



# Theory of Change stalking response project

Interim report

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Sussex  
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Commissioner



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## **Section 1: Theory of Change Model**

The University of Gloucestershire was commissioned by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Sussex to carry out work to identify ways in which victims of stalking can be best protected from harm, and to use a *Theory of Change* approach. This approach constructs a model through which change to policy and practice is implemented, evaluated, and developed in an iterative process. One of the key objectives was to provide models through which there can be a consistent understanding of the crime, and a shared approach to reports of stalking across agencies. This includes consideration of a sustainable paradigm to support transformative practices and thinking. This report is part of that iterative process and is completed to present outputs for ongoing consideration by the Multi-Agency Stalking and Harassment Group (MASHG).

The first stage of the project was to construct core goals and activities and this was done by the Sussex MASGH. Taking account of the stated goals, the project researchers consulted with stakeholders and professionals from the Sussex area so they could understand current practice, any frustrations, and receive suggestions for future practice. The second stage involved organising the gathered data and mapping that against some examples of current practice in stalking responses and innovative solutions being used in other places. The third stage was to produce specific practical outputs for consideration by, and consultation with, the MASHG. This report does not take consideration of current policy in any particular organisation.

The following aims and outcomes are those identified by the working group; succinct iterations are in the theory of change process diagram on p7:

### 1.1 Ultimate goals as stated by the MASHG

- a. Potential stalkers are disrupted prior to causing harm or abuse to members of society
- b. Stalkers are prevented from causing further harm of abuse to members of society

*To prevent harm caused by stalking*

### 1.2 Intermediate outcomes as stated by the MASHG

- a. Decisions regarding family systems are considered in the context of the risk of stalking behaviours
- b. Decisions regarding safeguarding of individuals are done in the context of maximum possible known information of the perpetrator
- c. Victims of stalking can report in confidence, knowing that they will be believed and positive action taken
- d. Within and across agencies establish and disseminate best practice and knowledge exchange

*To consider a whole family approach*

*To employ effective intelligence gathering*

*To encourage early reporting by victims*

*To disseminate best practice across multiple agencies*

### 1.3 Activities as stated by the MASHG

- a. Mechanism for perpetrator information-sharing which establish consistent key messages that can be embedded across wider policies and processes
- b. Common and consistent method to identify motivating factors behind a stalker behaviour (rather than output behaviours)

- c. Establish common language for risk behaviours and characteristics of stalkers
- d. Establish professional common language for communicating about and with victims/survivors
- e. Identify all potential responses available to agencies — comprising of, but not limited to, enforcement, offender management, and primary/acute health based setting

*Common shared stalking intelligence report*

*Common risk assessment with escalation curve*

*Common and defined language*

*Responses pathways identified*

*Consistent response across agencies*

The activities are linked to specific outputs which are designed to facilitate the activities: specifically a stalking intelligence report document; defined language with the document; shared basic and more advanced risk models; time investment grid to aid risk assessment; shared sustainable training; response models; referral pathway document.

#### 1.4 Show causal links

- a. Shared understanding and language creates consistency
- b. Consistency creates trust and reliability
- c. Intelligence gathering reveals risk and activities, and prepares for prosecutions and interventions

*Sharing information gives a better overview of the situation*

*Early reporting prevents further harm*

*Up to date practice is best practice*

## 1.5 Examine assumptions

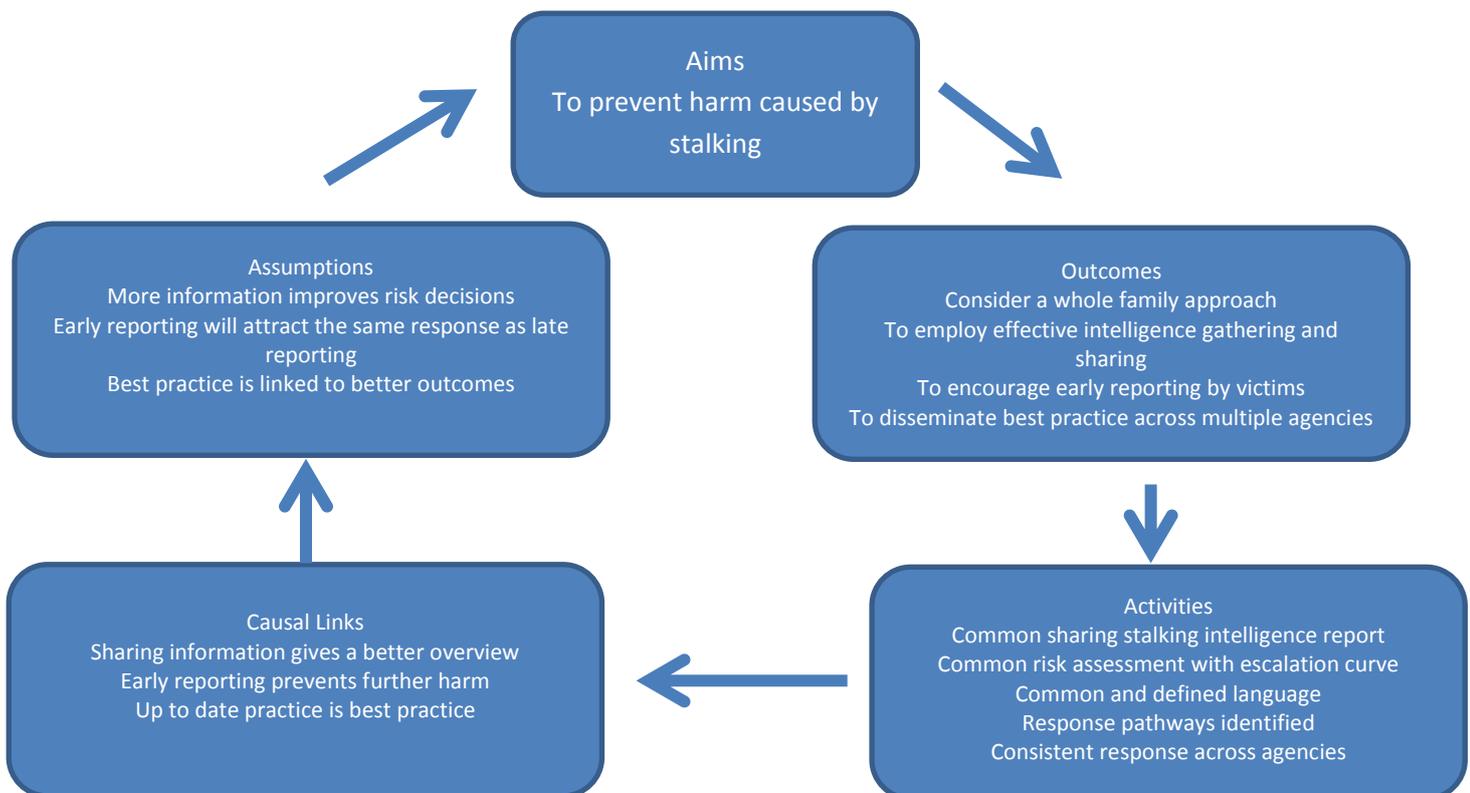
The project makes some assumptions:

*More information improves risk decisions*

*Early reporting will attract the same response as late reporting*

*Best practice is linked to better outcomes*

## Theory of Change



## **Section 2: Introduction and Statement of the Issues**

### 2.1 The scale of the problem

Stalking is considered a significant problem in the UK and many other jurisdictions, and the true scale of that problem is not known. Official statistics provided by the British Crime Survey for England and Wales 2009-2012 states that 5 million people experience stalking each year, with no official statistics on levels of cyber-stalking. One in six women and one in twelve men will be victims

each year, but this is believed to be an underestimation of the scale of the problem.

It is suggested by Paladin that only 1% of stalking cases, and 16% of harassment cases recorded by the police result in a prosecution. Research also shows that only 11% of stalkers receive an immediate custodial sentence (Paladin 2015), and only 9% for a S4a stalking offence.

Statistics collected by the National Stalking Helpline suggest that the majority of victims are female (80.4%) while the majority of perpetrators are male (70.5%). It is possible that women may be more likely to seek help from the helpline, but international research does support these ratios, especially in cases where there is higher risk of physical harm. It is found for example, that in the rejected stalker category, that where there has been a previous relationship between victim and stalker that the majority of victims will be female, and also in the predatory category which is relatively rare. Numbers are broadly more equal in some of the other stalking categories.

Sussex is home to over 1.5 million people and the averages suggest that could mean 128,000 potential stalking victims in any year. Stalking presents unique challenges to both professionals and victims, and knowledge around responding to both has improved significantly in recent years. Improvements in knowledge and understanding in themselves create pressures on professionals to improve their knowledge and understanding.

The increase in access to electronic means of communication and social media, as well as tracking and recording devices, gives more opportunities for stalkers, and it is not only determined stalkers who may start tracking victims. Research has suggested that most stalking will stop in a relatively short period of time, with up to 50% desisting very quickly. Those who persist after warnings, or continue after a two week period, are more likely to be persistent and in need of intervention.

## 2.2 The nature of the problem

Stalking is one of the most disturbing and insidious crimes. It involves persistent and repeated unwanted and distressing contact from the stalker to the victim, and also covert and overt monitoring and tracking of the victim. Due to the persistent nature of the offending, victims never know when they may be contacted or confronted and this may leave them in a near constant state of high alert that can have serious consequences to their health and wellbeing. The impact on their physical and mental health can be long term, as well as the disruption to their family, social, and work life. There are also justifiable concerns that in some cases victims may be assaulted or even killed.

For these reasons, stalking is more high profile as a negative pattern of behaviour than ever before. New knowledge and research brings pressure on organisations to be aware of how to respond to calls for assistance, to assess risk of harm, to deal with perpetrators and to prosecute offending.

Research has suggested that stalkers can be categorised through their motivation, and this may also have a link to their potential dangerousness (see s2). For example, those stalkers who have had an intimate relationship with the victim present the highest levels of concern, both in terms of their numbers and their potential threat. The most high risk category of stalker targeting strangers would be the predatory category, but the numbers are much lower. Both these groups are dominated by female victims with male perpetrators.

### 2.3 The impact on victims

Stalking victims can experience serious psychological and physical symptoms of traumatic stress and other forms of harm. The longer the duration of the stalking, the greater the potential damage to the victim. The severity of the harm is not directly related to the perceived seriousness of the stalking. Victims often express concerns that they will be physically assaulted, the stalking will never stop and that they will suffer long term anxiety and trauma.

Victims are often in a state of hyper vigilance due to the persistent and unpredictable nature of stalking and this too can have a detrimental effect on their health and wellbeing. It can also last for a long time after the stalking ends, maybe for a lifetime. Their sense of safety is seriously challenged and the amount of control they feel they have over their lives is severely compromised. There is also the fear of violence, and this is a valid fear. Stalking can result in physical assaults and even homicide.

#### 2.4 The legislation

The legislation is contained in The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (PHA) (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) and has four offences:

- Section 2 deals with conduct that alarms a victim or causes them distress
- Section 2A deals with the pursuit of a course of conduct in breach of section 1(1) and the course of conduct amounts to stalking
- Section 4 is where a victim is "put in fear of violence" by the actions of another.
- Section 4A deals with stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress

The HMIC and HMCPSI report published in July 2017 found that both the Police and the CPS had difficulty distinguishing between stalking and harassment. Police sometimes either wrongly recorded stalking as harassment or did not record it at all. The lack of a single well understood definition was considered a problem.

Stalking is not clearly defined in the legislation, and this may be a reflection of the diversity of behaviours and actions which may make up the stalking pattern in reality, there is a danger that strict definitions are likely to rule out, rather than rule in, some concerning behaviours and actions, and may work in favour of perpetrators. The repertoire of the stalker is important in assessing their potential risk, and it is often the case that much of what they do will remain covert and unknown. A working understanding of the difference

between harassment and stalking is advised, bearing in mind that harassment is considered a constituent part of stalking in the legislation.

## 2.5 Risk and stalking

The legislation helps to focus on actions and characteristics for the purposes of identifying that stalking may exist. This is very different to identifying risk. Risk is a complex and dynamic concept which is not a precise science, especially risk of violence (Shapiro and Noe 2015).

Predicting if and when serious assault or homicide may occur dominates UK police and professional responses to reports of stalking, and two key risk approaches are taken: an actuarial and a clinical approach. Both these approaches are used in some specialist stalking clinics, and both broad approaches have produced Risk Identification Checklists (RICs) to support a risk assessment, for example DASH, S-DASH and SASH.

These lists are made up of known behavioural markers which have been found in previous research to have been present in many homicides and assaults. Broadly, there has often been a practice of counting ticks to assess the level of threat or risk, though this is argued to be supported with a professional judgement of the individual circumstances of any case. This approach does not always reflect the knowledge we now have of stalking patterns.

In this report we will also look at a third supporting model to aid in assessing potential risk which is temporal sequencing. This model tracks the escalation in danger along a timeline of perpetrator behaviours and is linked to the 'rejected stalker' category.

It has been found in some studies that 27% of stalkers committed serious violence against their victim (ABH, GBH, Homicide). However, in the former intimate partner group serious violence was seen in 70% of cases. Monckton Smith *et al* 2017 and McFarlane *et al* 1999 found that the vast majority of men who killed or attempted to kill their ex-partners had stalked them prior to the violent act. There are studies which report lower levels and these

discrepancies are more to do with the definition to define what is stalking, than the overall prevalence of stalking patterns preceding violence.

These findings should not be interpreted as suggesting that victims of stalkers who are not ex-intimates are in no danger of physical violence. Stalkers from the resentful group pose an elevated risk of violence to their victims (Rosenfeld and Harmon 2002). Those stalkers in the predatory group who are preparing for a sexual assault are the most likely of the stranger stalkers to be violent (Mullen et al 2000).

It is suggested that the closer the prior relationship between the stalker and the victim, the higher the risk of physical violence. Rates have been found to be: Former intimate partners (56%); estranged relatives or friends (36%); casual acquaintances (16%); work related (9%); strangers (8%). It has been found that female stalkers are significantly less likely to proceed from explicit threats to action (Purcell, Pathe and Mullen (2001)).

It has been found that a duration of two weeks is a critical watershed. In one study it was found that around half of stalking will end within two weeks, but for those who stalked for longer than two weeks the average raised to six months, and longer (Purcell *et al* 2004). Victims who were stalked for less than two weeks were overwhelmingly targeted by strangers (75.5%), with only 3.1% of these victims being former partners of the stalker. When the stalking persisted beyond two weeks, victims were usually stalked by someone they knew.

## 2.6 Categorising Stalkers

Research has provided categorisations of motivation providing help for professionals in mapping potential risk. There are different categorisations, but the Stalking Risk Profile (SRP) (Mullen *et al* 2000) is the model being used in many jurisdictions. This body of work is an example of research and practice which may be useful in the Sussex wider approach to responding to allegations of stalking.

Stalkers are a heterogeneous group, and this can make risk assessment complex and difficult. Where there are stalking clinics, it is easier to use the clinical approaches as psychologists or psychiatrists may feed into risk panels. The SRP is based on clinical categories and the developments to risk tools draw from this position. However, for the purposes of this report we will assume no clinical expertise in the professionals dealing with stalking reports.

## 2.7 The situation in Sussex

A considerable amount of work has already been done in Sussex and targets have been set for improvements to services and for raising awareness with statutory agencies and the public. As part of her Police & Crime Plan, the Police & Crime Commissioner for Sussex (PCC) has acknowledged the growing problem that stalking has become in Sussex and has made the protection of vulnerable people and supporting victims to cope and recover from this abuse a key objective. Victims of stalking and harassment are some of the most vulnerable victims in Sussex and it is seen as a priority that they should receive the best possible service from the point of reporting the offence, through to the investigation and conclusion of the case.

One key development of the PCC's objective has been to establish a multi-agency stalking and harassment group that reports into the Pan-Sussex Executive Board. The group aims to get a better understanding of the demand; the prevalence and impact of stalking in Sussex; the mapping of current provision of services; the gaps of unmet need and the pathways for both victims and perpetrators and the joint working arrangements between agencies. In addition, the board is striving to review what works well locally and what areas there are for development while reflecting on best practice nationally and bringing together the learning from local reviews and enquiries.

The multi-agency group commissioned this study as a result of identifying a key area for improvement: the need for all agencies working in the stalking and harassment sector and beyond to have a common language and consistent understanding and recognition of stalking perpetrator behaviours

and trends. The study required expert support to devise a 'theory of change' to help map and identify an improvement route to take all partners from their current position to the desired place of communal understanding.

### **Section 3: Current Practice**

#### **3.1 Risk assessments**

##### *DASH and S-DASH*

The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Identification Checklist (RIC) is intended to support an officer's professional judgment about the potential risk of serious harm or homicide in any individual case where there has been a previous or current intimate relationship. It is in wide use across the UK by the police and other agencies but there has been little research until recently around its use or efficacy. The largest scale European study completed found that the DASH RIC is weakly predictive, and professional predictions based on DASH are little better than random in many cases. It is concluded that the tool offers limited value for correctly identifying high risk victims (Turner *et al* 2019). Clusters of risk markers are considered more helpful than numbers of markers for example, and it was found in an American study that where there is coercive control, violence, and a separation after co-habiting that risk of potential homicide rises by 900% (NCICP 2003). This cluster may only attract three ticks in the DASH RIC. It is also considered that the DASH RIC may present a danger that there will be too much focus on incidents failing to identify patterns (Turner *et al* 2019).

The DASH RIC was also evaluated in the UK (Robinson *et al* 2016) and as a result was developed to reflect better knowledge of domestic abuse. The revised tool being piloted does not require yes/no answers but encourages victims to say how often things happen to create a clearer picture of the nature and intensity of any abuse and has found that there are some benefits to this approach (Wire and Myhill 2018). The new approach focuses on time investment and may reveal patterns more effectively. The RIC may also have value in establishing what the risk markers have been found to be in research.

The S-DASH is the add-on to the DASH RIC and focuses attention on stalking patterns. The S-DASH suffers from similar issues to the DASH.

### *Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment (SASH) and Stalking Risk Profile*

Predicting risk in all stalking categories has also seen development of a screening tool which is in use in pockets of the UK. However, it is being used in all stalking clinics which are developing across England and Wales. This tool is known as SASH and is similar in presentation to other RICs like DASH. The main difference is that the SASH was developed by clinicians, for the use of non-clinicians like police officers. Originally called the Stalking Assessment Screen, this version (SASH) was developed in 2010 from a review of relevant stalking, intimate partner, and general violence risk assessment research. Following reliability and validity trials in Sweden and Australia, and feedback from users around the world, the tool was updated and published as the SASH in 2015.

The SASH is intended to be used as a triage tool that can help guide decisions about case prioritisation, not as a substitute for a comprehensive risk assessment that can aid in formulating risk management strategies. No specialist training or expertise is required to use the SASH although it is advised that users may find themselves able to apply the instrument more consistently and with greater accuracy if they complete standardised training. It may be that oversight by someone with the training may be sufficient.

The SASH uses a series of questions that capture the nature of the stalking behaviours to date, professional judgement about the perpetrator's mental health and substance misuse, the presence or absence of situational factors that might lead to contact between the victim and the perpetrator with the potential to aggravate the situation, the history of the perpetrator's offending such as physical and/or sexual violence and the victim's level of fear.

Evaluation of the tool found that "untrained police members were able to score SASH items in the same way 80% of the time, a rate that was significantly different from chance. This suggests that there was consistency. This study also

indicated that with appropriate training, the SASH could form part of a structured response to stalking that can ensure cases are treated appropriately by police and risk management strategies are put in place (Hehemann and McEwan 2017).

The Stalking Risk Profile which forms part of the wider body of work used in developing the SASH categorises stalkers by their motivation, and there are differing levels of concern attached to each category. There are five categories:

1. Rejected stalker — arises in the context of the breakdown of a close relationship. Victims are usually former sexual intimates but family members, close friends and those with a close relationship to the stalker can become targets. It is suggested that any form of intimate relationship (even a one night stand) should put the stalker in this category
2. Resentful Stalker — arises when the stalker feels as though they have been mistreated or that they are the victim of some form of injustice or humiliation. Victims are strangers or acquaintances who are seen to have mistreated the stalker.
3. Intimacy seeking stalker—arises out of a context of loneliness and a lack of a close confidant. Victims are usually strangers or acquaintances who become the target of the stalker's desire for a relationship.
4. Incompetent suitor — stalks in the context of loneliness or lust and targets strangers or acquaintances. Unlike the intimacy seeker their initial motivation is not to establish a loving relationship but to get a date or a short term sexual relationship.
5. Predatory stalker—arises in the context of deviant sexual practices and interests. Perpetrators are usually male and victims are usually female strangers in whom the stalker develops a sexual interest

The Rejected stalker category is the largest single category in terms of numbers, and the most likely to end in homicide. The predatory category is very high risk but there are fewer cases. The intimacy seeking category sees near equal numbers of male and female perpetrators. These kinds of assumptions can aid in a fuller risk assessment process.

### 3.2 Specialist Stalking Clinics

A number of 'stalking clinics' are in operation and being trialled in England and Wales. The stalking clinics use a dual actuarial (RIC) and clinical model in triage. The model for the clinical assessment is found in the Stalking Risk Profile and clinical professionals feed into a multi-agency panel considering triage and risk assessment. There are potential financial implications in this model dependent upon the agreement for participation of members of the panel. There are also specialist victim advocates attached to the clinic who will be trained in SASH and work in a similar way to IDVAs.

### 3.3 Temporal Sequencing: The Homicide Timeline

The homicide timeline was developed to show the journey taken in cases of intimate partner homicide and this is focused on the rejected stalker category. The timeline is based on research which identified a 'typical' chronology from over 400 cases of intimate partner homicide (Monckton Smith 2019).

The timeline is organised into eight chronological stages which show a risk escalation curve. The premise is that the final stages will be preceded by the earlier stages. It is best used in conjunction with other standard RICs like SASH and DASH, and gives a visual picture of how and why risk may escalate.

The typical eight stages are:

1. History: Perpetrator has a history of control, stalking and/or domestic abuse
2. Early relationship stage: Perpetrator seeks rapid commitment from the victim to a relationship
3. Relationship stage: The perpetrator believes they have a commitment from the victim and the relationship is dominated by control or domestic abuse
4. Trigger event: The perpetrator believes there is a threat to the relationship or their status
5. Escalation: there is an escalation in the frequency, severity or nature of stalking patterns, or controlling patterns
6. Escalation: There is an escalation in the frequency, severity or nature of stalking patterns, or controlling patterns.

6. A change in thinking: The perpetrator has a change in thinking and decides to resolve the issues with the victim. This may be to seek another relationship, or it may be the relationship is reinstated. The most dangerous point is if the perpetrator decides to resolve the issues through homicide. This is mapped onto the stalking risk model which cites this change in thinking as 'last chance thinking
7. Planning: The perpetrator will plan the homicide
8. Homicide: Can be with or without suicide, may involve children or others as well as the victim.

Risk markers from tools like SASH can be mapped onto the timeline to see an escalation curve.

This model for supporting risk assessment is currently being used in pockets across England, Wales and Ireland, and by different agencies. The National Probation Service has it in their training package and has received funding from the Ministry of Justice to use it in a nationwide project. Some Community Safety Partnerships, for example, in Wales and other parts of the country are developing it into their policy and practice, and the Garda Siochana among others have commissioned training.

The timeline is an additional tool to help professionals recognise risk and should be part of a wider risk assessment strategy.

### 3.6 The Domestic Abuse Champions Network model

This model is in use in the Thames Valley area and was developed and implemented by the charity Reducing the Risk of Domestic Violence. The premise is that professionals from a very wide number of agencies that may take disclosures of domestic abuse become 'champions' for that agency and are able to be consulted by other members. For example, a champion in housing may be able to give advice or the policy position of their organisation to others where needed. The champions are connected through events and online forums and have the opportunity to stay up to date on current best

practice, policy and local issues. There are well over 1000 champions within the network in Thames Valley police area, and this is growing.

The model could be adapted for a stalking champions network, but also the DA model captures the issues raised in the rejected stalker category. The charity running the project can consult with other areas, which they do regularly, on setting up such a scheme.

### 3.7 Shared policy

It has been suggested in the recommendations for some DHRs that a common basic policy is used as a template for all agencies, and provides consistency. Policy templates can then be adapted, keeping the basic content, to reflect the needs of any individual organisation.

## **Section 4. Outputs**

The following outputs are only suggestions and are designed to form a consistent response to stalking and harassment allegations, using consistent language across agencies, and understanding that a multi-agency response may be the most suitable

### 4.1 Language

Language is important; consistent use and understanding of terms can help with consistency. It may be useful to define some of the terms commonly used in stalking assessment for consistency. We have suggested the following terms may be helpful in building a common understanding of stalking and risk. It is possible to include more terms considered important by the MASHG.

**Fixation** — unnaturally strong interest in someone

**Obsession** - an idea or thought that continually preoccupies or intrudes on a person's mind

**Persistence** — repeated actions or behaviours, and a willingness to continue and ignore consequences

**Investment** – investment of time and effort to the stalking

**Escalation** – increase in frequency or severity of actions or behaviours, or a development in nature or repertoire or behaviours

**Timeline**- the typical chronological journey of a perpetrator

#### 4.2 Motivation model (stalking risk profile)

It may be useful to draw from the motivation model developed in research to categorise stalkers. The categories are listed below, but are explained in more detail under Section 2.

Stalking Risk Profile (as developed by Mullen, Pathe and Purcuss 2000)

1. Rejected
2. Resentful
3. Intimacy Seeking
4. Incompetent Suitor
5. Predatory

#### 4.3 Stalking intelligence report

It was suggested to us that consistency is important in the Sussex approach to stalking. For this reason, we suggest a Stalking Intelligence Report is used for all allegations of stalking and harassment across Sussex, and used by whatever agency takes the report. The SIR document is for discussion by the MASHG. We further suggest that it may be possible for this report to be visible to anyone from any agency with intelligence to add.

We recognise the difficulties with shared documents and shared access, but this would potentially be one of the more robust ways forward. Information sharing is a common problem arising from statutory Domestic Homicide Reviews. It could be that if shared access and ability to update the SIR is not possible, then there is a SPOC (Single Point Of Contact) to collate intelligence and updates and record all information in one place.

The most important reason for this is in the nature of stalking. It is a pattern, not merely a series of incidents. Updating information – even information that does not reach the bar for a criminal offence - may reveal escalation where it

might have been invisible before. It also gives opportunities to record potential de-escalation

#### 4.4 Risk assessment/escalation curve

Risk assessment is important and not only reveals safeguarding issues but can direct resources. We have discussed current RICs and the timeline escalation model in S3. In this section we provide for discussion by the MASHG more documents which may enhance risk assessment

Document 001 shows the typical escalation curve in the rejected stalker category. This can give an indication where the high points for risk are and also some indication of why these are high points. The model can be used in tandem with the processes being used already and provides context and a visual picture of the perpetrator's journey

#### 4.5 Time investment grid and stalking actions table

Time investment is a risk marker in stalking that has been found in previous research, as is the repertoire of the stalker. The time investment grid (Document 002) allows for recording of these two risk assessment issues.

#### 4.6 Training

Training is often a very vague term and not always focused and targeted in recommendations after homicides. We understand also that training can be expensive and resource heavy. For this reason, in our considerations we have tried to consider sustainable training activities.

Training should be considered as a focused event, both in the people being targeted and the level of specialist knowledge needed. The first consideration is who should be trained in what.

##### *Awareness training*

Awareness training is the most fundamental level and should be offered to all professionals who may take an allegation of stalking, or those required to

respond to it. We suggest that this type of training – which may be delivered in-house, or by VERITAS - should focus on the Sussex requirements in the *theory of change* model to create consistency. We suggest that any training around stalking awareness should include the terminology adopted by Sussex so that all those trained come out of that training knowing those terms and why they are used. All trainees should also have a clear idea of the referral pathway.

#### *Victim support training*

This is also a fundamental level. Trainees should know the basics of speaking with stalking victims to give them advice and collect best evidence. We suggest that this should include being able to identify stalking for a victim. Many may not name their experience as stalking, and many may feel paranoid or concerned. It is often the job of the professional to name stalking, where the victim doesn't, and it is a clear case. It should also be considered that because of the nature of stalking, an investigative mindset and professional curiosity should lead any conversations. Open ended questions for example, may elicit intelligence. Closed questions may be better at the stage of collecting evidence. Sensitive questioning and consideration of the manipulative nature of stalking, coupled with the very real fears of the victim, are important.

#### *Risk assessment training*

This is very focused and is a step above awareness training. It should include support for trainees in proper use of RICs, relationship chronologies, stalker repertoire and time investment. SASH training could be used for those who are more specialised, like support services and specialist police officers or others. Timeline training can be delivered to multi-agency groups, or can be given to trainers. Training trainers in specialised areas can be more sustainable.

#### *Advanced and specialist training*

This kind of training is usually reserved for those who will specifically benefit from it. Stalking is not only a public protection issue. Training can also be given to detectives investigating stalking in gathering evidence; detectives

investigating homicides where a forensic narrative may be crucial in presenting the antecedent to the case for example. Specialist courses like this are available.

#### *Cyber training*

Stalking and cyber activity co-exist. Specialist training in knowing what the more typical activities are, how to advise victims, and what to look for when investigating is becoming more crucial. It may be that cyber awareness is added into all stalking awareness training, or that specialists can be trained and advise others. This kind of 'stalking champion' may be made available to others who need somewhere to go to seek advice.

#### *Good practice dissemination*

Dissemination of good practice is a key part of 'soft' training. We will all be aware when something goes wrong and there is a death. It is possibly more important to publicise to professionals the success stories of people working in the field. It is impossible to know, in most cases, whether a death has been prevented. But there are many stories of good practice and successful outcomes which should give professionals confidence that what they do really matters. Dissemination of good practice stories can be crucial in building confidence and raising the issue of stalking. This is especially good in training sessions. It is important to know what is the right thing to do, as the wrong thing. This could be facilitated through a Stalking Champion Network.

#### 4.7 Domestic violence champions model (stalking champion)

As noted in Section 3, the model could be adapted to produce a stalking champions network which might provide an effective resource for professionals in Sussex.

#### 4.8 Leadership

Strong leadership can set the status of any particular issue. Experts in the field suggest that - to improve practice - the status of the crime needs to be raised. Championing the advancement of knowledge and practice in stalking should

have a high status leader. The PCC for Sussex has already given leadership in this area, and it is for other agencies to be consistent with her in this message. Frontline professionals should know that stalking is taken seriously, has resources, and is important to the organisation. Challenging stalking is a realistic homicide prevention activity and should have that status within agencies.

Maintenance of the profile of stalking should be the responsibility of someone. This has also come out in Domestic Homicide Review recommendations. Making sure the message is strong and repeated, and there is interest in ongoing stalking cases, and the knowledge development of those involved, could be enhanced with a high status lead. Keeping documents, posters, leaflets, training opportunities and peer support visible, replenished and accessible has been found to help with status.

### **Section 5: Pathways to Using Documents**

The overall focus for this report has been to show the nature and scale of the problem, to report on evaluations of current practice, and to make some recommendations for future practice. The next stage of this project is for the MASHG to look at the skeleton documents and consider whether, or how, they might be developed for use in Sussex. The outputs are suggestions for practice rather than finished documents. This is part of the *theory of change* process, to consider and re-visit.

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**Draft Documents**

**Document 001 Intimate Partner Homicide Timeline Risk Escalation Grid:  
Rejected Stalker Category EXAMPLE**

The table is split into three columns: The first shows the stage of the journey; the second gives information on the common characteristics present in cases more generally; the third column gives specific information on this case.

Stage	General characteristics and risk in a typical case	Characteristics and risk specific to this case
Stage One	<p><b>History of the perpetrator:</b> The perpetrator in a typical case has a history of controlling or stalking patterns. This could be found through a criminal record for such behaviours, but is more likely to be allegations from previous or current partners. This includes the history with the current victim.</p>	Perpetrator had history of stalking previous partners. History of control
Stage Two	<p><b>Pre-relationship behaviours</b> This stage is often characterised by the individual seeking rapid commitment to an exclusive relationship. Victims are subjected to intense attention and pressure to commit to an exclusive relationship. There may be evidence of early declarations of love, claims of great passion, early cohabitation, marriage, or pregnancy.</p>	Relationship started very quickly. They were committed in a relationship before actually meeting.
Stage Three	<p><b>Relationship behaviours</b> Dominated by controlling patterns. The relationship may have a number of the high risk markers from RICs, though control is one of the more significant. Control can be maintained through many means.</p>	Very controlling, with tracking and monitoring. Isolation and threats.
Stage Four	<p><b>Trigger event</b> This stage is a response to some challenge or threat to control. The most significant challenge noted internationally is separation or its threat. There are other challenges noted in research, for example, financial ruin, ill health, redundancy or retirement.</p>	Separation

Stage Five	<p><b>Escalation</b>  This stage seems the controlling person escalate their controlling behaviours in response to the challenge. This is often an attempt to re-establish control or to punish the victim for leaving, or attempting to leave. This can be through multiple and diverse methods- including anger, threats, crying and begging, menace or threats to suicide- often a combination of methods.  Stalking often starts in this stage. It can be to track and monitor for threats to the relationship, and to gather intelligence on the victim's activities.</p>	Stalking started immediately, calling, texting, hacking, turning up at victim's home, deliveries and reconnaissance.
Stage Six	<p><b>Change in thinking</b>  In this stage the individual may see that regaining control is not possible, or they may feel revenge is the only way to resolve their feelings of rejection or outrage. Some controlling individuals may leave at this point or move on to their next victim. Others, especially those who are vengeful will continue to proceed through the stages.  It is also possible that it is the victim who has the change in thinking. The escalation may become so intolerable, or they may feel so trapped that it is they who have the 'last chance thinking'. This is where suicide may be seen as an option.</p>	Victim was clear the relationship was over.
Stage Seven	<p><b>Planning</b>  This stage is where the decision to hurt or kill is acted on and the planning begins. It is here that stalking patterns may become very noticeable. The stalking may have more than one purpose; it may be to track and monitor, and gather intelligence - but also to hurt, trap, frighten, or harm.  If it is the victim who has decided to kill himself or herself then they may start planning for that at this stage.</p>	Stalking continued - reconnaissance
Stage Eight	<p><b>Homicide or serious harm</b>  This stage is the outcome of the planning, and in many cases may be homicide if that was what was intended or desired. It may be serious harm through assault or suicide.</p>	Homicide

This timeline can be matched to the DASH, S-DASH or SASH.

**Document 002 Time Investment Grid EXAMPLE**

Activities	Cyber Activity	Texting/ Calling	Approaches	Following/ Watching	Letters/ Gifts	Criminal Damage/ Disruption	Harassment	
	Social Media 1 hour daily	Phone Call 2x Daily 20 mins	Workplace 2x Week 1 hour	Home	Home 1x Week 1 hour	Home	Unwanted Deliveries/ Calls	
		Texts 6x Daily 30 mins	Home	Work	Work	Work	Approaching Others Daily 10 mins	
		Email/ Messaging 3x Daily 30 mins						
<b>Daily Total</b>	60 mins	80 mins	15 mins	Not Known	15 mins	Not Known	10 mins	<b>Daily Total= 3 hours a day</b>

This time investment grid is to give an idea how much time the stalker is giving to thinking about, and acting on, their campaign. Investment of time can indicate potential risk. Anything that takes time from the stalkers day and other activities is a concern. If the stalking is looking like a part time or full time job, there is a potential problem and risk to the victim. It should always be remembered that the stalker will probably be investing more time than will ever be identified.

In our example, we used a stalking case where a woman was stalking a former friend to try and force some contact. She would text, write letters, turn up at the victim's workplace, and try to get the victim's boyfriend to become involved. There were no threats or criminal damage at the time this form was completed.

Time estimates applied were:

- Social media= minimum one hour per day, extra evidence of activity will indicate more investment of time.
- One phone call= ten minutes investment where there is no conversation or the call wasn't answered.
- One text= five minutes per text minimum.

- Emails and social media messaging= we applied ten minutes per message
- Physical approaches should be measured taking consideration of the distance travelled, and the time to return. Driving, parking, walking, public transport times should be estimated, then doubled for a return journey.
- Following should take account of the amount of time followed, but also travel time as noted in the previous section
- Delivered letters and gifts should be assessed the same as following. So preparation, purchase of the gift, travel to the place it was left/travel to post office/time spent ordering.

Times should be applied to a daily or weekly total. We have used a daily total.

This total indicates whether the stalker is dedicating a lot of time to thinking about, and contacting the victim. Three hours per day is disruptive to the stalker's routines and thinking patterns and is a cause for concern. There should be intervention.