

**This document has been superseded by the
2023 guidance.**

**Available on APP [https://www.college.police.uk/
app/major-investigation-and-public-protection/
stalking-or-harassment](https://www.college.police.uk/app/major-investigation-and-public-protection/stalking-or-harassment)**

Stalking or harassment

Advice for investigators on effective investigation

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Annex A – Stalking or harassment risk assessments



Annex B – National services for victim support and advice for professionals investigating stalking or harassment offences



Annex C – Stalking or harassment potential lines of enquiry



Advice for investigators on effective investigation

Key points

Successfully identify stalking or harassment

- Think stalking first using the stalking mnemonic **FOUR**. Are the behaviours **F**ixated, **O**bsessive, **U**nwanted and **R**epeated?
- In cases of harassment, review and reconsider why the case does not meet the description of stalking.

Investigate thoroughly

- Establish any pattern of behaviour and relevant history, reported or otherwise.
- Follow all lines of enquiry, whether they point towards or away from the suspect.
- In cases of stalking or harassment it is likely there will have been use of technology to facilitate the behaviour, and reasonable lines of enquiry must be pursued.

Care for the victim

- Be compassionate and understanding in your approach.
- Do not make judgements about a victim's behaviour – focus on the evidence.
- Remember that safeguarding the victim and reducing risk take priority over a criminal justice outcome.
- Recognise that victims may be traumatised and in need of specialist support.
- Remember that victims may be entitled to an enhanced service under the **Code of Practice for Victims of Crime**.
- Keep the victim updated on relevant stages of the investigation (eg, arrest, charge or release).

Introduction

This advice will assist investigators responsible for a case once it has been transferred following the initial police response. This may be investigators working within public protection or CID, or in some forces, local policing investigators who retain stalking or harassment cases following an initial response.

Stalking has been found to be prevalent in the lead-up to the killing of females by males (Monckton-Smith et al, 2017).

This advice should be read in conjunction with the **advice to police responders** and the authorised professional practice (APP) for the following areas:

- **Investigation and Investigative interviewing**
- **Domestic abuse.**

Content

This advice has the following sections:

- **Definition**
- **Advice and support**
- **The joint protocol**
- **Victim care during the criminal justice system process**
- **Risk assessment**
- **Risk management**
- **Investigation**
- **Case building**
- **Civil and criminal orders**

Definition

While there is no specific legal definition of stalking, **existing advice** and the **2018 National Police Chiefs' Council and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) protocol on the appropriate handling of stalking or harassment offences** use the following description to better understand stalking:

A pattern of unwanted, fixated and obsessive behaviour which is intrusive. It can include harassment that amounts to stalking, or stalking that causes fear of violence or serious alarm or distress.

Stalking or harassment investigations can be complex, requiring a full investigation of the history of incidents to identify patterns of behaviour. A failure to recognise a course of conduct or patterns of seemingly innocuous behaviours as stalking or harassment will leave the victim at risk of harm.

The knowledge and skill of the investigator will be important in determining the parameters and scope of the case, and those identified as stalking should normally be investigated by a detective.

Advice and support

Single point of contact for stalking or harassment cases

This is usually an ancillary role carried out by a police officer or member of police staff, normally at a supervisory level, who will take responsibility as the police single point of contact (SPOC) for stalking or harassment offences and policy in their force area.

The functions of a police SPOC are to help improve investigation outcomes by providing support and guidance to investigators in stalking or harassment cases. They can support investigating officers to signpost victims to an appropriate specialist victim support service, either nationally or where they exist locally.

The joint protocol

The protocol on the appropriate handling of stalking or harassment offences between the National Police Chiefs' Council and the CPS was revised and released in May 2018, along with an evidence checklist. You should refer to the **key source document** when conducting investigations into stalking or harassment offences.

Victim care during the criminal justice system process

Build trust

- Be compassionate and understanding. Engage positively to build trust and establish a rapport, which will give the victim confidence in the criminal justice process.
- Remember that safeguarding the victim and reducing identified risks take priority over a criminal justice outcome.
- Explain how the case will be investigated, and agree a plan on how often victims will be updated on the case and how to raise concerns and provide information on the Victims' Right to Review Scheme.
- If the report is of non-recent behaviours, reassure the victim that their reasons for not having reported before are understood and not uncommon. Record the reasons.

Understand and respond to the victim's needs

- Conduct a victim's needs' assessment in line with the Victims' Code, identify victim needs and vulnerabilities including safeguarding, and meet these needs as far as possible. Do they need a female/male interviewer, intermediary or interpreter?
- Ensure necessary consent has been obtained for referral to specialist support.
- Where consent for referral has been given, follow up to ensure a successful referral is made and maintain contact with their case officer.
- Ensure a **Victim Personal Statement** is taken as it will be important in highlighting to the court the impact of the crimes on the victims and their family to be able to be part of the decision making on issues such as bail, sentencing and orders.

- Engage with the victim to discuss the range of **special measures** available to them.
- Engage with the CPS to discuss the needs of the victim and how they can be supported throughout the criminal justice process.
- Victims may interpret difficulties or delays in proceedings as their report not being believed, and withdraw their support for a prosecution. Explain the reason for any delay, and emphasise that difficulties do not imply that the victim is not fully supported.

Support services

- Victims may be traumatised as a result of stalking or harassing behaviours, and your victim may have diverse needs. Officers should identify the appropriate support service to support the victim to achieve an effective outcome.
- **Annex B** provides information about national support services for victims and professionals investigating stalking or harassment offences
- Where the CPS decision is not to charge or ends all proceedings in relation to the victim, the victim should be informed of their right to have the case reviewed as part of the **Victims' Right to Review scheme**.

Risk assessment

Officers and staff should seek advice from public protection specialists if they have any concerns, as the safety of the victim, children, other family members or friends involved is of paramount importance.

The most commonly used tools for identifying and assessing risk are summarised in **Annex A**. Investigators should follow their force policy on which risk identification or assessment tool to use. The risk assessment will require frequent review as circumstances change during the course of an investigation.

- Remember that safeguarding the victim and reducing the risk take priority over a criminal justice outcome.
- Understand the risk of harm posed in order to prioritise safeguarding and offender management opportunities.
- Conduct a risk assessment – understand the risk of harm to the victim through the patterns of behaviour demonstrated by the suspect.

- Use the risk assessment to inform safety planning and risk management.

Domains of stalking risk

From the limited available research, the following may assist in understanding stalking risk domains. These are based on:

- the relationship between stalker and victim
- the type of motivation driving the stalking
- the stalker's risk factors
- the victim's risk factors
- the legal and mental health context (Mullen et al, 2006).

The following domains of risk drawn from research assist in providing a structured approach to assessing and managing the risks in the stalking situation and may form part of a clinical based assessment such as the Stalking Risk Profile (MacKenzie et al, 2009).

Risk assessments concerning stalking generally include questions related to:

- Violence
 - Is a risk of violence indicated?
 - If so – is the risk of imminent violence indicated (potentially within the next couple of hours)?
- Persistence
 - How long has the behaviour been present?
 - Has the behaviour continued beyond two weeks post-separation (within ex-intimate cases)?
 - How frequent and intense are the behaviours?
 - Are there periods of concentration in the behaviours (ie, significant dates, anniversaries)?
 - Are the behaviours escalating?
- Reoccurrence
 - If the stalking behaviours have stopped for more than six months – why? (The suspect could be in prison.)
 - What might make the behaviour start again?
 - If it starts again, how will the behaviour manifest itself?

- Psycho-social damage to stalker
 - How is this affecting the stalker?
 - Is there evidence of suicidal ideation/self-harm?
 - What destabilises the stalker?
 - What disinhibits the stalker?
 - Do they have a diagnosis of a major psychotic/delusional disorder?

Research regarding stalking typologies

There are a number of stalker typologies defined in research (Mullen et al, 1999), which will help secondary investigators understand the stalking behaviour and motivation of the stalker. These typologies will help inform the subsequent approach to risk management strategies. One such typology research model is used as part of the **Stalking Risk Profile** and another is based on research by Sheridan and Boon (2002).

Risk management

- Where stalking is identified there is likely to be a high risk of harm, and a range of safeguarding interventions should be considered. See College **Principles for the management of serial and potentially dangerous perpetrators of domestic abuse and stalking**.
- Explore support available from local risk management teams, eg, integrated offender management, management of sexual and violent offender units, and other multi-agency risk management panels/processes.
- Some forces have developed and introduced multi-agency teams as a way of managing suspects of stalking with potential clinical needs – you should familiarise yourself with the local referral pathway to obtain this resource during the investigation.
- The initial **advice product for police responders** identifies a number of specific safeguarding tactics for consideration and the **Public Protection Tactical Menu of Options** can be used to inform the risk management plan.
- While there is developing practice in the use of publicly available safeguarding and evidence-gathering apps for victims of stalking or harassment, there is no current product which could be recommended for national use in all

circumstances – use local force policies and procedures to inform the use of available apps.

Perpetrator motivation

Understanding the motivation of the suspect will be important to the investigation and the approach to risk, and will influence (where appropriate) the type of multi-agency response. For example, recognising an individual's delusional and obsessive fixation on another person can enable appropriate referral to mental health services which could assist (see **APP Mental Health and Multi-agency public protection arrangements and managing potentially dangerous persons**). Similarly, some communications by the suspect to the victim (eg, those which are threatening or bizarre) can provide evidence of a suspect's disturbed state of mind, which may be relevant to mental health professionals in assessing risk and providing support and treatment to a suspect.

You should understand the referral pathways into local perpetrator intervention programmes, where they exist in your area, and make a referral, where appropriate, to the service.

In assessing mental health issues, be aware of the following:

- Mental illness is not a defence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- One should not assume that the alleged behaviour is a direct outcome caused by any underlying mental illness or that the suspect is unable to form the requisite mens rea to engage in such behaviour. To reiterate, the law assumes legal competency and capacity unless demonstrated otherwise.
- PACE guidelines state that suspects with a mental illness diagnosis may still be fit to be interviewed and are clear in relation to interviewing vulnerable suspects (**PACE Code C Annex G**), provided:
 - if the suspect has been assessed by a medical professional, mental health practitioner or registered psychiatric nurse while in custody and there is evidence of psychosis or enduring or acute major mental disorder at the prevailing time, then that would prevent the suspect from being interviewed or detained in police custody.
- The law (and the Mental Capacity Act 2005)

presumes capacity in the individual, and the suspect has the right to decline any mental health input from services/practitioners, unless they were made subject to a compelling order through application of the Mental Health Act. Capacity is specific to the person, decision and situation.

- Although it may be of legal and clinical utility to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the suspect's psychological and emotional state, this will depend on their consent.
- The question as to whether the suspect is legally competent is a question of law for a court to decide on application by the defence should they wish to raise the issue of 'insanity' – in which case the **M'Naghten Rules** are applicable.

Investigation

The **Joint NPCC and CPS Stalking or Harassment Evidence Checklist** (the Checklist) was developed to achieve improved and consistent performance in the identification, investigation and prosecution of stalking and harassment cases. This checklist should be used by investigating officers in the preparation of the case material. Additionally, the **Joint NPCC and CPS Checklist** will be relevant in domestic abuse cases and should be referred to.

Investigative strategy

- Develop an **investigative strategy** to ensure you follow all lines of enquiry, whether they point towards or away from the suspect.
- Review the history of the stalking or harassment behaviour to ensure the full picture is known to inform risk and investigative requirements.
- Check the initial recording of the offence is appropriate and ask yourself 'Why is this not stalking?'
- Be mindful that there does not have to be violence or threats of violence for a case to be stalking.
- Your investigative strategy should include deadlines for the completion of tasks as well as milestones for any future reviews of the investigation by a supervisor. In particular, your strategy should set outlines of enquiries to be pursued and dates for completion of:
 - identified risks and how these will be addressed
 - strategies relating to scenes, forensics,

search, victim and witnesses, intelligence, communications, covert methods and the suspect, as appropriate

- names of any police personnel involved in dealing with risks, what they are responsible for and deadlines for completing actions
- methods of ensuring that relevant information is available to any officers required to attend further incidents
- whether any specialist staff have or will become involved and their role.
- The investigation strategy should become a signed and timed record of all considerations and decisions made throughout the investigation. It should also be a record of supervision and will ensure that any decisions taken can be audited and that accountability is transparent throughout.

Timeline

- Include a timeline of the patterns of harassing or stalking behaviours, which will:
 - provide historical context to the case
 - inform further lines of enquiry
 - assist in providing a detailed chronology for the case, which can be transposed onto an MG5.
- The benefit of using a timeline is to:
 - help determine whether the suspect is engaged in a tactical and strategic course of conduct
 - identify the source of any behaviours and whether these behaviours and impact have already been corroborated
 - identify what reasonable lines of enquiry exist, or are outstanding, to increase the opportunities for an evidence-led investigation.
- The timeline has utility in a reactive and proactive capacity.
- Victims and those affected by the stalking behaviour can also provide evidence in the form of diaries, which can be added to the investigative timeline.
- The timeline can also help to conceptualise the picture of risk in a particular case.
- Historical information from a range of sources (eg, police, social care, health and probation) can also be added to give clarity about the suspect's risk status. This can also be converted, where appropriate, into evidence

of bad character should an application be made by the prosecution to introduce this into a case. It also assists in suspect and witness interview preparation by highlighting to investigators possible defences, points to clarify and other lines of enquiry (see [Annex C](#) for an example timeline).

Power of entry and search

- In summary cases of stalking, always consider the power of entry and search under section 2b. If this power is not used, a rationale should be recorded on an investigation log.

Pre-charge and post-charge bail

- In all stalking cases you should consider use of powers under the Bail Act 1976 and the use of conditions that will assist in safeguarding the victim during the investigation and post-charge.
- Ensure that the victim is updated on the use of bail and any conditions imposed on the suspect relevant to their safety.

'Substantial adverse effect'

- In cases of section 4a stalking offences (**fear of violence or serious alarm or distress**) it will be essential to evidence how a 'substantial adverse effect' has been caused to the victim. It will be necessary to ask victims how they have changed their behaviour in response to the alleged behaviour or activities.

Cyber and online offending

- The **advice to police responders** to ensure an effective response to reports of stalking or harassment contains practical advice to provide to victims regarding online offending.
- The basis for seizing victims' devices will be with consent, and the purpose and objective will need to be explained to the victim. Where it is necessary to seize the victim's mobile phone, consider issuing the victim with a replacement device if it is their only source of contact in an emergency.
- The prevalence of cyber and online enabled offending and the skill of perpetrators in the use of technology are increasingly prevalent in stalking or harassment cases. A focus on digital investigation and a clear search strategy will aid investigators to capture evidence early and minimise loss of material. Investigators should seek specialist advice

from a local digital media investigator where necessary. (See [Annex C](#) for a link to lines of enquiry and social media.)

- Investigators should be aware of the CPS guidelines on prosecuting cases involving communications sent via social media, and cyber and online crime prosecution guidance.

Case building

The police and the CPS will work closely together to develop cases that have ensured all possible investigative opportunities are explored.

Investigators should consider early investigative advice where appropriate, which is a valuable tool for informing the direction of an investigation.

- It is important to evidence the impact on the victim and how the behaviour may have had an effect of their daily lives.
- In cases of section 4a, investigators need to be mindful that safeguarding activity implemented with the victim may have had an impact, eg, police interventions which have changed victims' daily routines should not be relied on as evidence to support a 'substantial adverse effect'.
- Explore the motivation, behaviours, background and context of the suspect as well as the affect on the victim in order to ensure a balanced consideration of the account provided and to enable all available evidence to be gathered.
- Include the provision of any completed risk assessment in the case file as sensitive material.
- Be aware of any early defence of insanity which could be raised in a police interview. Relevant case law can be found at [Loake vs CPS 2017](#).
- Where you are unclear or uncertain whether the behaviour is stalking or harassment, where the case is complex or involves challenging issues, or where it involves stalking; consider contacting the police stalking or harassment SPOC and, where appropriate, seek early investigative advice from the CPS.

Disclosure

'Disclosure refers to providing the defence with copies of, or access to any prosecution material which might reasonably be considered capable of

undermining the prosecution case or of assisting the case for the accused. It is a crucial part of a fair trial.' (CPS, 2018)

Applying the disclosure test

The disclosure regime set out in the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA) as amended by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 must be scrupulously followed. This means that only material satisfying the disclosure test (capable of undermining the prosecution case or assisting the case for the accused) should be disclosed to the defence. Under no circumstances should there be blanket disclosure. The disclosure of material that does not satisfy the disclosure test is a breach of the CPIA.

Guidance for investigators on the rules of disclosure can be found at:

cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/legal_guidance/National-Disclosure-Standards-2018.pdf

Victim unable to support the prosecution

- If the victim, for whatever reason, is unable to support a prosecution, safeguard them from risk and ensure that, as far as possible, their needs are met before they leave police care.
- Be aware that if the suspect is a partner, member of the victim's family or a carer, the victim may need additional safeguarding and support.
- If the victim wishes to withdraw their support and fully retract their account, the following points will be required in a statement from the victim and a report should be made to the CPS as per the protocol referred to earlier:
 - fully explain the reasons for withdrawing support
 - if the original account has to be amended, provide an explanation as to why this is the case
 - state whether the original complaint was true
 - set out whether the complainant has been pressurised to withdraw their complaint by any person
 - details of those with whom the complainant has discussed the case, especially anyone who has advised them (eg, solicitor)

- confirm whether the complainant is pursuing any civil action.

- Engage with the CPS to discuss the possibility of proceeding without the victim's evidence and/or support, and explain to the victim that a prosecution may still proceed and the implications that may arise.

Discontinuance

- Explain any decision to discontinue the investigation and the rationale to the victim within 24 hours of the decision being taken, clearly, with care and wherever possible, in person. Explain to the victim that should further evidence become available, the case could be re-examined.
- Ensure the suspect is also informed, giving consideration to the increased risk this may present.

Prosecution

- Investigators should engage with the CPS if it has been established that there are parallel proceedings with the family or civil courts. Stalkers will sometimes use court proceedings to perpetuate their stalking behaviours, and early consultation will be essential in these circumstances to ensure information is shared appropriately.

Civil and criminal orders

There are a range of **civil and criminal orders** available across different crime types. They will often be essential to ensure the ongoing safety and security of victims of stalking or harassment offences, and consideration should be given to an order, where appropriate. The following orders may be applicable to stalking or harassment offences:

- stalking protection order (available 20/01/2020)
- restraining order
- non-molestation order
- domestic violence protection orders
- injunction to prevent nuisance or annoyance.

Investigators will need to explain to victims that restraining orders specifically may be applied for on conviction or, where possible, on acquittal of any offence.

The police should provide information to support an application for a restraining order to the prosecutor as early as possible, and this should be recorded on the evidence checklist and MG3 during early consultation with the CPS or the MG6 in a case file. Since the correct application of orders can be a significant part of managing the risks to a victim and in preventing further stalking or harassment, the investigating officer should provide information to support relevant conditions for an order, for the information of the CPS.

Victims should be consulted and the CPS should be informed whether or not the victim has approved the suggestions.

Officers should also make recommendations, where appropriate, relating to the length of time an order should be in place, taking into account issues of risk.

Suggested conditions for orders could be:

- not to contact a victim directly or indirectly by any means
- not (either alone or by means of agents) to directly or indirectly contact, harass, alarm, distress or molest the victim and others as appropriate
- not to interact or engage with the victim or the victim's network by any social media means – this includes 'liking' posts, following profiles or retweeting comments
- not to knowingly approach within the boundary of (specify locations and attach a copy of an annotated map to clarify parameters) any premises where the victim and others as appropriate reside, work or frequent. Investigators should be mindful to keep specified locations as wide as possible
- not to contact the victim directly or indirectly by telephone, fax, communicate by letter, text, electronic mail or the internet, or to send or solicit to send any correspondence whatsoever
- not to retain, record or research by any means, private, confidential or personal facts, or information relating to the victim and others as appropriate
- not to use a different name or to change his/her name without immediately notifying the court or investigating officer.

In addition, in ex-intimate cases victims and/or suspects may raise the issue of child contact. It's important that conditions give adequate protection but don't usurp the function of the family proceedings court, so conditions in those cases might be phrased as:

- not to contact the victim directly or indirectly by any means, save for the purposes of child access through specified solicitors or as directed by the family proceedings court.

Conditions should be drafted as clearly as possible in unambiguous language and address the particular risks presented in each case, and should not have an impact on the victim. They should not be a repetition of routine clauses or bail conditions. One issue to be addressed is whether or not it is safe to include the victim's address on the order. The purpose of the order is to protect the victim (or other named person) from any future stalking or harassment or fear of violence, rather than to punish the defendant.

The order can be granted for a specified or indeterminate period of time, therefore, leaving the onus on the defendant to satisfy the court that they no longer present a risk to the victim. When preparing an order, consideration should be given to specifying the period of time that it should remain in force.

In particular, it is essential that the order is checked for accuracy – both in terms of content and spelling. Where the drafting of the order is incorrect, it may not be possible to deal with breaches appropriately.

While prosecutors will remind the court to inform the police if an order is granted by the court, it is important that copies of the order are uploaded onto record management systems so that they are included on the Police National Database. Where appropriate, orders should be shared with specialist victim support agencies and the probation service.

Breaches of orders

When breaches of orders occur, the police will take prompt and robust action to deal with the breach and consider any further stalking or harassment offences. A case file should be prepared in a timely manner.

A conviction, acquittal or the granting of an order in relation to a stalking or harassment offence effectively ends that course of conduct. Investigators will need to establish whether a fresh course of conduct has occurred following the breach of any order that has been granted by a court.

Stalking protection orders, when available, will provide courts with the power to impose positive requirements and prohibitions on alleged suspects of stalking offences.

References

CPS (2018) Rape and serious sexual offence prosecutions – Assessment of disclosure of unused material ahead of trial. Available from [cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/RASSO-prosecutions-Assessment-disclosure-unused-material-ahead-trial_0.pdf](https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/RASSO-prosecutions-Assessment-disclosure-unused-material-ahead-trial_0.pdf) [Accessed 25 September 2019]

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Sheridan, L.P. and Boon, J. (2002) Stalker typologies: Implications for law enforcement. In: Boone, J. and Sheridan, L. (eds) *Stalking and psychological obsession: Psychological perspectives for prevention, policing, and treatment*, pp 63–82. Chichester: Wiley.

Annex A

Stalking or harassment risk assessments

DASH stalking screening tool (S-DASH)

The current DASH risk assessment, routinely conducted as part of the initial and secondary policing response, incorporates a question that asks the victim whether the perpetrator is ‘constantly texting, calling, contacting, following, stalking or harassing them’. The form explains that as these are risk factors for serious harm, if the answer is ‘yes’ to any of these questions, an extra set of 11 questions should be answered.

As the joint inspectorates found they were being used in isolation outside the domestic abuse context they commented:

‘the S-DASH contains the questions present in a DASH that identify the risk factors of the behaviour exhibited by the perpetrator. However, these are insufficient on their own to properly assess the risks to the victim and should be read in conjunction with questions regarding the effect of the behaviour on the victim. The S-DASH does not currently contain these extra questions.’

This risk identification tool has not been piloted or evaluated to date.

Guidelines for Stalking Assessment and Management

The Stalking Assessment and Management (SAM) guidelines manual was created by Kropp et al (2011¹). It is based on structured professional

¹ Kropp, P.R., Hart, S.D., Lyon, D.R. and Storey, J.E. (2011) The development and validation of the guidelines for stalking assessment and management. Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 29(2), pp 302–316. DOI: 10.1002/bsl.978.

guidelines for assessing stalking. This tool includes a number of assessment items that are categorised under three main areas: the nature of stalking, the perpetrator’s risk factors and the victim’s vulnerability factors.

The administration of the SAM includes a number of steps, including: identifying information, factors present, scenarios of stalking, case management plan and case prioritisation. This assessment is predominantly used as part of the secondary response.

An evaluation was undertaken by the developers of the tool on inter-rater reliability, and some aspects of validity ([ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21374706](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21374706/)).

A second evaluation has also been conducted: The Reliability and Predictive Validity of the Guidelines for Stalking Assessment and Management (SAM) researchgate.net/publication/323745657_The_Reliability_and_Predictive_Validity_of_the_Guidelines_for_Stalking_Assessment_and_Management_SAM

Further testing is currently taking place in the UK.

Stalking Risk Profile: guidelines for the assessment and management of stalkers

The Stalking Risk Profile (SRP) is a structured professional judgement tool for assessing and managing risk in stalking cases. Developed in response to the limitations of other tools when assessing the multifaceted nature of stalking; the SRP adopts an innovative approach to risk assessment that enables the assessor to determine not only the risk of violence, but

also the separate risk domains of persistence, recurrence and psychosocial damage, according to the stalker's motivation.

This assessment is predominantly used as part of the secondary response.

Some evaluation of validity/reliability and impact on reoffending has been carried out by the developers of the tool (McEwan et al, 2016²).

Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment

The Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment (SASH) is not a comprehensive risk assessment tool. For individuals who are identified as presenting a moderate or high concern, more comprehensive assessment using the SRP or a similar instrument is strongly recommended as part of any risk-management plan.

This tool was developed by the same researchers as the SRP, and there are licensing conditions which need to be considered should forces decide to use the tool. The SASH is a 'short tool designed for use by frontline workers such as police or health workers, to help them determine whether a particular stalking case requires more intensive response'.

There is one validation study in the Netherlands (Hehemann et al, 2017³)

The HMI 'Living in Fear' report stated, 'Two of the forces visited used stalking screening tools, such as the screening assessment for stalking and harassment (SASH). Although not a comprehensive risk assessment tool, these screening tools do allow forces to identify the cases of most concern and allow decisions to

be made about future action to protect victims and address offending behaviour'.

Digital Risk Assessment of Stalking and Harassment tool (DRASH)

The DRASH was developed by the National Centre for Cyberstalking Research at the University of Bedfordshire from an evidence base of historical cases. It is a professional judgement tool with a training requirement but is not an actuarial risk assessment. DRASH acts as a baseline for risk management in cyber harassment cases.

This risk assessment, specifically relating to cyber harassment, has not been piloted or evaluated to date.

Further reading

The following link is to the Risk Management Authority website and may be useful for further reading in relation to stalking or harassment risk tools: rated.rmascotland.gov.uk/risk-tools/internet-stalking/

² McEwan, T.E., Shea, D.E., Daffern, M., MacKenzie, R.D., Oglloff, J.R.P. and Mullen, P.E. (2016) The Reliability and Predictive Validity of the Stalking Risk Profile. Assessment. DOI: 10.1177/1073191116653470.

³ Hehemann, K., van Nobelen, D., Brandt, C. and McEwan, T.E. (2017) The reliability and predictive validity of the Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment (SASH). Journal of Threat Assessment and Management, 4(3), pp 164–177.

Annex B

National services for victim support and advice for professionals investigating stalking or harassment offences

This annex provides information about national support services for victims, and includes organisations that may be used by professionals investigating stalking or harassment to provide relevant safety advice.

National victim specialist support services

The National Stalking Helpline

The National Stalking Helpline is run by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust. Call their helpline on **0808 802 0300**.

Calls are free from all landline telephones and also from mobiles. Calls will not be shown on BT landline bills.,

If you would like administrative information or for any request that is not linked to advice, please email info@stalkinghelpline.org

Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service

Paladin is a trauma-informed service established to assist high-risk victims of stalking in England and Wales. Their unique team of accredited independent stalking advocacy caseworkers ensure that high-risk victims of stalking are supported and that a coordinated community response is developed locally to keep victims and their children safe.

Email: info@paladinservice.co.uk
Secure email: info.mailbox@paladin.cjsm.net
(Please note that you can only use this account if sending from a secure email account.)
Telephone: **020 3866 4107**

Veritas Justice

Veritas Justice aims to raise awareness, train, support and provide advocacy for individuals affected by stalking. We provide practical support and advice to service users and professionals.

Telephone: **01273 766 633**

Email: info@veritas-justice.co.uk

Action Against Stalking

Action Against Stalking (AAS), formerly known as Action Scotland Against Stalking, is an umbrella charity which champions the rights of stalking victims in the UK and across the globe.

Victim short-term crisis support and signposting – if you or someone you know feels you are in danger, please complete the AAS Referral Form and contact them with the completed form on support@actionagainststalking.org

If you need help filling in the form, please download their guide

Protection Against Stalking

protectionagainststalking.org – Protection Against Stalking works jointly with relevant agencies to increase awareness of stalking and harassment to ensure victims receive all the protection and help they need to rebuild their lives and live free of fear.

Protection Against Stalking has created a directory of local specialist victim services.

Network for Surviving Stalking

scaredofsomeone.org/ – The charity Network for Surviving Stalking (NSS) represents UK stalking victims and their families. Established by stalking victim Tracey Morgan in 2000, NSS listens to the views of victims and professionals and uses their knowledge and experience to help others. NSS helps run the National Stalking Helpline.

NSS cannot offer one-to-one advice about individual cases. If you need help about a stalking case, please see the list of organisations on its useful contacts page.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Telephone: **020 7091 0014**
email **info@suzylamplugh.org**

suzylamplugh.org – This organisation aims to create a safer society and enable everyone to live safer lives. It works to reduce crime (and the fear of crime) against the person by campaigning for policy and legislative change, research, training and advice.

Refuge

Modern technology gives perpetrators ever-growing ways to stalk, isolate and control women using the tools of everyday life.

Whether you are a survivor of tech abuse or a professional working with a survivor, the resources below will equip you to understand how to use different devices, apps, websites and networks safely. Click on the link below to see the list of guides and tips relevant to you.

[refuge.org.uk/our-work/forms-of-violence-and-abuse/tech-abuse-2/resources/](https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/forms-of-violence-and-abuse/tech-abuse-2/resources/)

Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline **0808 2000 247**

Please note they cannot respond to emails by telephone as safety may be compromised. If you wish to speak to somebody, please call the number above.

They will respond to your email within five working days. The National Domestic Violence Helpline can only offer limited information by email as they don't have the resources to provide ongoing support or in-depth information in this way. If you require an urgent response or need in-depth emotional support, please contact the freephone 24-hour helpline on **0808 2000 247**. When you email the helpline it's very important that you specify when and if it is safe to respond, and to which email address. Your safety is their main concern.

Victim Support

Telephone: **0808 16 89 111** **victimsupport.org.uk**
Helpline for anyone affected by crime.

Other national services

National Stalking Clinic

The National Stalking Clinic is a specialist service providing assessment and consultation for those who have engaged in stalking behaviour. It is an internationally recognised service that is part of the North London Forensic Service. It is led and managed by Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust.

It provides:

- detailed assessment of stalkers, with regard to risks of violence, persistence, recurrence and psycho-social damage
- guidance as regards appropriate management of cases
- individual treatment programmes for stalkers
- assessment and treatment of stalking victims.

The service involves assessment by both a consultant forensic psychiatrist and a forensic psychologist with special expertise in the field of stalking.

Referrals are taken from health, social services and criminal justice agencies on a fee-per-case basis. Assessments of stalkers can take place in the community or in custody. Treatment programmes for stalkers are undertaken only in the setting of the community clinic and require a compulsory

basis, such as a condition of parole or of a community order.

Tel: **020 8702 6104** Fax: **020 8442 7264**
Email: nationalstalkingclinic@nhs.net

Fixated Threat Assessment Centre

The Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC) is the first joint NHS/police unit in the United Kingdom. Its purpose is to assess and manage the risks from lone individuals who harass, stalk or threaten public figures. Many such people are suffering from serious mental illnesses and have fallen through the care net.

FTAC helps such people get the care they need and, by doing so, decreases any risk they might pose, not just to prominent people, but to the individuals' families and to those around them.

FTAC is a unit within the Metropolitan Police Service. It has a national remit.

If you wish to contact FTAC, please email ftac@met.police.uk

National Centre for Cyberstalking Research

The extensive knowledge and understanding built up by the National Centre for Cyberstalking Research, at the University of Bedfordshire, has provided the basis for decisions, plans and training programmes by UK government and official bodies, including the National Police Chiefs' Council stalking working party, which seeks to understand, counter and legislate for cyberstalking.

Telephone: **01234 400 400**
(9am–5pm Monday to Friday)
Email: nccr@beds.ac.uk

Annex C

Stalking or harassment potential lines of enquiry

Possible lines of enquiry specific to harassment or stalking reports

Behaviour to consider

- Keeping observations on the victim's home, their place of work or other places frequented.
- Gaining entry to premises associated with the victim.
- Interference with the victim's refuse bin.
- Interference with the victim's vehicle, eg, attaching tracking devices.
- Incidents that the victim is aware of but that have not previously been attributed to stalking or harassment.
- Repeatedly searching for the victim online.
- Visiting their social media profiles or those of their friends.
- Making alias accounts to follow the victim or others associated with the victim.
- Using URL proxies to hide their activities.
- Hacking or taking control of mobile phone, social media, internet shopping accounts, etc.
- Posting or sharing intimate images or abusive material without consent.
- The 'Internet of Things' and how that enables suspects to 'drop in', monitor, track, control (eg, connected Bluetooth speakers, CCTV equipment, location services).

Gathering evidence

- History of previous incidents of, and preparation for, harassment by the suspect.
- Search of intelligence and police databases (eg, PNC, VISOR and PND).
- Identify data communications providers.
- Retain and attribute digital evidence from telephones, answerphones and computers.
- CCTV and ANPR.
- House-to-house enquiries.
- Financial enquiries.
- Victim's own records or diaries.
- Other evidence collected by the victim including correspondence from the suspect.
- Evidence and records kept by other witnesses.
- Information from other agencies.
- Physical evidence such as documents, handwriting, fingerprints and sources of DNA).
- Victim's medical history in relation to physical or psychiatric injury.

Example timeline

Investigative strategy type	Time/date	Event	Source of information (including ref no)	Comment	Corroborated? (Yes/No/exhibit ref)	Line of enquiry	Action completed
5, 6	13/05/2015	Suspect was arrested for harassment of a neighbour. Neighbour states suspect pointed a crossbow at her. Crossbow was discovered while searching suspect's bedroom. Suspect has numerous firearms' magazines/ leaflets.	Niche ref 456789	Victim MG11 states suspect has 'threatened to shoot her'	Yes	NFLMS Checks	
8, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11	16/08/2018	Victim reports being bombarded with text messages from unknown number, including threats to kill and implying the victim is being watched.	Niche ref 123465	Screenshots provided by victim	Yes Ex no AB/01 Victim MG11 dated 17/08/2018	Telecoms RIPA Forensic Mobile Phone Downloads CCTV? ANPR?	

The timeline should fit in with the basic investigative strategy – certainly in more complex cases where policy decisions and actions are recorded through referencing (but where the threshold for HOLMES has not been reached).

1. Scenes
2. Victim
3. Witnesses
4. Suspect
5. Search
6. Arrest
7. Interview
8. Communications
9. Covert
10. Safeguarding
11. Risk management

Gathering evidence of financial activity relating to stalking or harassment

- Bank or building society statements.
- Cheque book stubs and used cheques.
- Contracts, invoices and receipts for the provision of goods, work or services.
- Correspondence in relation to sales and purchases via postal, telephone and internet shopping.
- Credit, store or charge-card statements and sales vouchers.
- Utility bills.
- Correspondence relating to payments and receipts.
- Legal documents and correspondence in connection with the rental, lease or purchase of land or buildings (other than items subject to legal privilege).
- Rental or hire agreements.

Corroborative evidence to be considered for search strategy

- Clothing that the suspect has been described as wearing by witnesses.
- Footwear that may be a match for footmarks recovered.
- Check victim's car/house for recording devices, USB devices and external hard drives, cameras, films, photographs, video- and audio-recording tapes, and any other recording media.
- Passwords to access IT equipment and social media sites to build up a communications picture of the suspect.
- Computer equipment (this can include gaming consoles or any device that has the ability to connect to the internet), vehicle-management systems (eg, GPS systems), printers, typewriters and other electronic means of communication as appropriate to the case.
- Any items relevant to the victim or their premises (eg, house keys that may have been cut).
- Diaries or address lists.
- Wrapping materials that may be relevant to items received by the victim.
- Financial details, including statements that may reveal relevant purchases or the location of a suspect at particular places and times.
- Mobile phone(s).
- Victim's personal property.
- Business cards and other documents that relate to the receipt of unsolicited goods by the victim.
- Instruments or tools that may have been used in the course of stalking and harassment (for evidence of a mechanical fit).
- Documents and keys relevant to the use of other premises.
- Vehicle keys and documentation.
- Handwriting samples.

Social media platforms

Information regarding activity on social media can often be obtained directly from the platform – each have their own law enforcement guides, which give details on making the requests, for example:

facebook.com/records/x/login/

support.twitter.com/articles/41949

storage.googleapis.com/snap-inc/privacy/lawenforcement.pdf

help.instagram.com/494561080557017/

google.com/transparencyreport/userdatarequests/legalprocess/

Advice on evidence collection for victims

- Keep a record of what happened separately to their own personal diary — where and when they were followed or telephoned, or when they received post or email/social media messages, and details of people who may have witnessed these events.
- Write information down as soon as possible when events are still fresh in the mind.
- Download email messages onto an appropriate device and print out a hard copy (including the full header), but not to delete the original, which should be kept for the police to examine.
- Forward emails to the investigating officer (include header).
- Screenshot social media messages or use appropriate platform facility for retaining these messages.
- Not to tamper with or dispose of a mobile phone or its SIM card without first consulting the investigating officer.
- Record how the suspect looked or sounded, what they were wearing and the make, number plate and colour of their car.
- Tell the police if any neighbours or others saw or heard what happened.
- Keep letters and parcels as evidence and, if the victim recognises the handwriting, retain those items as evidence without opening them.
- Record telephone conversations and keep the recording.
- Keep any stored messages (including text messages) or telephone numbers that have been received on a mobile phone or caller ID unit.
- Use 1471 on the phone and write down details of calls received including the time received and the telephone numbers, even unanswered calls.
- Tell neighbours, regular trade visitors (eg, milk and newspaper deliveries), friends and work colleagues what is happening, unless any of them are suspects, and ask them to keep notes of anything they see and hear, eg, if colleagues answer the victim's telephone at work.

About the College

We're the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. Our purpose is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public and secure public trust.

college.police.uk



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