

Appendix A - DASH training, Stalking and Harassment Training, and the delay in implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool

1. Enquiries with the Learning and Development Department confirmed that classroom based DASH training was rolled out between 2009 and 2011 to 2,100 Officers in Devon and Cornwall Police. The target audience for this training was broad and included response teams. New recruits to the force currently receive a 3 hour input on DASH, however transferees did not receive any DASH training, nor did PCSOs or Special Constables. There was, however, reference to the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions in the force DASH training PowerPoint.
2. The IPCC investigation identified that the officers and police staff subject to this investigation were not aware of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool prior to Miss Power's murder. Examination of DASH forms, policies, working practices and DASH training material identified that it was not implemented by the force until 2014.
3. Devon and Cornwall Police amended their stalking and harassment policy to include stalking legislation in preparation for the introduction of stalking legislation in November 2012. Although the policy contained a hyperlink to working practice documents where the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool was referred to, it did not impose any requirement upon officers to use the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions.
4. When question 8 of the DASH is answered positively by the victim, the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions should be asked. DASH forms published in-force in 2009, 2010 and 2011 contained a prompt after question 8 *'Does (.....) constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you?'* The form prompted the officer to ask the victim to *'Please expand to identify what and whether you believe this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done'*.
5. Revised DASH forms were issued in July 2011 which included a prompt at question 8, specifically to *'consider enhanced questions for harassment as featured in the guidance'*. This prompt was also present in the DASH forms published in February 2012, however, for reasons unknown, the DASH form Police Response Officer A completed in respect of Miss Power, a version dated April 2013, did not contain this additional prompt.
6. It is apparent that the 11 ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions did not feature at question 8 [or indeed anywhere else on the form] in any

version of the DASH issued by the force prior to 2014.

7. Whilst the computer system in operation at the time of Miss Power's murder (CIS) contained an electronic DASH form that could be populated with information extracted from the hard copy DASH, there was no facility in the template to record the additional 11 stalking questions and answers.
8. The investigation has established the Safeguarding Vulnerable People (SVP) board, previously named the Protecting Vulnerable People From Harm (PVPFH) board, is the strategic forum where decisions on force training needs in relation to safeguarding matters should be made. The SVP board should be convened on a quarterly basis and attendees from both Learning and Development and Public Protection should be present. ACPO guidance and training issues should be taken to the SVP board for decisions.
9. The minutes from the SVP board meetings indicate the implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool was considered as early as February 2011. It appears that an action was allocated for an individual to scope the feasibility of implementing the tool, however there is no evidence that the scoping exercise was completed or revisited in the SVP board meetings that followed.
10. Following an SVP Board Meeting in May 2011, the DASH forms were amended; a paragraph was included prompting officers to consider the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions. However, the additional 11 questions were not included in the DASH form. Furthermore, no training was disseminated to officers regarding the 11 questions and their effect on a DASH risk assessment grading.
11. A further 'options paper' detailing considerations around formally adopting the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool was presented to the SVP Board in March 2012. The paper presented three options. A decision was made to draft a combined risk assessment form for non-domestic abuse and domestic related stalking and harassment which was tasked for presentation at the Crime & Justice Senior Management Team (C&J SMT). There is no evidence that this form ever being presented at either of the subsequent C&J SMT meetings and the minutes from the next SVP Board in August 2012 contained no reference to the combined risk assessment action or any mention of implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. Similarly, there is no reference to the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool in the minutes of the next SVP Board in October 2012. Detective Sergeant Chloe Webber brought it to the attention of the domestic abuse portfolio lead Acting Detective Superintendent Thorne in February 2012 that the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool had not been implemented by the force; it was recognised that this carried a risk. Three options were proposed with regards to its implementation, but there is no evidence of any action taken as a result.
12. In April 2012, Detective Superintendent Paul Northcott commenced the role of Head of Public Protection. On 31 May 2012 the stalking and

harassment policy was signed off by Detective Chief Superintendent Russ Middleton who had been informed by Detective Superintendent Northcott that all reference to the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool had been removed. Detective Superintendent Northcott informed Detective Chief Superintendent Middleton that he had requested a further briefing paper on the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool as he felt it would have training, marketing and bureaucratic implications and he did not feel it was needed at that time. The force has been unable to identify any documentation to confirm the outcome of the briefing paper Detective Superintendent Northcott reported he had requested.

13. In November 2012 the DASH was considered as part of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons (SVP) review and the aim was to make it part of the VIST (A vulnerability screening tool developed independently by the force). There is also reference to an aspiration to mandate the National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) stalking e-briefing training noted in the Domestic Abuse and Harassment Improvement Plan. A target date of 30 November 2012 was noted to develop training material through the Learning and Development Centre to support practitioners' application of national guidance and best practice.
14. On 21 November 2012 the stalking and harassment policy was updated to include the new stalking legislation which came into effect on 25 November 2012.
15. On 26 November 2012 a force wide message was distributed introducing the new stalking legislation. The message highlighted that the stalking and harassment policy had been updated accordingly and a link for the stalking and harassment e-briefing training was provided. This training was not mandated for officers; the message stated as follows:
'under the risk management section of this e-briefing, reference is made to officers needing to complete the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool however officers should be aware that this part of the assessment has not been formally adopted by Devon and Cornwall Police at this time'
16. In November 2012, DS Webber attended a National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) stalking briefing which resulted in clarity in understanding of how to adopt the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. On her return to Devon and Cornwall Police, DS Webber emailed Detective Superintendent Northcott detailing her concern about the introduction of stalking legislation and the need to adopt the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. Detective Superintendent Northcott instructed her to submit a briefing paper on the matter.
17. On 17 December 2012, DS Webber emailed a briefing paper to Detective Superintendent Northcott and DI Andrea Kingdon. The paper provided three options with regards to the introduction of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. The paper also recommended the N-CALT stalking e-briefing be mandated.

Option 1 was to include the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions

and a facility to record answers in the DASH booklet. It was noted that the Crime Information System should be amended to ensure the information could be recorded.

Option 2 was to include a checklist only within the DASH booklet, but not to amend the computer system.

Option 3 was to include a checklist only within the DASH booklet, and to amend CIS for non-domestic cases only.

DS Webber also presented an amended draft DASH form which included the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions and an amended version of the DASH risk assessment working practices.

18. The Domestic Abuse and Harassment Improvement Plan indicated all actions to form part of a training plan regarding the new stalking legislation and screening tool had been consolidated and a meeting on 14 January 2013 would decide the best way forward. Detective Superintendent Northcott's Outlook calendar showed a stalking and harassment meeting was scheduled to take place on that date.
19. In January 2013 DS Webber recalled being instructed by Detective Superintendent Northcott to progress Option 1 of the paper she had presented in December 2012. She also recalled being informed by Detective Superintendent Northcott that the force would not mandate the stalking and harassment training; she stated she believed this decision had been made in a board. Evidence suggests she commenced enquiries to identify if CIS could be amended to incorporate the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool on 15 January 2013.
20. On 28 January 2013 an entry in the Domestic Abuse and Harassment Improvement Plan indicated that the Public Protection Unit were still awaiting a Senior Management Team (SMT) decision on how to proceed with the stalking legislation.
21. On 30 January 2013, a 'thin' SVP board meeting was held however audit records indicate the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool was discussed at this time.
22. On 1 March 2013 evidence suggests work was ongoing to combine the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool into the VIST and discussions were ongoing to identify how this could be included in CIS.
23. On 25 March 2013 ACC Shewan (ACPO Lead for Stalking and Harassment) sent an ACPO letter to all forces encouraging them to ensure officers were undertaking the NCALT E-learning package on stalking and harassment.
24. In May 2013 the force underwent a change in computer systems. The old system, CIS, was to be replaced with a new system called UNIFI. A restriction was placed on changes to legacy IT systems, noting that any changes required to CIS which had not been considered as part of the data migration strategy would incur cost and any new changes would be

lost in the migration to the new computer system. There is no evidence that any further work was carried out into the possibility of combining the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool and VIST once the CIS embargo was brought in.

25. In May 2013 the scheduled SVP board meeting was cancelled due to a key board member, Detective Superintendent Northcott, being unable to attend due to other work commitments. ACC Bickley's secretary advised she would seek an alternative date for the meeting, however the next SVP Board meeting did not take place until November 2013.
26. In May 2013 NCALT (an online training provider who provides e-learning to police forces) informed Devon and Cornwall Police that version 2 of the stalking and harassment E-learning would be available on 5 June 2013. The Public Protection Unit was consulted and advised the Learning and Development Department that the package should be completed by all frontline officers and Command Management and Control Unit (CMCU) staff. The Public Protection Unit was subsequently advised this would need to be presented at the Corporate Learning Management Group (CLMG) for approval. This action was tasked to a Detective Inspector on 11 June 2013. It is not clear what action was taken in relation to this, however there is no evidence to support it was ever presented to CLMG.
27. In June 2013, whilst on extended leave, DS Webber stated she reported her concerns that no progress had been made with the introduction of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool now the force had established Option 1 was not viable. There is no evidence that DS Webber's workload was reallocated and it is not clear whether her concerns were escalated by her line manager.
28. In September 2013 DS Webber returned from leave and recalled a meeting with Detective Superintendent Northcott when he informed her he would have to resubmit the paper she had drafted in December 2012, as there had been no board meetings for him to present it in her absence.
29. In November 2013, a briefing paper was re-presented to the first full SVP Executive meeting. Full meeting minutes are unavailable therefore it was not possible to ascertain whether the CIS embargo was discussed, although there is no reference to the CIS embargo noted on the options paper. Option 2 was supported by the board; however there was no mention of the recommendation that CMCU staff should update the investigation screen on CIS with a summary of responses to the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. A recommendation was also made to take the N-CALT e-learning to CLMG; however this action was assigned to a DCI who was not in post at that time, or present at the meeting. The action was sent via an email, which he was copied into. This individual stated the action was not flagged to him and he was unaware of its allocation prior to the IPCC investigation. No action was subsequently taken to present the NCALT stalking and harassment training to CLMG at this time.

30. In November 2013 the HMIC inspection report on Devon and Cornwall Police's approach to tackling domestic abuse made no reference to the implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool.
31. Miss Power was murdered on 14 December 2013. After her death a force wide message was distributed from ACC Bickley titled '*Prevention and investigation of domestic abuse*'. The message highlighted that where there was a report of stalking officers must use the DASH stalking questions to inform their judgement as to risk.
32. The Gold Group Minutes from the first meeting following Miss Power's murder, held on 21 January 2014, indicate that the action to take the NCALT training to CLMG had been completed. Despite this, there is no evidence that this action was completed. It is believed some confusion arose over which NCALT training was being referred to within this meeting. The DCI who had originally been tasked with taking the Stalking and Harassment NCALT e-briefing to CLMG following the November 2013 SVP board meeting had independently taken a different NCALT package (The Public Protection Abuse Relationships) to CLMG following instruction from Detective Superintendent Northcott to consider it on 27 November 2013. This package contained elements and learning on stalking and harassment and was later mandated by the force. Whilst there was reference to stalking within this package, it was not the package specifically designed to accompany the stalking and harassment legislation.
33. On 18 February 2014 the DASH booklets in circulation were replaced with amended versions which contained the 11 ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions. Working practice was updated, specifying that the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool responses should be recorded in the 'free text comments box'.
34. On 27 February 2014 a force wide message was distributed informing officers and staff that the DASH risk assessment form had been amended to include the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool.

Detective Superintendent Northcott's account

35. Detective Superintendent Northcott provided an account to the IPCC investigation in his capacity as Head of the Public Protection Unit at Devon and Cornwall Police. His response addressed concerns regarding the gaps in DASH training, and the delay in the implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool and stalking and harassment training. His response to each topic will be addressed in turn.

DASH training

36. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated he was aware that the force required domestic abuse training prior to Miss Power's murder. He stated that as a result, he raised the issue of DASH training on numerous occasions at executive level within the force. He was unable to provide

supporting documentary evidence of his consultation with the force executive, but stated that he had raised concerns with his managers. He stated that whilst he could advise the force regarding training requirements, these still had to be approved through strategic groups such as CLMG.

37. Detective Superintendent Northcott explained that in 2014 ACC Bickley made the decision to initiate DASH update training, but only after this was discussed at strategic level over many months and in a number of forums. He explained that this decision would result in Critical Incident Managers (CIMS,) response sergeants and constables all being trained in DASH. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated the training will be a three year rolling programme designed to ensure all officers are constantly refreshed in respect of domestic abuse, DASH and stalking.

The delay in the implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool

38. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that throughout his time as Head of the PPU he raised his frustration at the force being unable to implement the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool and stalking training and briefed his managers on his concerns.
39. Detective Superintendent Northcott explained that in November 2012, following attendance a member of PPU's attendance at an NPIA stalking briefing, it became clear to Devon and Cornwall Police how the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool should be developed. He requested a briefing paper be produced to enable him to take the implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool and NCALT training forward. A briefing paper was produced, providing three options, in December 2012, however the months that followed coincided with the executive's decision to cancel the (SVP) board meetings, where the proposals needed to be presented in the first instance. With no strategic boards to take the briefing paper to, Detective Superintendent Northcott stated he decided to start to progress the matter and instructed his team to progress Option 1 in January 2013.

Option 1 was to include the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool questions and a facility to record answers in the DASH booklet. It was noted that CIS (the force computer system in place at the time) would be amended to ensure the information could be recorded.

Option 2 was to include a checklist only within the DASH booklet, but not to amend the computer system.

Option 3 was to include a checklist only within the DASH booklet, but to amend CIS for non-domestic cases only.

40. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that there were a number of portfolio leads within PPU who had been tasked to develop the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool and to embed it into force practice. He stated that these individuals were tasked to work with various departments to develop a viable method of recording information gleaned from the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool accurately. He added that

he could not have undertaken this work personally as he did not have capacity and it would not be expected of him as Head of Department. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated he monitored the work through regular updates from those staff completing the actions, but was hindered by his workload at the time, the large number of actions required to be delivered across all areas of safeguarding and the lack of an effective force system which could monitor and flag actions and progress issues.

41. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that enquiries into the practicability of incorporating the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool into CIS (the computer system functioning at that time) commenced in early 2013. At this time, Devon and Cornwall Police were working towards a new computer recording system called UNIFI. A decision made in a different forum meant an embargo had been placed on making any changes to the CIS system. He stated this delayed attempts to incorporate the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. He could not recall the exact time he became aware of the barriers to uploading the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool on CIS, but assumed it was between the end of May and June 2013, when the embargo was put in place.
42. When faced with the embargo, Detective Superintendent Northcott explained that they explored incorporating the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool into VIST, but this was not viable either. He stated he could not recall when or if he was made aware that work on the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool screen on VIST stopped when the CIS embargo came in.
43. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated he could not recall the time at which UNIFI was considered to incorporate the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool, but stated as soon as they identified that VIST was not an option, they looked at the viability of UNIFI to include the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. He explained that UNIFI was never ruled out as an option, they just had to work through the practicalities of uploading the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool onto the system.
44. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that he relayed the problems in respect of implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool onto a system with his managers.
45. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that there were no full SVP Boards convened from October 2012 and November 2013 to enable him to progress implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool. He stated that he tried to encourage the executive to reinstate the boards without success and stated that the responsibility to convene the meetings was with the force executive. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that he raised this with ACC Boarland and with ACC Bickley and his personal assistant. He added that the reinstatement of the board was attributable to his persistence as he was concerned that there was no strategic forum at which decisions regarding PPU business could be made.
46. Despite these blockages, Detective Superintendent Northcott stated he sought alternative routes to try to progress implementation of the ACPO

Stalking Risk Screening Tool. He explained that when it became clear that Option 1 was not viable, he believed Options 2 and 3 would therefore need to be considered. He stated that a decision to implement Option 2 was made during the SVP Board in November 2013.

The delay in the implementation of training on stalking and harassment to accompany the new legislation

What is the process of implementing training relating to public protection?

47. Detective Superintendent Northcott explained that where training needs are identified in relation to safeguarding, these should be taken to the SVP board by the PPU, geography or training department. He explained that the SVP Board is the main forum to agree on training needs in relation to safeguarding matters. He stated that a representative from the Learning and Development Department should sit on the SVP board at the executive level and should, in theory, take any such actions to the most appropriate forum. He explained that where agreement is reached that training should be progressed, the proposal should be taken to a further board called the CLMG. He stated that this board considers all training requests made in the force and makes decisions as to what training is to be prioritised and implemented.

Why was the N-CALT Stalking and Harassment training not mandated prior to 2014, despite the introduction of stalking offences in November 2012?

48. Detective Superintendent Northcott explained that the suggestion to mandate the NCALT Stalking E-briefing was raised by a member of his staff in November 2012. He stated that as a result he requested a briefing paper. He recalled he repeatedly suggested to managers that as a force they were vulnerable in that area as they had not delivered training. He stated that he discussed this with his managers who all agreed the need for training, but that this needed to be taken to the Corporate Learning and Management Group against other priorities. He explained that as a result of this a force wide message was disseminated to staff highlighting that training was available. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that a member of his staff believed he informed her on 14 January 2013 that the training would not be mandated and she believed this decision had been made at board level. He was unable to recall which board that would have been taken to and clarified that he personally would not have made that decision as training implementation decisions are made by the Executive Safeguarding Board.
49. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that the NCALT Stalking e – briefing had not been mandated, as it would have needed to go through the process outlined in the paragraph above to enable implementation. He stated that the cancellation of the SVP Board meant there was no forum to enable progression of the training until November 2013, shortly before Miss Power's murder. He explained that a decision was reached in the November SVP Board to mandate the NCALT training, but the individual the action was allocated to had not been present at the board and now claim they were unaware they had been tasked to complete this.

Detective Superintendent Northcott stated he would have monitored the progress of all of his staff action plans but on review and in reality there would have been little time for him to progress the action and implement the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool in the weeks between the board meeting and Miss Power's tragic death. He stated he had only recently become aware of this action through review of the documents provided to the IPCC.

50. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that in May 2013 the People Services Department made him aware of Version 2 of the N-CALT package. He recalled he offered his view that it would be a good package to get out to frontline staff and CMCU. Evidence shows DI Kingdon tasked this to a Detective Inspector to ensure this would take place in an email dated 11 June 2013. Detective Superintendent Northcott stated that he only became aware of this task through the IPCC investigation and could not recall how the action had been monitored. He stated that he continually tried to highlight the need to mandate the package to SMT members.

Other enquiries

51. DI Nick Clarke from the Devon and Cornwall Police Professional Standards Department assisted the IPCC in conducting further enquiries in relation to this matter.
52. Enquiries were carried out with Ex ACC Mr Boarland, who retired from Devon and Cornwall Police in May 2013. Mr Boarland had been retired from the force for two years and had no recollection of the matters raised by this investigation, nor did he recognise any of the issues.
53. Enquiries were carried out with Miss Sandra Densham. Miss Densham was ACC Bickley's secretary. In respect of the January 2013 meeting, she stated she did not think that it was intended to be a "thin" meeting, and that attendance at that meeting, for whatever reason, turned out to be "thin". She recalled that no papers were provided for circulation in that meeting and according to the minutes there had been no references to DASH training in the previous meeting chaired by Mr Boarland, in Oct 2012. In respect of the May 2013 meeting, she recalled that Detective Superintendent Northcott was on a training course and as such Mr Boarland requested that it should be rearranged. Miss Densham was unable to provide a definitive answer as to why it did not happen until November 2013. She stated she believed that there was not one single reason for a delay but possibly a combination of factors, including a change of ACC and competing demands at that time. She did recall that ACC Bickley reviewed the terms of reference for the SVP Board which eventually led to him setting up the monthly SVP Executive Board meetings from November 2013 onwards, with SVP Operational and Business Boards sitting underneath the Executive Board.
54. Enquiries were carried out with Mr Bickley, who was ACC in Devon and Cornwall Police for several months, commencing the role in May 2013. Mr

Bickley stated that ACC Boarland postponed the May 2013 SVP Board meeting due to key members not being available, which meant a meaningful meeting would not have been viable. He recalled there were a number of reasons as to why there were no SVP board meetings between May and November 2013 including operational demands which impacted on capacity of individuals in a number of areas. He added additional context and outlined that in July 2013 a decision was sought from Chief Officers as to how the force would approach all aspects of children and adult safeguarding. He explained that this resulted in the introduction of the SVP Executive Board which commenced in November 2013.

55. Mr Bickley stated that he encouraged any urgent and pressing matters to be dealt with as part of day to day business, as opposed to waiting for a formal board to raise issues. He stated that he was aware that Detective Superintendent Northcott was keen for a formal governance structure/process to be put in place for safeguarding vulnerable persons and that the Executive SVP board was set up following Chief Officer decisions in the SVP business case. Mr Bickley could not recall if the lack of DASH refresher training was specifically presented to him as a critical risk which required a decision from him, but recalled that he had frequent conversations with Detective Superintendent Northcott. Similarly, he could not recall whether the issues around implementation of the ACPO Stalking Risk Screening Tool were raised with him, or how he responded. He did, however, recall the introduction of the new computer system in the force creating many varied complexities and stated that there were consequential impacts which affected all areas of work.