – and what information should be made available to each of them.

In making decisions about this, the board will need to balance the following considerations.

- The need to maintain confidentiality in respect of information contained within reports.
- The accountability of public services and the importance of maintaining public confidence in the process.
- The need to secure full and open participation from the different agencies and professionals involved
- The responsibility to provide relevant information to those with a legitimate interest.
- Constraints in sharing information when criminal proceedings are outstanding.