

Call to End Violence against Women and Girls

Taking Action – the next chapter



HM Government



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March 2012

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Ministerial foreword by the Home Secretary



My ambition is nothing less than ending violence against women and girls. There can be no excuse for these horrific crimes that ruin lives, destroy childhoods and damage our society. Each year, over one million women suffer domestic abuse¹, over 300,000 women are sexually assaulted and 60,000 women are raped². Shocking statistics. But these crimes are often hidden away behind closed doors, with the victim suffering in silence. Fewer than one in four people who suffer abuse at the hands of their partner³ and only around one in ten women who experience serious sexual assault report it to the police.⁴ That means we have to do more to help victims feel confident about reporting these crimes and it means we all must do much more to prevent violence against women and girls happening in the first place.

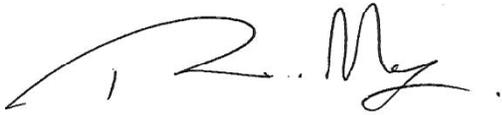
Soon after coming to office we set out a new strategy, placing prevention at the heart of our approach. This document updates that strategy and details the progress made. Our key themes of prevention, provision of services, partnership working, better justice outcomes and risk reduction remain; this revised document builds on the previous plan and makes clear what we expect from local areas and local partners.

The local landscape is changing: new Health and Wellbeing Boards are being established, and we are consulting on plans for Police and Crime Commissioners to take responsibility for commissioning the bulk of victims' services from 2014. We want to ensure that services to victims of violence against women and girls are protected and enhanced under these new structures – that is why this revised plan is so focused on local services. I fought to protect central government funding for frontline specialist services, high-risk victims and rape support centres. We need to see the same commitment to helping victims at a local level as well.

I am proud of the progress that, together, we have made in improving prevention, punishing perpetrators and helping victims. The previous action plan set out 88 specific actions – more than half of them have been completed, including implementing new laws to make all local areas hold a domestic homicide review after every domestic violence death and the piloting of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. We are making good progress on almost all of the remaining actions.

This updated plan includes new actions to help keep women safe. For the first time, we will be piloting a process to give women access to information about the past actions of a new partner where that may help keep them safe. We will also introduce two specific criminal offences of stalking and we will work to reduce the harm suffered by the vulnerable women working in prostitution.

None of this success would be possible without the hard work of the police, local authorities, teachers, health workers, and, perhaps most importantly, the women's sector. They continue to do tremendous work to provide vital services to women and girls. This document provides the framework for the way forward – now we must work in partnership to ensure it is implemented. Together we can help end violence against women and girls.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. May', with a large, sweeping flourish at the beginning.

Right Honourable Theresa May MP
Home Secretary and Minister for Women and Equalities

Chapter 1: The story so far – the first chapter

1.1 The initial vision

Tackling violence against women and girls requires a focused and robust cross-government approach. In November 2010, we set out our vision and guiding principles in the *Call to End Violence against Women and Girls*. In March 2011, we published a detailed range of 88 supporting actions for taking that strategy forward, alongside a full response to Baroness Stern's review into the way rape complaints were handled.

1.2 Where we are now

More than half of the 88 actions in the March 2011 Action Plan have been completed and we continue to make good progress on the others. Our approach has benefitted from:

- clear strategic objectives focused on prevention, provision of services, partnership working, justice outcomes, and risk reduction;
- buy-in from across government, with activity co-ordinated across 13 government departments overseen by an inter-ministerial group chaired by the Home Secretary; and
- an early commitment to almost £40 million of earmarked funding over the spending review period for specialist services from Home Office and Ministry of Justice.

The original Action Plan has therefore been a solid foundation for taking forward our broader Violence against Women and Girls strategy. The underlying principles of that strategy remain as valid now as when it was published.

1.3 The changing context

This Government has always made clear that it is committed to devolving power, resources and accountability to local areas to decide their own priorities and how they deliver on these. Reforms to policing, the NHS, public health arrangements and to the way victims' services more generally are commissioned locally, will lead to a radical shift in accountability for services to support the victims of VAWG from the centre to local areas themselves.

These changes are now well down the path to implementation, and will shape the way our future strategy develops.

There have been a number of other developments in the last year which have also influenced this refreshed Action Plan:

- **Consultations on VAWG legislation** – we have consulted on a domestic violence disclosure scheme and on how we can protect victims of stalking more effectively. We are also consulting on the government's definition of domestic violence and whether a specific criminal offence would help us to combat forced marriage and, if so, how it would be formulated and how we might implement the criminalisation of breaches of the civil Forced Marriage Protection Orders.
- The government's **Ending Gang and Youth Violence** report⁵ published in November 2011, highlighted the impact of gang violence on girls and young women. In response, we have announced a further £1.2 million over the next three years to support girls under 18 suffering rape and sexual abuse – including from gangs. This money will fund 13 new posts for 'Young People's Advocates'.
- The **Victims' Strategy** *Getting it right for victims and witnesses* was launched in January 2012 and is currently subject to consultation. The strategy seeks to increase the sums of money available for practical support and advice for victims alongside reforming the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme to target compensation on the most seriously injured victims of serious crime. Victims of sexual offences and patterns of abuse will have their compensation payments for pain and suffering protected. It includes proposals to transfer responsibility for commissioning the majority of victims' services from central government to Police and Crime Commissioners. It is proposed that a proportion of the additional income raised from offenders through the Victim Surcharge and other financial impositions will go to services for victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- The **Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill** retains legal aid for victims in private family law cases where domestic violence is a feature and will continue to provide legal aid for applications for protective injunctions such as non-molestation orders. The Bill also introduces a new sentencing regime which would replace sentences of imprisonment for public protection.
- The **Bailey review** *Letting Children be Children* on the commercialisation and sexualisation of children was published in June 2011.
- The **Troubled Families programme**, launched by the Prime Minister in December 2011, commits the government to working with local areas to turn around the lives of 120,000 troubled families by the end of the Parliament. Based on past evidence we would expect a significant proportion of families would suffer domestic violence problems.

We continue to listen to partners and value their input into our work. For example, they have been calling for two specific areas of work to be included in the VAWG action plan: explicit consideration of prostitution, and male victims' services. We know that many sex workers may be particularly vulnerable to violence and can be less likely to come forward and seek help. In response, we have included some new actions around reducing the harm and risk of violence to this vulnerable group. Similarly, stakeholders had reported that support for male victims was underrepresented, and we are therefore starting to address this too.

1.4 Our approach so far

The approach set out in the first Action Plan included a particular focus on high risk victims, including those vulnerable to repeat victimisation. Our support for Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs), Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs), and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) is aimed at ensuring that women and girls at highest risk of violence are identified and referred for specialist help.

We have also emphasised the importance of prevention – of tackling the attitudes that can explicitly or tacitly support violence against women and girls, and communicating to potential victims and perpetrators alike. For example, the recent Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign was a package of media activity to reach a specific group, and to clearly communicate what sexual and domestic violence is, that it is unacceptable, and to signpost preventative and support services.

1.5 Opportunities

The first anniversary of the publication of our original Action Plan presents an opportunity to review and refresh those commitments. This allows us to reflect the evolution of the work already done and learn lessons, highlight what remains to be achieved, and acknowledge the changing context in which our strategy operates.

We have also identified ways that the Action Plan can be improved, and are taking this opportunity to do so, for example by helping the voluntary sector become more self-sustaining.

This refreshed Action Plan therefore takes us from our initial vision – and the key principles which continue to drive our overriding strategy – through the changes borne from a year of focused activity, and looks forward to the next year, taking into account the changing landscape.

We will review this refreshed Action Plan by March 2013.

Chapter 2: Preventing violence

Guiding principle: To prevent violence against women and girls from happening in the first place, by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early to prevent it.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Society believes violence against women and girls is unacceptable and is empowered to challenge violent behaviour
- Fewer victims of sexual and domestic violence
- Frontline professionals (e.g. teachers, doctors, police and prosecutors) are able to identify and deal with violence against women and girls
- Employers recognise and support victims of domestic and sexual violence

Everyone has a role to play in prevention. This is not just about government activity, but is also about schools, the media, employers, health workers, friends, family members and neighbours spotting the signs and taking a stand. We will continue to support and promote actions that help people recognise domestic violence and sexual violence and know where to go for support. We also recognise that violence against women is a consequence of continuing inequality between men and women, and is a barrier to achieving equality.

The Government will continue to run national campaigns to raise awareness about violence against women and girls so that these messages have the broadest reach. As part of our work on the Bailey recommendations, we will also continue to work with industry to reduce the inappropriate sexualisation and commercialisation of children. We also work with industry as part of the body confidence campaign to reduce the burdens that popular culture places on people's well-being and self-esteem.

On challenging attitudes, behaviours and practices, since 2010 we have:

- Re-launched our **Teenage Relationship Abuse** campaign in September 2011, which ran on TV, in cinema and online. This included further information in a lesson pack for teachers and those working directly with young people. By the end of January 2012 the campaign website 'This is Abuse'⁶ had received over 168,000 hits with 1,200 comments posted on discussion boards.

Teenage Relationship Abuse Campaign

The Government's £1.5 million teenage relationship abuse (TRA) campaign ran from August to December 2011. The TV advert ran in cinemas alongside teen films, and online advertising ran on popular teen websites and within social networking sites to reach teens discussing these issues with their peers. Posters were also used in shopping malls and college washrooms to raise awareness. The campaign was targeted at 13-18 year old boys and girls and aimed to:

1. raise awareness of the issue of abuse in relationships
2. change attitudes that abuse in relationships is acceptable and
3. make victims feel more confident to report abuse and empower individuals, including boys, to play their part in tackling the issues.

All the advertising directed teenagers to the campaign website www.thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk. The site provided further advice and third party support as well as a space for teenagers to discuss the issues with their peers. The site also ran a series of live webchats where teenagers could put their questions to specialist support partners. Women's Aid, Respect, Beat Bullying, Broken Rainbow and AVA (Against Violence and Abuse) all provided specialist advisers to answer questions.

During the campaign the website received over 170,000 visits and there were over 1,200 comments left of the discussion boards. Many of the comments received a response from a moderator providing advice and signposts to further help.

Evaluation research was conducted to understand the impact of the campaign amongst the target audience*. Of those surveyed who stated they had experience of relationships, one third admitted to experiencing some form of relationship abuse.

Eight in ten of all respondents agreed with a statement that the adverts made them more likely to do something about an abusive relationship if they or a friend were in one. Over two-thirds of all respondents agreed with a statement that abuse in relationships is a serious issue. This figure increased to eight in ten among those who were spontaneously aware of the advertising.

We also received comments on the discussion board on the campaign website from teenagers who said that the campaign had helped them directly.

"just finished with my boyfriend of two years after seeing these videos and I can relate to each one, the word 'your pathetic' 'little tart' and 'you don't do anything without my say so' just shock me back to reality I know I deserve better than what I was getting put through:"

"I've just broken up with my boyfriend of nearly 6 months. After watching this video, the exact words of 'you're pathetic, are you gonna go cry to your friends' echoed in my mind. He had said those exact words to me on many occasions. He put me down, stopped me from talking to my friends who were boys, checked my inbox, my texts, physically pushed me around.. I don't see why I didn't see this before!"

* Sample: 800 13-18 year olds, England and Wales. Online survey, October – November 2011. Data weighted by gender, age and social grade. Please note that this research is not part of the Home Office National Statistics programme but is communications evaluation research only. Results should be seen as indicative and directional rather than absolute. Figures relate to the polled sample and should not be applied to the general population.

- Improved the **reporting on the number of successful rape prosecutions** in the UK. Following a Ministry of Justice (MoJ) consultation on improving statistics, MoJ will alter the way conviction rates for rape are measured and reported.
- **Explored the prevalence and effects of VAWG on vulnerable groups**, including black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, and raised awareness of VAWG both within these groups and with frontline practitioners and local decision makers. This highlighted the importance of having an open dialogue with specialist providers as the needs of such vulnerable groups may be complex.
- Commenced work on raising awareness and more importantly bringing change on **tackling forced marriage**. We have provided funding to projects set up to tackle forced marriage in the UK, through the Domestic Project Fund.
- Launched a **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) community engagement fund** providing total funding of £50,000 to 10 local organisations across the UK to support and facilitate community engagement work to prevent FGM.
- Introduced an integrated **public sector equality duty** which puts an onus on public bodies to consider the need to foster good relations between men and women. In meeting the requirements of the Duty, the need to tackle violence against women should form an integral part of every public body's consideration. We have published two quick start guides to assist public bodies to comply with this duty.⁷
- Published the **Bailey Review** into the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood in June 2011.⁸ In response to the Bailey Review and to parents' concerns about a number of media content issues, businesses and media regulators have taken a number of significant actions, including:
 - the launch of 'ParentPort' – a single website set up by the media regulators to provide a single place for parents to express their views and concerns about material they think is unsuitable for their children, to make complaints, and to give information about the regulatory framework.⁹
 - publication of stricter guidelines by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)¹⁰ on sexual images in outdoor advertising, particularly near schools. The ASA has already banned a number of advertisements using these new guidelines.
 - Ofcom issued new guidance¹¹ on pre-watershed TV content to ensure programmes aimed at a family audience are always family-friendly and suitable for children.
- Held an **inter-ministerial group** meeting in October 2011 with representatives from the media industry and media regulators and industry bodies to discuss how images and messages could perpetuate gender stereotypes and promote an acceptance of VAWG. This work will continue as we take forward the Bailey recommendations.

On early intervention, since 2010 we have:

- Supported the development of **Community Budgets for troubled families in 16 areas**, covering 28 local authorities or 20% of the country. Community Budgets aim to strip away the barriers which stand in the way of different local services working in a more effective and joined up way with very troubled families. A second phase of a further 70 local authorities have said that they plan to develop Community Budgets to scale up their family intervention services for April 2012. Building on the Community Budget initiative we launched the **Troubled Families programme** in December 2011. This will boost the pace and scale of developing family intervention services to turn around the lives of 120,000 troubled families through local investment and collaboration.
- Published the government response¹² to the **Munro Review**¹³ on child protection and are working with frontline services to take forward the recommendations.
- Published **updated anti-bullying advice to schools**¹⁴. The advice sets out the government's stance on prejudice-based bullying (including where it may be gender-based), summarises schools' legal obligations and powers, and signposts school staff to specialist organisations that can offer specialist support for different types of bullying.
- Published the outcome of the Ofsted consultation on the new inspection arrangements which included **bullying as one of the four key areas** of inspection.¹⁵
- Set up a working group to develop and advise policy to reduce **the impact of gang violence** on girls and young women. The group met for the first time in January 2012. This followed the publication of the Ending Gang and Youth Violence report in November 2011.

By 2015, we will do the following:

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Raise public awareness of and reduce public acceptability of VAWG | | | |
| 1. Continue to deliver a cross-government VAWG Communications Strategy. | 1 | HO | Ongoing |
| 2. Launch the second phase of our prevention campaign to tackle teenage relationship violence – with a focus on sexual violence and consent. | 2 | HO | March 2012 |
| 3. Develop education and awareness-raising campaigns on rape and sexual assault. Communication proposals include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring victims have access to comprehensive support and advice online. • Exploiting media opportunities as a way of confronting the myths that surround rape. • Sharing details of good local campaign practice, via the Home Office website. | 3 | HO | To be launched in March 2012 |
| 4. Raise awareness of forced marriage and challenge attitudes which condone this practice through media activities, training events and community engagement. | 10 | FMU (HO/FCO) | Ongoing. A major event was held in January 2012 with a visit of Pakistani civil society campaigners to campaign within the UK diaspora |
| 5. Produce two short informative films for the NHS Choices website on child sexual exploitation and FGM. | NEW | DH | Summer 2012 |
| 6. Ensure that all government press releases on VAWG issues contain the national domestic violence and national stalking helpline phone numbers and contact details. | NEW | All depts | Ongoing |
| Outcome: Reduce inappropriate media portrayal of women and children and prevent premature exposure of children to sexualised media and sexual bullying | | | |
| 7. Work with the National Union of Journalists to produce guidance for journalists reporting on issues relating to VAWG. | 8 | HO | Draft guidance has been produced by Against Violence and Abuse. To communicate by June 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8. Monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Bailey Review of the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood. | NEW | DfE/ HO/ DCMS | A full stocktake of progress will be undertaken by the Government by the end of 2012. If voluntary action by businesses has not been effective, the Government will consider what further action is necessary, including statutory measures if there is a good case to do so. |
| 9. To continue to work closely with media regulators and stakeholders across industry to ensure that suitable media content protections are maintained. | NEW | DCMS | Ongoing |
| 10. Work to tackle sexual bullying and harassing practices such as 'sexting'. | NEW | HO | December 2012 |
| 11. Work with social media to challenge social media sites that promote or make light of sexual/domestic violence. | NEW | HO | December 2012 |
| 12. Ensure media literacy tools are available to help people challenge body images and gender stereotyping in the media. | NEW | GEO | July 2013 |
| Outcome: Empower BME communities to take action | | | |
| 13. Support community engagement work to challenge attitudes, prevent female genital mutilation (FGM) and encourage individuals to report cases of FGM. | 11, part NEW | HO/ DH/DfE | March 2013 |
| Outcome: Increase personal safety of women and girls | | | |
| 14. Consider what more could be done with our partners to increase personal safety for women and girls. | NEW | HO | December 2012 |
| 15. Consider what more could be done with our partners to improve women and girl's perceptions of personal safety, and their awareness of initiatives to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, on public transport. | NEW | DfT | December 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Outcome: Working with teachers and schools to reduce sexual and sexist bullying in schools and identify those children at risk of domestic violence | | | |
| 16. Encourage the teaching of sexual consent within the curriculum. | 20 | DfE | Ongoing |
| 17. Promote effective partnership working between police and schools where children are at risk of domestic violence (e.g. Operation Encompass). | NEW | ACPO | December 2012 |
| Outcome: Reduce children's access to harmful material on the internet | | | |
| 18. Increase use of parental controls by improving skills of parents and children, and provide resources for the schools' and children's workforce. | 22 | DfE/ HO/ DCMS | Ongoing |

Chapter 3: Provision of services

Guiding principle – provide adequate levels of support where violence occurs

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- VAWG victims receive a good and consistent level of service across England and Wales
- Statutory agencies and NGO's get the response right the first time
- High quality commissioning and service provision at a local level

As we move from central to local accountability, central government should focus on those functions which are most effectively commissioned, delivered or co-ordinated at a national level, so in future our priorities will be:

- Support for, or provision of, services which are most effectively provided nationally – such as national telephone helplines or the Forced Marriage Unit;
- Development and dissemination of best practice advice and national guidance – for example through disseminating the lessons learnt from local Domestic Homicide Reviews;
- Raising standards of professional practice through support for professional training and development of both statutory and voluntary sector staff; and
- Improving the response of statutory services which are still the responsibility of central government – for example HM Courts Service, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Jobcentre Plus, National Offender Management Service and UK Border Agency.

As new arrangements, some of which are subject to consultation, are put in place for the commissioning of local health, policing and victims services, we will continue to honour the commitments we made to provide earmarked funding for certain specialist services to support the victims of violence against women and girls during this transitional phase. Ministry of Justice ring-fenced grants to local rape support centres will continue until March 2014. Home Office funding for local IDVAs, ISVAs and MARAC co-ordinators will continue until the end of the spending review period (March 2015).

Under government proposals for the future commissioning of victims' services Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will develop local strategies for supporting victims, prioritising the needs of victims of serious crime, the persistently targeted and the most vulnerable. This includes victims of domestic and sexual abuse. They will receive a budget for this purpose from the Ministry of Justice – including additional resources for victim services (of up to £50 million a year) to be raised from the Victim Surcharge and increased financial penalties – a proportion of which will be earmarked for VAWG services.

In London, the new Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPC) is already showing the opportunities the PCC role provides to make VAWG a local priority and set distinctive local priorities.

VAWG as a priority for the Mayor of London

The Mayor of London's Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy is delivered through the MOPC and aims to transform how London responds to violence against women. It aims to:

- make London a global leader in ending VAWG;
- improve access to support;
- address the health, social and economic consequences of violence;
- protect women at risk; and
- get tougher with perpetrators.

In its first three months of activity the MOPC is:

- working with anti-trafficking agencies, local authorities and criminal justice partners by holding a Human Trafficking and London 2012 Network event;
- engaging boys and young men on VAWG issues at a roundtable event ;
- highlighting to the VAWG sector how to engage and lobby Police and Crime Commissioners on VAWG at the Women's Aid national conference; and
- integrating a response to harmful practices (such as FGM) into Multi-agency Safeguarding Hubs.

On frontline services, funding and sustainability of the sector, since 2010 we have:

- Allocated grant funding to Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and VCS organisations to support 87 **Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA)** posts on a stable basis until 2015. This is an increase from 44 in 2010/11. We have also committed to improve the training available to ISVAs to ensure a minimum quality standard for ISVA support, and provide a framework for qualification of ISVAs.
- Allocated grant funding of nearly £3 million per year for the next three years to 65 **existing rape support centres** across England and Wales.

- Worked in partnership with the sector to **open four new rape support centres** based in Trafford, Hereford, Devon and Dorset.
- Supported the **Sojourner Project** which ensures that a refuge place is funded for women who have suffered domestic violence after entering the country on a spouse visa while their claim to stay in the UK is considered. There have been a total of 1,841 referrals to the project between December 2009 and December 2011 (of which two were men). From April 2012, women in this situation will be able to access DWP income-related benefits for up to 10 weeks while they make an application for long term leave to remain in the UK.
- Completed a study of the implications of transferring **commissioning and budgetary responsibility for forensic sexual assault work** from the Police to the health service.

On effective practice and training, since 2010 we have:

- Held a Ministerial roundtable to support and **encourage sharing of effective commissioning practice by local authorities**. The Local Government Association held a conference in 2011, providing the opportunity to highlight to local authorities the importance of investing in domestic violence and VAWG services.
- Launched an **e-learning package for ISVAs** that will be made available online shortly.
- Developed an improved **forced marriage e-learning tool** for frontline practitioners. Using real life case studies, the training will give professionals a basic understanding of the key issues surrounding forced marriage, how cases can present and how to respond appropriately.¹⁶
- Reviewed the use and effectiveness of multi-agency guidelines for dealing with forced marriage.
- Produced a needs **assessment toolkit on sexual violence** to provide a local dataset that can inform local statutory assessments. This was developed for those commissioning and developing specialist services for victims of sexual violence at a local level, including Primary Care Trust Chief Executives, Directors of Public Health, Local Authority Chief Executives, Directors of Adult and of Children's Social Services.¹⁷
- Established a **strategic network of specialist VAWG Coordinators within the CPS** supporting implementation of policy, information sharing and effective criminal justice responses to all forms of VAWG.
- Issued **guidance to prosecutors** on engagement with specialist BME support services.
- Launched **e-learning training for GPs** on violence against women and children to help GPs identify and respond to victims more effectively (see text box on following page).

Royal College of General Practitioners – Violence against Women E-Learning course

A key aspect of the VAWG action plan taken forward by the Department of Health includes work to improve awareness and training of professionals such as the development of an e-learning toolkit by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) on violence against women and children. The e-learning tool enables GPs to identify and respond to victims more effectively.

Since it launched in September 2011, the RCGP Violence against Women and Children e-learning course has been accessed by approximately 650 primary health care professionals. The course includes a pre and post-course assessment designed to measure learners' knowledge and attitudes before and after completing the course. The average score on the pre course assessment is 70.6%; the average on the post course assessment is 78.1% demonstrating a 7.5% increase. Users have the opportunity to rate the lessons out of 5 and the current average rating is 4.1, making it one of the most highly regarded courses on the e-learning platform.

Some of the free text comments made by users include:

"This is really useful as am now more aware of domestic violence. Very thorough."

"Very informative, giving me some confidence in how one should start asking somebody about violence."

"Think I have not been detailed enough and probing enough for years and feel a better degree of enablement to be helpful in such circumstances."

"Excellent and informative. Easy to read but loads of information."

In addition, the course has been widely promoted including through a well-attended domestic violence workshop at the RCGP annual conference, an article in the RCGP News and through the various College websites and Chair's blog.

By 2015, we will do the following:

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Provide stable funding arrangements to deliver specialist services | | | |
| 19. Continue the allocation of £28 million of Home Office funding over four years towards part-funding of IDVA, ISVA and MARAC co-ordinator posts and consider mechanisms to devolve Home Office VAWG monies in the next Spending Review. | 36 | HO | Until March 2015 |
| 20. Continue to provide funding to 65 local rape support schemes. | 39a | MoJ | Until March 2014 |
| 21. Continue to work with the voluntary sector to develop new rape support provision in areas lacking provision. | 39b | MoJ | Ongoing |
| 22. Continue to allocate £900,000 a year towards the running costs of national helplines to support the victims of domestic violence and stalking. | 38 | HO | Until March 2015 |
| 23. Subject to consultation ("Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses" published 30 January 2012), commit a proportion of up to £50m a year of additional income raised from offenders through the Victim Surcharge and other financial impositions to services for victims of domestic and sexual violence. | NEW | MoJ | June 2012 |
| 24. Allocate £1.2 million to fund 13 new posts for 'Young People's Advocates for Sexual Violence' who will provide direct and dedicated support to young people experiencing, or at risk of, sexual abuse and exploitation. | NEW | HO | Three years funding – £400,000 per year until March 2015 |
| 25. Provide £125,000 to develop further initiatives to support male victims of domestic violence. | NEW | HO | Until March 2013 |
| Outcome: Support victims of violence and abuse to be more independent | | | |
| 26. Introduce an automatic 13 week deferral period for victims of domestic violence who claim Jobseeker's Allowance. This provides additional support for Jobseeker's Allowance benefit claimants who are victims of domestic violence so that they are not financially dependent on abusers who are partners or family members. | 33 | DWP | Implementation from April 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Support migrant spouses who are victims of domestic and sexual violence | | | |
| 27. Develop an effective and sustainable funding solution to support victims of domestic violence who have entered the UK on a spouse visa while their claim to remain in the country is considered. | 40 | DWP | New DWP arrangements in place to provide 10 weeks support while immigration claims are dealt from April 2012 |
| 28. Work to ensure that the asylum system is as gender-sensitive as possible. | 45 | UKBA | Ongoing |
| Outcome: Improve local provision and quality of services for VAWG victims | | | |
| 29. Provide Home Office funding over the Spending Review period for continued training, support and quality assurance for MARACs. | 37 | HO | Until 2015 |
| 30. Fund up to 75 training places a year for IDVAs until March 2015. | NEW | HO | Every year until 2015 |
| 31. Improve the training available to ISVAs to ensure a minimum quality standard for ISVA support and provide a framework for qualification of ISVAs. | 47 | HO | By April 2012 |
| 32. Review and update guidance on the operation of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs). | 48 | NOMS | Ongoing |
| 33. Consider how VAWG victims in rural areas could be better supported. | NEW | Defra | Ongoing |
| 34. Develop a training package for chairpersons of Domestic Homicide Reviews. | NEW | HO | Roll out training by March 2013 |
| Outcome: Support victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence (HBV) | | | |
| 35. Build capacity amongst NGOs to establish local initiatives and services to raise awareness of and tackle forced marriage. | 42 | FMU (FCO / HO) | Ongoing |
| 36. Review use and effectiveness of multi-agency guidelines for dealing with FGM. | 51 | (HO / FCO) DH / DfE | June 2012 |
| 37. Review the findings from the HBV local mapping exercise and identify models of effective practice to share with local areas, particularly those where awareness and activity to tackle forms of HBV is low. | 52 | HO | December 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Train frontline professionals | | | |
| 38. Develop training for health visitors to provide support to families when they suspect violence against women or children may be a factor. | 18 | DH | Work on updating current professionals is ongoing and expected to complete by 2015 |
| 39. Work with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to produce public health guidance on preventing domestic violence. | 30 | DH | To be completed by 2015 |
| 40. Produce a universal academic module (six days duration) for frontline professionals on VAWG. The training module will be produced for frontline practitioners including nurses, teachers and social workers so that they can access a formal standard of training which is directly relevant to their work. | 55 | HO | Ongoing |
| 41. Develop a training package for the voluntary and statutory sectors on supporting young people experiencing domestic violence, sexual violence and gang involvement. | NEW | HO | Develop training package by March 2012. Roll-out training by March 2013 |

Chapter 4: Partnership working

Guiding principle: Work in partnership to obtain the best outcomes for victims and their families.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Better support for victims and their families with statutory, voluntary and community sectors working together to share information and agree practical action
- Improve the life chances of victims of VAWG overseas with VAWG a clear priority for our overseas aid budget
- VAWG is an international priority with the UK working with our international partners to raise the profile of this issue

The Government is committed to do all it can to end violence against women and girls but it cannot achieve this alone. Recognising the new and significant roles that Police and Crime Commissioners and Health and Wellbeing Boards are likely to play, it will be important they are equipped with the right knowledge so that they can work with communities, the women's sector and victims themselves to ensure the right response is provided at a local level. Statutory and voluntary services need to share information about the women and girls most at risk and agree clear referral and needs assessment arrangements.

Partnership is just as important on the international stage. Lynne Featherstone, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Equalities and Criminal Information, is the Ministerial Champion for tackling VAWG overseas. The focus of her role is to provide policy coherence and co-ordination across Whitehall departments on tackling VAWG and to represent the UK overseas. It is important to make the links between the women whom the UK is helping in the international arena and those who arrive in the UK seeking protection as these are often the same women.

In raising awareness and tackling VAWG overseas, since 2010 we have:

- Continued to **implement the UK Government National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security**. We published the Annual Review of the NAP in October 2011 and a revised version of the NAP earlier this year.

- **Worked within the EU, UN, and other international institutions** to ensure progressive and robust language was included in a range of international resolutions.
- Ensured that women's rights remained a **priority on the international human rights agenda** by raising women's rights issues with 27 countries through the Universal Periodic Review process.
- Submitted the **UK's 7th Periodic Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) Report**¹⁸ to the United Nations on 10 June 2011. We continue to raise awareness across government, the devolved administrations, and with NGOs through a range of methods.
- Published the **Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS)** in 2011. This recognises that women's inclusion in political settlements and peace processes, the protection of women and girls in situations of armed violence, and women's access to security and justice, are essential building blocks for more peaceful and stable states and societies.
- Developed a strategy to implement the recommendations of the **Humanitarian Response Review**. We ensure that the needs of women and girls are integrated into all our humanitarian responses, policy and guidance.
- Provided £10 million a year for the previous year and current year (2011-2013) in **core funding to UN Women**. This is in addition to earmarked funding of £3.25 million over three years to a UN Women 'Women, Peace and Security' project focused on lesson learning.
- Supported work to tackle **VAWG in at least 15 of the world's poorest countries**.
- Played a pivotal role in ensuring that the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Communiqué included confirmation that Heads of Government would undertake to **improve gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Commonwealth**. It also called on Heads of Government to implement international instruments and agreements on women's rights, including CEDAW, and to consider actions to address early and forced marriage.

Examples of our VAWG work overseas

In **Somalia** DFID is funding a United Nations development programme which trains police officers and legal officials in dealing with sexual violence cases, as well as funding sexual assault referral centres, which enable women to access free medical care, counselling and legal advice.

Through the Social Inclusion Action Fund in **Nepal**, we have funded a wide range of work on VAWG, including supporting the Gender Based Violence unit in the Prime Minister's office and a study on sexual violence among adolescents.

VAWG is also a major component of the Justice for Vulnerable Groups programme in **Malawi**. The programme includes support through UNICEF for violence prevention work in villages and schools and initiatives to strengthen victim support services locally and in police stations and hospitals.

By 2015, we will do the following:

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Outcome: Improve commissioning of services | | | |
| 42. Information to support health and wellbeing boards to understand VAWG and who they can work with at a local level to take action on it. | NEW | DH | September 2012 |
| 43. Develop a support package to help NGOs better understand the local authority VAWG commissioning process and help local authority commissioners better understand the needs of VAWG victims and measures to tackle perpetrators in their areas. | NEW | HO | September 2012 |
| 44. Provide £100,000 to determine gaps in service provision at a local level, help local authorities better understand what services will best assist victims and assist the voluntary sector in professionalising their dealings with statutory agencies. | NEW | HO | From March 2012 |
| 45. Host a national conference to bring together Local Authorities and the voluntary and community sector to discuss VAWG issues. | NEW | HO | December 2012 |
| 46. Subject to outcome of consultation "Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses" published 30 January 2012, ensure that new arrangements for commissioning of services for victims from 2014 take account of the needs of victims of VAWG. | NEW | Moj/ HO | April 2014 |
| 47. Subject to outcome of consultation "Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses" published 30 January 2012, central government to continue to commission services which are best provided at a national level (for example, national domestic violence and stalking helplines; national training and accreditation programmes; nationally co-ordinated services for victims with specialised or complex needs, such as victims of trafficking). | NEW | Moj/ HO | April 2014 |
| Outcome: Work with employers to improve awareness and outcomes for VAWG victims | | | |
| 48. Work with businesses to tackle violence against women in the workplace. | NEW | HO | March 2013 |
| 49. Raise awareness in the Department of Health to ensure staff have an understanding of VAWG, and where to seek help and support. Engage with other government departments to encourage similar activity for staff across the Civil Service. | NEW | DH | 2015 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Improve the life chances of VAWG victims overseas | | | |
| 50. Work with Governments overseas to encourage legislative and policy reform to address the structural causes of VAWG, in accordance with international commitments. | NEW | FCO | Ongoing |
| 51. Continue to strongly support the ratification and lobby for the full implementation of the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol. | 60 | FCO | Ongoing |
| 52. Continue to promote the domestic implementation of CEDAW. | 60a | GEO | Ongoing |
| 53. Take action to tackle VAWG in conflict and post conflict countries through the implementation of the UK National Action Plan (NAP) on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security, in partnership with the Department for International Development (DfID) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). | 61 | FCO/ MoD/ DfID | Ongoing |
| 54. Ensure that the UK's humanitarian action, including both assistance and protection, prevents and responds to VAWG. | 63 | DfID | Ongoing |
| 55. Work with UN Women to ensure it focuses on key priorities including VAWG and the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals and delivers real progress for women and girls worldwide. | 64 | DFID / FCO | March 2013 |
| 56. Continue to support the role of the Council of Europe (CoE) in preventing and responding to VAWG. | 65 | HO/ MoJ/ GEO/ FCO | Consider whether to sign up to CAHVIO by April 2012. |
| 57. Provide practical guidance to DfID country offices to tackle VAWG in at least 15 of the poorest countries (includes countries in the UK 1325 National Action Plan). | 67 | DfID/ FCO | Ongoing |
| 58. Work with partners to improve and communicate the evidence base on VAWG and understanding of effective interventions. | 70 | DfID | Ongoing |
| 59. Improve the international, including EU, response to forced marriage by continuing to lobby for commitment to tackling the practice at key events. | 71 | FMU (FCO / HO) | Ongoing UN General Assembly in September 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 60. Review results of EU Fundamental Rights Agency's survey on VAWG across EU member states and consider any recommendations. | 72 | All depts | Initial findings due June 2013. Full report end 2013 |

Chapter 5: Justice outcomes and risk reduction

Guiding principle: Take action to reduce the risk to women and girls who are victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

The outcomes we want to achieve:

- Increase confidence of women and girls to access the criminal justice system
- Improve criminal justice outcomes for victims of VAWG, including the rate of convictions
- Rehabilitate more offenders
- Reduce multiple incidents of violence by using the appropriate risk management tools

The Government will ensure that the right legislative measures are in place to protect women and girls from violence and bring perpetrators to justice and that practitioners use these tools effectively to provide justice outcomes for victims. By better serving victims, we hope other women will have confidence to come forward and report incidents of violence to the police.

We will continue to work with the police, CPS, judiciary and voluntary agencies to ensure that vulnerable and intimidated victims and witnesses are fully supported throughout the criminal justice process and are able to give their best evidence in court. We will also seek to ensure myths and stereotypes around rape are challenged so that juries are not inappropriately swayed by this misinformation.

In order to get the CJS first response right, since 2010 we have:

- **Trained 807 rape specialist prosecutors** in the CPS, who handled 4,208 prosecutions for rape in 2010-11.
- **Trained all new CPS prosecutors in domestic violence** and prosecuted 82,127 defendants in 2010-11 for domestic violence related offences.
- Introduced a **quality assurance scheme for VAWG prosecutions** which includes an assessment of 25% of all rape prosecutions.

- Ensured that the **CPS review of victim support commitments** included consideration of communication with, and support of, victims of VAWG.
- **Evaluated the police specialist unit approach to investigating rape.** ACPO have published and circulated a report on the dedicated team approach to handling rape cases. The report shows that increased reporting rates were found in each force following the launch of dedicated teams and has identified a number of factors that appeared to make a positive difference to rape investigations.
- Funded Rights of Women to revise and **republish their handbook for adult victims of sexual violence; *From Report to Court***. The guide was launched in July 2011.
- **Revised and published two sets of practitioner guidance:** *Achieving Best Evidence: Guidance on Interviewing Victims and Witnesses* and *Guidance on Using Special Measures (2011)* and *Vulnerable and Intimidated Witnesses a Police Service Guide (2011)*. Both sets of guidance are aimed primarily at the police and practitioners working with vulnerable and intimidated victims and witnesses (including domestic and sexual violence victims).
- Made available the **CPS Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Rape booklet** on the CPS website and continued to quality assure letters from the CPS to rape victims with this process overseen by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Action on stalking

- Learnt from the **Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC)** to see how its methods of investigation of stalking cases could be applied to mainstream policing.
- Held **four regional road shows to promote awareness of stalking** and encourage people with experience and expertise in this field to respond to the Government consultation on how we can protect victims of stalking more effectively.
- Established a **National Stalking Strategy Group** to support the ACPO Stalking Working Group. The group has discussed cyberstalking, the FTAC, regional roadshows and legislation.

Stalking – our next steps

Following our recent consultation on stalking, we will be amending the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 to introduce two new offences of ‘stalking’ and ‘stalking where there is fear of violence’ alongside the existing harassment offences in the Act. We hope that making stalking explicit in the law – and distinguishing it from other types of harassment such as neighbourhood disputes – will raise the profile of this awful crime and make it clear to the police, prosecutors and the public that stalking is a criminal offence and should be dealt with appropriately.

We will also be giving the police a new power to enter the properties of people suspected of stalking (where there is no fear of violence) to search for and seize equipment used to stalk victims. This should help them to collect the evidence they need to deal with stalking behaviour at an early stage and prevent it from escalating.

However, we recognise it is not enough to change the law. The Home Office, Ministry of Justice, the Crown Prosecution Service and the National Policing Improvement Agency will work together to develop training and best practice guidance for the police and prosecutors to help them recognise stalking behaviour and ensure that more stalking perpetrators are brought to justice.

On legislation and justice outcomes, since 2010 we have:

- Been piloting **Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs)** in three police force areas for 12 months starting in June 2011. As of 6 February 2012, 213 had already been granted by the courts with positive feedback from practitioners, victims and local NGOs.¹⁹

Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs)

In June 2011, the Home Office launched a 12 month DVPO pilot in three police areas – Greater Manchester, West Mercia and Wiltshire. DVPOs are a new power that enables the police and magistrates to protect the victim in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident. With DVPOs, the perpetrator can be prevented from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for between 14 to 28 days, allowing the victim breathing space to consider their options such as taking out a longer-term injunction. As of 6 February 2012, provisional data indicated that 213 DVPOs had been granted by Magistrates across the three force areas since the pilot began.

The pilot has made a real and positive impact on victims' lives. For example, early in the pilot, magistrates in Wiltshire granted a DVPO for the full 28 days. This barred the perpetrator from molesting or contacting the victim, evicting or excluding the victim from the property or from entering or going within 100 metres of the property. While the DVPO was in force, the victim was able to get support from domestic abuse agencies and apply to the County Court for a Non-Molestation Order, which was subsequently granted for six months.

The victim said that, without the DVPO, she would still be worn down by daily abuse. “The DVPO helped me to take steps which I couldn’t have done if he was still in the house. It’s the best thing that could have happened to me.”

- Put in place **statutory domestic violence homicide reviews** in April 2011 and published guidance.²⁰
- **Published guidelines for prosecutors** dealing with potential cases of FGM.²¹
- Implemented amendments to the existing **special measures** available in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 to **further assist vulnerable and intimidated witnesses** to give their best evidence in court. Amendments include making special provision for the admissibility of video-recorded evidence in chief of adult complainants in sexual offence cases in the Crown Court, specific provision for the presence of a supporter to the witness in the live link room, automatic eligibility for special measures to children under 18 providing child witnesses with more choice about how they give their evidence and relaxed the restrictions on a witness giving additional evidence in chief after the witness's video-recorded statement has been admitted.

ISVAs – improving the prosecution of rape cases involving sex workers

A Home Office funded specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advocate working in Merseyside with sex workers has helped improve the prosecution of rape cases involving sex workers and their safety. By March 2011, after only three months, four dangerous defendants were in prison responsible for attacking at least ten women. In one of the cases a defendant was prosecuted for rape of a sex worker in September 2010 and, using a new scheme called 'Ugly Mugs', the police identified a previous victim of sexual assault and false imprisonment. An earlier rape case from 2006 had found the defendant not guilty, following victim intimidation. However the victim in the earlier case agreed to go to court to give 'evidence of similar fact' or 'bad character'. The defendant pleaded guilty to rape and although he did not admit the sexual assault and false imprisonment the ISVA fed back information to that victim who was satisfied with the outcome. All three women have now exited street sex work, two are completely drug free (one in second stage rehabilitation) and one is on a methadone reduction programme. The defendant will be on the sex offenders' register for life.

- Held a **ministerial seminar on personal harm over the internet** (covering hate crime and cyber stalking) in July 2011 with internet service providers, charities, victims and officials and work to take this forward is being discussed.
- Announced our intention to further strengthen **notification requirements for registered sex offenders** through the introduction of four additional requirements on offenders to: i) notify all foreign travel ii) notify weekly where registered as 'no fixed abode' iii) notify when living in a household with a minor and iv) notify police of passport, bank account and credit card details and provide proof of identification at each notification. This legislation will be in force by summer 2012.
- **Launched consultations on a range of issues** in relation to VAWG and possible changes to the law, including on a domestic violence disclosure scheme, the definition of domestic violence to take into account younger victims, stalking and forced marriage.
- Announced that **breaches of Forced Marriage Protection Orders** will become a criminal offence.

On reducing the risk for victims and rehabilitating offenders, since 2010 we have:

- Continued to **invest in local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs)** to protect the highest risk domestic violence victims. As at 31 December 2011, over 250 MARACs were in place across England and Wales which in the 12 preceding months had discussed **protection plans for 53,120 domestic violence victims** (and their 70,126 children) (including repeat victims). The Home Office is part funding 54 MARAC co-ordinator posts and through the Coordinated Action against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) has invested in a national support infrastructure to provide practical training, support and advice to MARACs across England and Wales.
- Published a **review of MARACs**.²²
- Provided £3.2 million of joint funding (National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the Corston Independent Funders' Coalition) for 2011/12, to sustain 26 women's community services across England to provide **alternatives to custody** for women offenders and women at risk of offending who themselves also suffer high rate of victimisation – including domestic and sexual assault.
- Formally announced that in 2012-13, **NOMS will continue to fund up to 30 women's community services**. This new commitment will amount to an additional £3.5 million to existing Probation Trust budgets and will form part of their future baseline funding.
- Funded **Women's Breakout**, an umbrella body for women's service, for three years (2011-2014) to build capacity in this sector.
- Provided **information on services to support women offenders** and women at risk of offending who have been affected by abuse or violence. The National Offender Management Service, in conjunction with Women's Aid, has recently published a Framework '*Supporting women offenders who have experienced domestic and sexual violence*'. This provides links to resources for practitioners, guidance for commissioners of services and details of many organisations offering support for women in the community.
- Rolled out the **Women Awareness Staff Programme (WASP)** in the Community following 6 pilot courses. This was aimed at voluntary and community sector organisations working with women offenders and women at risk of offending in the community. NOMS has also been rolling out the **Sex Workers in Custody and the Community (SWICC)** training and since 1 April 2011, over 1,000 members of staff and CJS partners, including from probation services, women's centres, charities working with offenders, police, drugs agencies, NHS staff, school exclusion teams and domestic violence specialists have been trained.
- Continued to develop work to **rehabilitate convicted perpetrators of domestic abuse**, including producing guidance for Offender Managers working with domestic violence offenders in the community, and the development of a new Domestic Abuse accredited programme which will be run in both custody and the community. In 2010-11 3,841 men completed a domestic violence programme in Probation and around 200 men in prison.
- Delivered **sex offender treatment programmes**. In 2010-11, 1,572 men completed a programme in Probation and 1,142 men completed a programme in prison.

- Hosted a **roundtable to discuss the response to perpetrators of domestic violence**. It was agreed to establish a working group to provide a forum for statutory and voluntary organisations to discuss and develop a narrative on the government response to perpetrators of domestic violence. The first meeting was held on 1 November 2011 and a meeting on 7 February 2012 looked at the interface with Children's Services. Further meetings are planned during 2012.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Pilot Scheme

On average two people are killed by their current or former partner each week in England and Wales.²³ On 5 March 2012, we announced that a one-year pilot will take place from the summer of 2012 to test out a Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme in the police force areas of Greater Manchester, Gwent, Nottinghamshire and Wiltshire.

The pilot will test a process for enabling the police to disclose to the public information about previous violent offending by a new or existing partner where this may help protect them from further violent offending. The pilot will test two types of process for disclosing this information. The first would be triggered by a request by a member of the public ("right to ask"). The second would be triggered by the police where they make a proactive decision to disclose the information in order to protect a potential victim ("right to know"). Both processes can be implemented within existing legal powers. The pilot follows a consultation published in October 2011.

We will consider the outcomes from the pilot very carefully before deciding on next steps.

By 2015, we will:

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Improve the CJS response to VAWG victims | | | |
| 61. Work on the development of guidance and learning programmes for the Police on sexual and domestic violence, including FGM, forced marriage, honour-based violence (HBV) and stalking. | 34, part NEW | HO/ MoJ/ ACPO | December 2012 |
| 62. Develop and deliver refresher training for prosecutors in VAWG issues. | NEW | CPS | Specifically developing new training in cyber-stalking and harassment by July 2012, HBV and FM by December 2012 and considering refresher training in domestic violence and rape by March 2013 |
| 63. Publish research on special measures to protect vulnerable victims – including of domestic and sexual abuse – and take appropriate actions following findings. | NEW | CPS | Publication is due in March 2012, implementation in 2012-13 |
| 64. Seek to re-establish effective voluntary arrangements with local authorities to ensure that the protocol ²⁴ on exchange of information is adopted and used to best effect. The protocol ²⁴ was developed by CPS, ACPO, LGA and Association of Directors of Social Services. | NEW | CPS/ HO/ CLG/ DfE | Protocol is undergoing examination to be completed by August 2012; with any amendments/ update implemented by March 2013. |
| 65. Develop local action plans building on the qualitative assessment of VAWG prosecutions. | NEW | CPS | Develop six-monthly action plans (April 2012 and October 2012). Use local scrutiny and involvement panels to assure CPS action plans, March 2013; include lessons in CPS VAWG annual report, September 2012. |
| 66. Ensure rape myths are consistently recognised and challenged during the prosecution of rape cases. | NEW | CPS | From March 2012 use only appropriately experienced and regularly updated advocates, whether in-house or members of the self-employed Bar. |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 67. Fund a national 'Ugly Mugs' scheme to protect sex workers from violent customers. | NEW | HO | March 2013 |
| Outcome: Develop guidance and share good practice | | | |
| 68. Learn from how police forces in other countries respond to VAWG and work with our police partners to consider how effective approaches might be applied in England and Wales. | 29 | HO | Ongoing |
| 69. Work with the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime and other partners on an effective response to exploitation of prostitution and human trafficking in preparation for the Olympic Games. | NEW | CPS/ HO | Ongoing work to be completed before July 2012 |
| 70. Address the issue of cyberstalking by ensuring that the links are made between the different agencies that are working on stalking, e-crime and communications data. | 81 | HO | December 2012 |
| 71. Identify and share good practice in prosecutions for child sexual exploitation. | NEW | CPS | Identify by June 2012; dissemination by March 2013 |
| 72. Publication of the Forced Marriage Designated Courts Resource Manual so that it is available to all professionals practising in this area. | NEW | MoJ | Summer 2012 |
| 73. Identify the most appropriate method of support and communication with VAWG victims. | NEW | CPS | Identification of methods by April 2012; roll out 2012-13 |
| 74. Review the effectiveness of the statutory guidance on Domestic Homicide Reviews. | NEW | HO | December 2012 |
| Outcome: Improve support to VAWG victims (including sex workers) | | | |
| 75. Undertake an audit of SARC services to ensure they all meet the minimum elements. | NEW | HO | Summer 2012 |
| 76. Undertake research to gain an understanding of international best practice in relation to tactics to reduce harm and abuse of women involved in prostitution. | NEW | HO | December 2012 |
| Outcome: Protect and support victims of domestic violence through the CJS | | | |
| 77. Consider the responses to the consultation on widening the current cross-government definition of domestic violence (for example to include victims under 18) and agree next steps. | NEW | HO | May 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 78. Consider the responses to the stalking consultation (closed on 5 February) on how we can protect victims of stalking more effectively. | NEW | HO | April 2012 |
| 79. Complete a 12-month pilot of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs). | 73 | HO / MoJ | Publish findings by Autumn 2013. |
| 80. Consider the case for implementing section 60 of the Family Law Act 1996. This provision would provide for a 'prescribed person' such as the police or local authority to make an application for a domestic violence injunction on someone else's behalf. A similar provision is already available in forced marriage cases. | 74 | MoJ | Defer until 2013 until after the DVPO pilots are concluded and evaluated |
| 81. Support women affected by domestic violence through the courts system. | 76 | MOJ/ CPS/ HO | £4.7m in funding provided over the next 3 years through the Victim and Witness General Fund for 44 court-based IDVA posts. National steering group to oversee transition of SDVCs affected by court closures. |
| 82. Consider feasibility of applying Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) model in Youth Courts. | NEW | MOJ/ HO/ CPS | Consider feasibility with select areas in 2012; dissemination of any findings 2013 |
| 83. CPS and ACPO publish a joint enhanced evidence gathering and charging checklist for use in domestic violence cases. | NEW | CPS/ HO/ ACPO | Publish by July 2012 and roll out 2012-13 |
| 84. Address ways to improve the safety of victims, including those under 18, in the prosecution of domestic violence cases. Research into safety of victims including: actions following victim withdrawals from prosecutions and into the impact of IDVA support on CJS outcomes. | NEW | CPS | To be completed by August 2012; consideration of findings for implementation in March 2013 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome: Consider changes to the law to better protect VAWG victims | | | |
| 85. To introduce two new offences of stalking. | NEW | HO/ MoJ | Summer 2012 |
| 86. Consider the responses to the consultation on whether a specific criminal offence would help us to combat forced marriage (closes 30 March) and agree next steps. | NEW | HO/ MoJ | May 2012 |
| 87. Legislate to make breach of a Forced Marriage Protection Order a criminal offence. | NEW | MoJ/ HO | When parliamentary time allows |
| 88. Consider ways to improve the criminal justice response to the abuse of trust involved in cases of domestic violence. | NEW | HO/ MoJ | June 2012 |
| Outcome: Better understand the issues and reduce risk through research and evidence gathering | | | |
| 89. Improve understanding of the incidence and reporting of false allegations of rape. | 4 | HO/ MoJ | March 2013 |
| 90. Explore the prevalence and effects of VAWG on vulnerable groups, including BME communities, and work to raise awareness of VAWG both within these groups and with frontline practitioners and local decision makers. | 9 | HO | Autumn 2012 |
| 91. Carry out further research on the health aspects of violence against women and children (VAWC). The Department for Health has committed £1.5m to conduct new research into VAWG and the NHS response to it. The research is being commissioned to provide evidence to government in developing policy to tackle violence against women and children and to contribute to building research capacity across the sector in a relatively short period of time. The research will cover the NHS response to sexual violence, information sharing, trafficking, violence against women and children, and the long-term consequences of violence, trauma and abuse. | 56 | DH | DH is in the process of commissioning separate but related studies on the health aspects of violence against women and children Projects should be beginning in April 2012 with the view to completion by 2015 |
| 92. Review and assess how third parties monitor Forced Marriage Protection Orders and deal with breaches of these orders. | NEW | MoJ | By end 2012 |

| Action | Previous action number | Dept | Timing |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------|--------------------------------------------|
| 93. Clarify the issues around Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery through the inquiry that Sir Bruce Keogh is conducting into cosmetic surgery and other cosmetic interventions. | NEW | DH | Report by March 2013 |
| Outcome: Risk management and reduction | | | |
| 94. Consider whether MARACs could be used to identify and support high-risk victims of rape and sexual assault. | 85 | HO | June 2012 |
| 95. Pilot a domestic violence disclosure scheme in four police force areas. | NEW | HO | Commence Summer 2012 |
| Outcome: Rehabilitation of offenders | | | |
| 96. Continue to support the NOMS domestic abuse strategy by developing and making available for delivery an evidence-based programme of intervention for perpetrators of domestic abuse. This would replace programmes currently used by probation and some prisons. | NEW | NOMS | End April 2012 – submit for accreditation. |
| 97. Create a new specialist risk assessment tool to enhance the validity of the risk-targeting criteria for the offending behaviour programme 'Building Better Relationships' in line with the What Works risk principle. | NEW | NOMS | End September 2013 |
| 98. To revise the NOMS domestic abuse strategy and the Best Practice Guidance for Offender Managers working with perpetrators of domestic abuse in line with the new domestic abuse programme. | NEW | NOMS | April 2014 |
| Outcome: Support women offenders who have been victims of violence | | | |
| 99. Support the continued development of effective community-based alternatives to custody for women offenders and women at risk of offending. | 86 | NOMS | Ongoing |
| 100. Deliver the Women Awareness Staff Programme to voluntary and community sector partners working with women offenders and women at risk of offending in the community. | 88 | NOMS | Ongoing |

Annex A – Summary of completed actions in the VAWG action plan, published 8 March 2011

Of the 88 actions included in the original VAWG Action Plan, to date, 45 have been completed.

| Action No. | Update |
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| 5. | Improve the reporting on the number of successful rape prosecutions in the UK. The Ministry of Justice has consulted on improving crime and conviction statistics on rape, and committed to altering the way conviction rates for rape will be measured. |
| 6. | Take action to protect children from excessive commercialisation and premature sexualisation. The Reg Bailey Report on the sexualisation and commercialisation of childhood was published on 6 June 2011. |
| 7. | Hold a forum between the VAWG inter-ministerial group and representatives from the media and music industries. An IMG was held on 19 October 2011 with representatives from the media industry and media regulators and industry bodies to discuss how images and messages could perpetuate gender stereotypes and promote an acceptance of VAWG. |
| 12. | Raise awareness of VAWG in the Armed Forces. The Ministry of Defence has met with Service families and welfare associations and identified a range of actions to raise awareness of VAWG within the Service community. |
| 13. | Update the British Crime Survey (BCS) to improve understanding of attitudes towards VAWG. Questions have been developed and put forward to the BCS team for inclusion. |
| 14. | Discussed how to promote personal safety for lone workers. The Home Office has attended the quarterly meetings with retail business organisations to discuss retail crime which feed into the National Retail Crime Steering Group co-chaired by Lord Henley. |
| 15. | Promote new equality duty. The new equality duty commenced on 5 April 2011 and Government Equalities Office has published two quick start guides to assist public bodies to comply with it. |
| 16. | Establish an independent VAWG Advisory Group to advise the Department for Education. This group was established and has met during 2011. Going forward, this group will be combined with the Home Office stakeholder group. |
| 17. | A national campaign to support and help turn around the lives of families with multiple problems has seen 16 community budget areas now established, a new Early Intervention Grant made available and the exemplar projects (e.g. on access to domestic violence services) now approved. |

| Action No. | Update |
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| 19. | Implement findings from Munro review. The Department for Education responded on 13 July 2011 to the Munro review of child protection.The recommendations are to be taken forward by local authorities and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards. |
| 21. | Reduce sexual and sexist bullying in schools. The Department for Education published updated anti-bullying advice to schools in July 2011. |
| 23. | A Women, Girls and Gangs working group has been established as part of the Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme (which has superseded the Guns, Gangs and Knives roundtable).The group has established its terms of reference and will meet bi-monthly with the aim to develop policy and influence local delivery to prevent and reduce the impact of gang violence on girls and women.The group includes representatives from other government departments, children's services, the criminal justice and voluntary sector. |
| 24. | Evaluate the police specialist unit approach to investigating rape. ACPO has completed the report on the dedicated team approach to handling rape cases. |
| 25. | To improve communication with victims of sexual violence , the Home Office has funded "Rights of Women" to revise and republish their handbook "From Report to Court" and a new CPS booklet "CPS Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Rape" is now available on the CPS website. |
| 26. | We have learnt from the Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC) .The Department for Health and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) now sit on the National Stalking Strategy Group to ensure health practitioners and police professionals working on stalking are linked up. |
| 27. | Ensure best practice guidance on the investigation and prosecution of stalking cases is disseminated through regional events. Four stalking road shows were held at the end of 2011. |
| 28. | The National Stalking Strategy Group has been established. |
| 32. | The VAWG training module for healthcare professionals undertaking DWP Work Capability Assessments has been introduced. |
| 35. | CPS review of victims support commitments includes consideration of VAWG victims. Proposals were piloted from September to February 2012.VAWG victims were being identified as 'those in greatest need' and supported accordingly.Consultation continues on the most appropriate methods of support and communication.A final decision on rollout across England and Wales will be made by March 2012 with rollout in 2012/13. |
| 39. | Use proceeds from the victims surcharge to give existing rape crisis centres stable, long-term funding and to establish new centres where there are gaps. Funding for existing centres for the next three years has been finalised.The first four new rape support centres are open and work is ongoing to identify further potential sites. |
| 41, | Consider the findings of a study examining the impact of transferring commissioning and budgetary responsibility for forensic sexual assault work from the Police to the health service. The study has been completed and the findings have been analysed.As a result, the decision has been taken to transfer commissioning responsibility to the NHS Commissioning Board. |
| 43. | Explore options for providing longer term support to victims of forced marriage once they have been repatriated to the UK. Funding awarded to Karma Nirvana in December 2011 and the project is underway. |

| Action No. | Update |
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| 44. | Support local authorities and specialist organisations, in partnership with the Local Government Association, to work together to provide local support for women and girls affected by abuse. A Communities and Local Government Ministerial led roundtable was held in May to support and encourage sharing of best practice by local authorities, and the Local Government Group (which includes the LGA) held a conference in June to highlight the importance of investing in VAWG services. |
| 46. | A diploma in forensic and clinical aspects of sexual assault has been developed with two intakes per year. |
| 49. | An e-learning tool for GPs on violence against women and children was launched at the Annual Primary Care Conference on 20th October 2011. |
| 50. | The review of the forced marriage e-learning tool has been completed and will help to evaluate the tool's use across practitioner groups. |
| 53. | Support information sharing through a network of CPS specialist co-ordinators. CPS co-ordinators have been rationalised; established network of 13 supported by headquarters through internal communications sharing information and effective criminal justice responses to forms of VAWG. |
| 54. | Deliver training for specialist prosecutors in VAW. 807 rape specialist prosecutors have been trained. All prosecutors that have joined the Service since 2008 completed the mandatory Domestic Violence e-learning by March 2012. |
| 57. | Help local areas understand the overall benefit of investing in VAWG services. Whilst the EHRC online tool to assess the need for services was completed, it will now not be published due to problems with the methodology. |
| 58. | The needs assessment toolkit on sexual violence to inform local statutory assessments has been published and made available on the DH website. |
| 59. | Work with eight local areas on a project exploring how tackling VAWG can be supported by community projects. Completed projects on community coaching and participatory budgeting. |
| 60a. | Promote domestic implementation of CEDAW. We completed and submitted the UK's 7th Periodic Report on CEDAW to the United Nations on 10 June 2011. |
| 62. | Complete as the Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS) references VAWG , and that we are in the next stage – delivery of the strategy which could be a new action. |
| 64. | Work with UN Women to ensure it includes VAWG in its priorities. The UN Women Strategic Plan was adopted by the Executive Board in September 2011. |
| 66. | Continue to support the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015. Attended the annual expert group consultations in March 2011. |
| 68. | Enhance UK's international leadership on tackling VAWG overseas. Lynne Featherstone appointed Overseas VAWG champion on 25 November 2010. Programme of work from April – March 2012 has been completed and plans for future visits are being drawn up. Lynne Featherstone has written out to ministers to encourage them to use all levers in their domestic, EU and international engagements to ensure VAWG issues remain high on the agenda. |
| 69. | Enable DfID staff to develop their expertise on VAWG. DFID launched its online resource as planned in Autumn 2011. |

| Action No. | Update |
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| 75. | Implemented section 9 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004 putting in place domestic homicide reviews since April 2011. |
| 77. | Consult on a revised definition of domestic violence to take into account younger victims. The consultation was launched in December 2011 and will close on 30 March 2012. |
| 78. | Address issues relating to prosecution, domestic violence and ethnicity. CPS have issued guidance to prosecutors on engagement with specialist BME support services. |
| 79. | Guidelines have been produced for prosecutors dealing with potential cases of FGM. |
| 80. | Review impact of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. A consultation on stalking was launched in November 2011 and closed on 5 February 2012. |
| 82. | Take steps to validate how VAW prosecutions are conducted. Six-monthly validation checks will continue to be scrutinised by Chief Operating Officer. A VAWG report was published in November 2011. |
| 83. | Widen the notification requirements for registered sex offenders. The consultation on whether we should widen the notification requirements for registered sex offenders has been completed and a statutory instrument to implement the changes was laid on 5 March 2012. |
| 84. | Ensure that local areas are fully equipped to continue to operate MARACs as part of their wider response to tackling domestic violence. Review on the operation of MARACs has been completed. |
| 87. | Provide information on services to support women offenders and women at risk of offending who have been affected by abuse or violence. The Ministry of Justice framework guidance document to provide information on services to support women offenders and women at risk of offending, who have been affected by abuse, was published on 30 June 2011. |

Glossary

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| ACO | Association of Chief Police Officers |
| BME | Black and Minority Ethnic |
| BCS | British Crime Survey |
| BSOS | Building Stability Overseas Strategy |
| CAADA | Coordinated Action against Domestic Abuse |
| CAHVIO | Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence |
| CJS | Criminal Justice System |
| CLG | Department for Communities and Local Government |
| CPS | Crown Prosecution Service |
| DCMS | Department for Culture, Media and Sport |
| DfE | Department for Education |
| DfT | Department for Transport |
| DH | Department of Health |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| DVPN | Domestic Violence Protection Notice |
| DVPO | Domestic Violence Protection Order |
| DWP | Department for Work and Pensions |
| EHRC | Equality and Human Rights Commission |
| EU | European Union |
| FGCS | Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery |
| FGM | Female Genital Mutilation |
| FMU | Forced Marriage Unit |
| FTAC | Fixated Threat Assessment Centre |

| | |
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| GEO | Government Equalities Office |
| HBV | Honour-Based Violence |
| HO | Home Office |
| IDVA | Independent Domestic Violence Adviser |
| IMG | Inter-Ministerial Group |
| ISVA | Independent Sexual Violence Adviser |
| JSNA | Joint Strategic Needs Assessment |
| LGA | Local Government Association |
| MAPPA | Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements |
| MARAC | Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference |
| MOPC | Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime |
| NAP | National Action Plan |
| MoD | Ministry of Defence |
| Moj | Ministry of Justice |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organisation |
| NHS | National Health Service |
| NOMS | National Offender Management Service |
| NUJ | National Union of Journalists |
| Ofsted | Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills |
| PCC | Police and Crime Commissioner |
| PSHE | Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education |
| SARC | Sexual Assault Referral Centre |
| SDVC | Specialist Domestic Violence Court |
| SRE | Sex and Relationship Education |
| UKBA | United Kingdom Border Agency |
| WNC | Women's National Commission |
| UKCCIS | United Kingdom Council for Child Internet Safety |
| UN | United Nations |
| VAW | Violence against Women |
| VAWC | Violence against Women and Children |
| VAWG | Violence against Women and Girls |
| VCS | Voluntary and Community Sector |

Endnotes

- ¹ Smith, K. et al. (2012) Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2010/11. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/12. London: Home Office.
- ² *ibid* 1
- ³ *ibid* 1
- ⁴ Smith, K. et al (2011) Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2009/10. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 01/11. London: Home Office.
- ⁵ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crim/ending-gang-violence/>
- ⁶ www.thisisabuse.direct.gov
- ⁷ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/equality-act-guidance/>
- ⁸ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0077662/bailey-review-of-the-commercialisation-and-sexualisation-of-childhood-final-report-published>
- ⁹ <http://www.parentport.org.uk/>
- ¹⁰ <http://www.asa.org.uk/Media-Centre/2011/ASA-statement-on-sexual-imagery-in-outdoor-advertising.aspx>
- ¹¹ http://www.ofcom.org.uk/files/2011/11/11-189291759_annex.pdf
- ¹² <http://www.education.gov.uk/munroreview/downloads/GovernmentResponsetoMunro.pdf>
- ¹³ http://www.education.gov.uk/munroreview/downloads/8875_DfE_Munro_Report_TAGGED.pdf
- ¹⁴ <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/bullying>
- ¹⁵ The new framework which took effect from January 2012 can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/news/shape-of-school-inspection-2012-0>.
- ¹⁶ The training can be accessed at: www.fmelearning.co.uk
- ¹⁷ http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_125668
- ¹⁸ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/international-equality/7th-cedaw-report>
- ¹⁹ This is provisional data supplied by police for monitoring purposes and may be subject to change
- ²⁰ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/domestic-violence/domestic-homicide-reviews/>
- ²¹ http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/d_to_g/female_genital_mutilation/
- ²² Supporting high-risk victims of domestic violence: a review of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) (2011) Steel et al. Research Report 55 (Home Office)
- ²³ Smith, K. et al (2012) Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2010/11. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/12. London: Home Office.
- ²⁴ <http://www.cps.gov.uk/Publications/docs/protocol/%20letter.pdr>



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