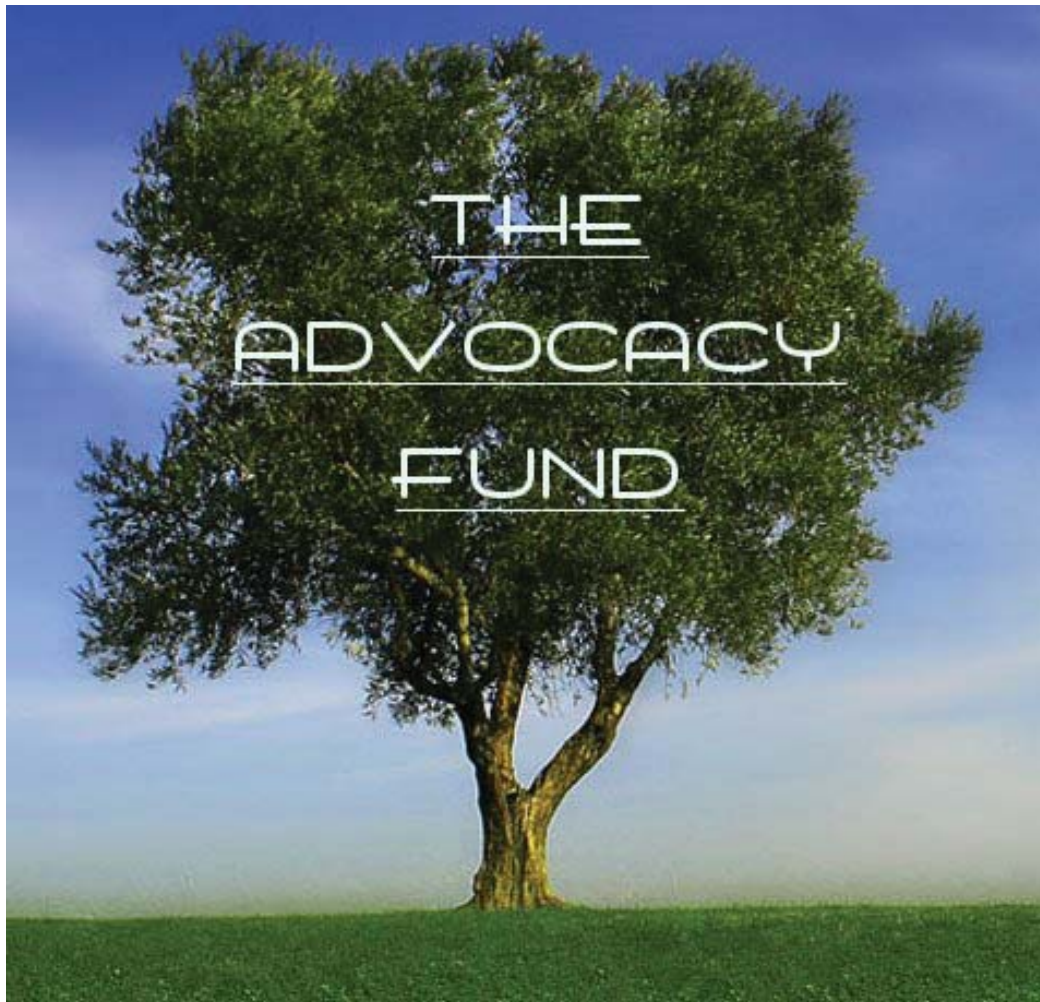


# Single or Dual DV Risk Assessments

## A summarised report

**A survey of Dual and Single Risk Assessment Policies and Practices of the 52 Police Constabularies in Great Britain & Northern Ireland as National indicators of public policy and practice and discriminatory practices and un-assessed DV victim risk in the UNITED KINGDOM.**



**Mr Paul Randle- Joliffe (Chairman & FOI Conception & Report Completion)**  
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The Advocacy Fund – 13/02/2013



## The Advocacy Fund

The Advocacy Fund is a National Non Profit Research & Advocacy Non Governmental Organisation, run by volunteers, that works to find the flaws and gaps that aid or prolong disadvantage in current systems and its hope is that by identifying these issues that this will lead to a rethinks in public policy and practice to enable those who are victims of: Abuse, Discrimination and flawed public policies and systems to receive the recognition of their plight and the sometimes simple adjustments to be assisted.

As a result of its Advocacy work and engagement with Local Authorities, Police Forces, other official and non official agencies and Service Users from around the UK, The Advocacy Fund has become aware of policy and practice gaps and with individual service users being unable to address these with the organisations resulting in many cases of conflict and engagement issues at best and at the other end of the scale tangible discrimination, risk and harm.

The Advocacy Fund because of the diversity of it's engagements has been able to see common patterns that A. Individual Users may not see and B. Organisations may not be aware of: as both have more focused rather than broader engagements.

To address these issues The Advocacy Fund initiated and will continue highly focused Freedom of Information Requests (FOI) (Under the Freedom of Information Act 200) across the UK to establish the Policies and Practices with various organisations concerning issues using the WhatDoTheyKnow website <http://www.whatdotheyknow.com> Search4 Advocacy Fund DV.

This is to enable the response results to available publicly as used in The Advocacy Fund's reports, which this is one, in each FOI request area.

At this time all the work that is being presented to you has been done by no more than six people from their own donated resources and time, it is hoped the work will have an impact.

THE FOI's AND THIS REPORT WERE COMPLIED FOR THE UKFRM (UK Family Rights Movement)



About UK Family Rights Movement (UKFRM)

The UK Family Rights Movement (UKFRM) is dedicated to three initial objectives:

To facilitate exchange of information and ideas among peer FRM organisations;

To network with peer FRM organisations regarding joint undertakings such as submissions in response to public consultations;

To discuss creation of a UK FRM "big tent" Coalition to provide political economies of scale without impacting the autonomy of member organisations.

FRM is defined as the community of mothers' / fathers' / children's / grandparents'/ second spouses' organisations subscribing to core ideals of the international Family Rights Movement:

Presumptive shared parenting, Gender equality, and Recognition of domestic violence as a genderless dysfunction. Members from the following 31 organisations are currently participating in forum discussions:

Advocacy Fund, BFMS, Both Parents Matter-Cymru, Cheltenham Group, C.O.P.E, Custodyminefield.com, EPA, FASO, FKCE, FLS, FNF & FNF Cymru, FR4E, F4J, Family Advocacy & Law, Grandparents Apart, Grandparents Association, Mankind Initiative, McKenzie Friends Family Law, Men's Aid, NPPN, No More Solicitors, P4P Wales/Cymru, PAIN ,PEF, RF4J, SNAP, Temper DV, The Men's Network, Wikivorce, Victims Unite.

## THE FOI REQUEST IN BRIEF

This summarised report concerns The Advocacy Fund's FOI duplicated requests to the 52 Police Constabularies in England and Wales, Scotland & Scotland concerning the use of single or dual risk assessments in Domestic Violence /Abuse cases and the practices and policies being used: IN SHORT do the Constabularies risk assess just the reporter of DV or both alleged victim and perpetrator, why? and does this cause risk?

The same FOI request was sent to the following:

<p><b>London Region</b></p> <p>1 City of London Police</p> <p>2 Metropolitan Police Service</p> <p><b>Eastern Region</b></p> <p>3 Bedfordshire Police</p> <p>4 Cambridgeshire Constabulary</p> <p>5 Essex Police</p> <p>6 Hertfordshire Constabulary</p> <p>7 Norfolk Constabulary</p> <p>8 Suffolk Constabulary</p> <p><b>South East Region</b></p> <p>9 Hampshire Constabulary</p> <p>10 Kent Police</p> <p>11 Surrey Police</p> <p>12 Sussex Police</p> <p>13 Thames Valley Police</p> <p><b>South West Region</b></p> <p>14 Avon and Somerset Constabulary</p> <p>15 Devon and Cornwall Constabulary</p> <p>16 Dorset Police</p> <p>17 Gloucestershire Constabulary</p> <p>18 Wiltshire Police</p> <p><b>East Midlands Region</b></p> <p>19 Derbyshire Constabulary</p> <p>20 Leicestershire Constabulary</p> <p>21 Lincolnshire Police</p> <p>22 Northamptonshire Police</p> <p>23 Nottinghamshire Police</p> <p><b>West Midlands Region</b></p> <p>24 Staffordshire Police</p> <p>25 Warwickshire Police</p> <p>26 West Mercia Police</p> <p>27 West Midlands Police</p>	<p><b>North East Region</b></p> <p>28 Cleveland Police</p> <p>29 Durham Constabulary</p> <p>30 Humberside Police</p> <p>31 North Yorkshire Police</p> <p>32 Northumbria Police</p> <p>33 South Yorkshire Police</p> <p>34 West Yorkshire Police</p> <p><b>North West Region</b></p> <p>35 Cheshire Constabulary</p> <p>36 Cumbria Constabulary</p> <p>37 Greater Manchester Police</p> <p>38 Merseyside Police</p> <p>39 Lancashire Constabulary</p> <p>40 Police Service of Northern Ireland</p> <p><b>Wales Region</b></p> <p>41 Dyfed Powys Police</p> <p>42 Gwent Police</p> <p>43 North Wales Police</p> <p>44 South Wales Police</p> <p><b>Scotland Region</b></p> <p>45 Central Scotland Police</p> <p>46 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary</p> <p>47 Fife Constabulary</p> <p>48 Grampian Police</p> <p>49 Lothian and Borders Police</p> <p>50 Northern Constabulary</p> <p>51 Strathclyde Police</p> <p>52 Tayside Police</p>
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The text of the FOI was:

## Single or Dual DV Risk Assessments

*To ask the Constabulary Lead/Coordinator/Policy Holder for Domestic Violence:*

*What is the constabulary's policy and practice in regard to:*

1. *Ensuring all DV/DA reports are risk assessed on the front line by officers and how is this monitored*
2. *Which of the following is the constabularies policy in regard to risk assessments:*
  - a. *That it Risk Assess only the alleged victim (IE the reporting party)*  
*or*
  - b. *That it Risk Assess both alleged victim and alleged perpetrator no matter who reports (IE Dual Risk Assessment)*  
*In either case before or after an arrest or other change in the proximity of one person to the other*

*[IE Either officers conduct as a matter of policy a single or dual risk assessment regarding each individual DV report.]*

3. *In the following how many risk assessments were done in the last year*
  - a. *Single Risk Assessments*
  - b. *Dual Risk Assessment (a single count for both assessments)*

*The above is raised in light of in DV/DA Risk Assessments there are a number of scenario dynamics that need to be considered as possible, listed as follows IE who is the victim and who is the perpetrator, a report alone cannot evaluate the matter.*

- *Male Perp*
- *Female Perp*
- *Both Perps (common couple ie equal)*
- *Both perps but one is reactive victim*
- *Perp makes victim look like perp*
- *Perp Inciting other to go for victim (Other here can also include other family and officials like the police) Abuse by proxy.*

*Dual Risk Assessments are a vital too enable the above to be evaluated.*

*In some cases where dual risk assessments have been done previously thought of as perpetrators have been found to be a very high risk victims IE at risk of murder, this has resulted in MARAC, with out this not only adult victims would have been previously more at risk of being mis-categorised as perpetrators but this could also have put children at more high risk.*

4. *Does the constabulary have a policy that would include recording crime/prosecuting both parties if both were as above "Both Perps (common couple ie equal) or would it only prosecute or only one and how would it decide which one*
5. *Given that false allegations of DV can be made to gain advantage for another purpose, say for control of a home or in civil proceedings say involving children, what is the forces policy in regard to crime recording and prosecutions in such matters*
6. *If the event that the constabulary:*
  - a. *Does have a dual risk assessment policy for front line officers: How has it performed and what benefits have been seen.*
  - b. *Does not have a dual risk assessment policy is it willing to introduce one as being consistent with its duty to ensure public protection and its gender equality duty (GED)*





7. *Does the constabulary have a gender inclusive DV policy and DV definition as a part of its GED*
8. *In the event that:*
  - a. *The constabulary has a dual risk assessment policy has it ensured that its partner agencies, via it's local area DV officers/coordinators, in local DV forums are aware and practice this as well as a part of their GED and as a part of MARAC's and where applicable to assist in their duties under the sex discrimination act*
  - b. *That the constabulary introduces as dual risk assessment policy will it ensure that its partner agencies, via it's local area DV officers/coordinators, in local DV forums are aware and practice this as well as a part of their GED and as a part of MARAC's and also where applicable to assist in their duties under their sex discrimination act*

## AF USE OF WDTK RESPONSE CLASIFICATIONS

The Advocacy Fund's use of WDTK Classifications was as follows:

To assist in classifying the FOI responses AF did not use the WDTK classification system as it would normally be used, instead the following approach was adopted general to enable report users to use the WDTK system at a glance, however the allocation to a classification was a subjective approach as a rule of thumb including where the tone of response may or may not appear to be helpful in the reply, so some may have provided more, less or similar information and yet be classed differently to others due to the tone and substance of the reply.

### FOI USE OF CLASIFICATIONS

#### DO NOT HAVE THE INFORMATION

##### REFUSED:

Refused to answer

Responded but Virtually no information provided

Do not have a policy and very little information provided

#### SOME OF THE INFORMATION

Do not have a policy but other information provided

Do have a policy but little other information provided

#### ALL OF THE INFORMATION

Do not have a policy but comprehensive other information provided

Do have a policy and most other information provided

All information provided

## The reasons for this FOI

## DUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

It was known before placing the FOI that there was a policy and practice Gap in risk assessments, this was identified by the Chairman of the Advocacy Fund in 2009 who was then Chairman of the London & SE Branch of the Mankind Initiative and was dealing with the issue of a high number of Male Victims of Domestic Violence, the lack of services for them and that a common pattern was that many male victims apart from the lack of support were also being treated as perpetrators by default.

This was caused by the overwhelming focus on female victims and the unlawful public policy of only funding services for women, at the beginning of the problem analysis, the Government was funding women's services through local governments alone to the through the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the tune of £60,000,000 per annum and for Men it was £0, this was despite the fact that incidences were at 4.2% for Women and 4.2% for men and thereabouts in various years as assessed via the Governments own British Crime Survey and analysed by [www.dewar4research.org](http://www.dewar4research.org) Later an amount of £100kPA was provided form men, but not to any existing service with the relevant experience.

In addition the "Interministerial Group on Domestic Violence" comprising 24 Government Ministers, from various depts, Chaired by Baroness Scotland approved this and other funding and programmes thereby assisting one part of the population and ignoring another as a matter of public policy.

This was clearly unlawful, given that public funds cannot be used to the advantage of one part of society to the disadvantage of another by arbitrary discrimination by Gender as in the Gender Equality Duty (GED) as the Equality Act 2006 created a "general duty" on public authorities to: "Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment." The Government's own public policy created both on a national basis under the chairmanship of the Attorney General.

In addition the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 made it unlawful to discriminate by gender in the provision of goods and services.

[The GED, which came in to force in April 2007, created new legal requirements for public authorities. The GED was superseded by the Equality Act 2010 in April 2011 and specifically by the Single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).]

In addition BVPI 255 kept tabs on local government performance but it was also positively discriminatory in form and breached both the GED and SDA. This was analysed as follows for lawfulness with a view to a challenge at law of the Government and local authorities by Judicial Review, but it was discontinued before this could be done.

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Domestic Violence BVPI 225 An Analysis of where the following BVPI issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) breaks current discrimination laws and encourages other authorities to do so.

### - Frequently Asked Questions

Domestic violence BVPI 225 was introduced on 1 April 2005 225. The aim of the BVPI is to assess the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence and to prevent further domestic violence.

## DUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Since its introduction, the Homelessness & Housing Support Directorate in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) - formerly ODPM - has dealt with a number of queries relating to the BVPI. This note summarises the most frequently asked questions.

BVPI 225 fails in its aim to assess the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence and to prevent further domestic violence as it fails to include males in its criteria for assessment reporting, it encourages local authorities to only perform its duties by discriminating in favour of females and therefore breaches discrimination and equality laws. .

### **1. Has the local authority produced a directory of local services that can help victims of domestic violence?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they generally do not address the reality of male victims or provide sign posting and means of access for male victims focusing upon female & gay.**

**Q:** There is already a directory available at a county level. Do district authorities still need to produce a directory in this case?

**A:** *The definition for this part of the indicator is quite clear. It states "A directory should be available for each district and not just at county level..."*

*If a countywide directory is already available, the BVPI is not suggesting that this be replaced by local directories - the more information that is available for victims of domestic violence, the easier it is for them to find the help and support they need. A way to save time and resources and meet this part of the indicator is to adapt an already available county-wide directory for use locally.*

### **2. Is there within the local authority area a minimum of 1 refuge place per ten thousand population?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it only designates for one gender.**

**Q:** This question makes no reference to whether or not the refuge places are provided by or funded by the local authority. Is it correct to assume that any refuge places within the local authority area may be counted, whether they are provided by the district council, the county council or other agencies?

**A:** *If a local authority has a minimum of 1 refuge place per ten thousand population within their area, then this part of the indicator is met, regardless where the funding comes from - this is about provision rather than finance. As much of the funding for refuges comes via the Supporting People programme which is administered at county level, it would make it almost impossible for district authorities to meet this part of the indicator if it were otherwise.*

**Q:** Can two-tier authorities claim to meet this part of the indicator if the combined refuge places across a county amount to more than one per 10,000 population, even if this is not met in every district?

**A:** *No - this part of the indicator is about provision at a **local** level. Each individual authority needs to be able to answer 'yes' to the question in order to score against it.*

**Yes this breaks the law as it only designates for one gender.**

**Q:** The guidance says that refuge places refer to provision for women and children. Can they include refuge places for gay men as well?

**A:** *No - The question on refuge provision in BVPI 225 is specific to places for women and children and places for gay men can not be counted towards meeting this part of the indicator. It is*

## DUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

*recognised that there may be a need in some areas for more specialist types of refuge accommodation. However, it is the responsibility of the individual local authority to identify any gaps in service provision and put in place appropriate solutions to address this.*

**Yes this breaks the law as it only designates for one gender, men are not included though it only mentions exclusion of one class of men, indicating if gay men could be included it would be ok to discriminate against all other men, the law says no!**

**Q:** What is meant by "places" - is this the number of rooms or the number of beds?

**A:** *Places mean the number of rooms providing bed spaces for a woman and her children. Rooms not normally designated as bedrooms cannot be counted towards the total.*

**Yes this breaks the law as it only designates for one gender.**

### **3. Does the local authority employ directly or fund a voluntary sector based domestic violence co-ordinator?**

**Q:** For a district council with more than 35,000 households, does the co-ordinator need to be appointed on a full-time basis in order to be able to answer yes to this part of the indicator?

**A:** *DCLG was not prescriptive in setting out what proportion of the co-ordinator's role should be dedicated to domestic violence. Being able to answer "yes" to question 3 would be enough to meet this part of the indicator. However, given that it is the co-ordinator's responsibility for strategically co-ordinating domestic violence issues throughout the local authority area, the ability of the post holder to carry out the full range of domestic violence co-ordination within an area of more than 35,000 households may be questionable if the post was not full time.*

### **4. Has the local authority produced and adopted a multi-agency strategy to tackle domestic violence developed in partnership with other agencies?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they exclude those concerned with male victims focusing upon female & gay.**

**Q:** There is already a county-wide strategy in place. Do district authorities still need to draw up individual strategies in this case?

**A:** *A strategy at district level needs to be in place in order for an authority to be able to answer "yes" to this part of the indicator. Consideration should, however, be given to adapting the county-wide strategy for use at a local level.*

### **5. Does the local authority support and facilitate a local multi-agency domestic violence forum that meets at least four times a year?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they exclude those concerned with male victims focusing upon female & gay.**

**Q:** Can a county-wide domestic violence forum be counted as local?

**A:** *Within the context of the BVPI, local refers to the area covered by the authority concerned. Therefore a county-wide domestic violence forum would not count towards meeting this part of the indicator.*

### **6. Has the local authority developed an information-sharing protocol and had it agreed between key statutory partners?**



## DUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Q: This authority has no specific protocol in terms of domestic violence. However we do have a number other information exchange protocols (eg community safety). Do we still need a specific domestic violence protocol, or can we use those already in existence?

A: *This part of the indicator is looking for a specific domestic violence protocol. If, however there are already a number of information sharing protocols in place consideration should be given to adapting the protocols and making them domestic violence specific.*

- 7. Has the local authority developed, launched and promoted a 'sanctuary' type scheme to enable victims and their children to remain in their own home, where they choose to do so and where safety can be guaranteed?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they exclude the sign posting and means of access and services for male victims focusing upon female & gay.**

*Queries regarding the sanctuary scheme tend to require a more comprehensive response than queries relating to other parts of BVPI 225. DCLG has taken a more proactive role in addressing issues raised by authorities who are setting up sanctuaries by speaking at various events, highlighting areas of good practice, visiting local authorities and providing advice on sanctuary scheme proposals.*

*In partnership with the LGA, DCLG hopes to publish guidance for local authorities on options for setting up a sanctuary scheme, later this year.*

- 8. Has there been a reduction in the percentage of cases accepted as homeless due to domestic violence that had previously been re-housed in the last two years by that local authority as a result of domestic violence?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they exclude the sign posting and means of access and services for male victims focusing upon female & gay.**

Q: How do we calculate a response to this part of the BVPI?

This part of the indicator refers to section E3 of the P1E returns, homeless households accepted<sup>1</sup> by local authorities by main reason for loss of last settled home. Data collected under **4a** - violent breakdown of relationship involving partner and **4b** - violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons, should be included.

To answer this part of the indicator a baseline figure for the year that is being reported on must be established. In this case we will refer to 2005-06.

<sup>1</sup> Households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falling within a priority need group, and consequently owed a main homelessness duty under the 1996 Housing Act.

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they exclude the sign posting and means of access and services for male victims focusing upon female & gay. It is therefore not possible for them to collect the data for male victims.**

Apart from the deposit scheme no male could access any of the £60m PA provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

To establish the baseline figure for 2005-06 an authority must consider any case that had previously been accepted as homeless by reason for loss of last settled home due to violent

relationship breakdown with partner, at any time in the previous two years. In this case, this will be 2003-04 and 2004-05.

For example if in 2005-06 a local authority accepts 50 households by reason for loss of last settled home due to violent relationship breakdown with partner and 10 of those households accepted had previously been accepted for the same reason at any time during the financial years 2003-04 and 2004-05, the baseline figure for 2005-06 would be 10.

To calculate if there has been a reduction in the percentage of cases accepted as homeless, a baseline figure for the previous year (which in this case would be 2004-05) must be established using the method described above. If the baseline figure for 2004-05 is 12, then the answer to question 8 of the BVPI is yes – there has been a reduction in the percentage of cases accepted as homeless due to domestic violence that had previously been re-housed in the last 2 years by that local authority as a result of domestic violence.

**9. Does the council’s tenancy agreement have a specific clause stating that perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered grounds for eviction?**

**Yes. This may break the law if its practice if there is no means of reporting and therefore assessing for male victims.**

Q: This authority has a clause dealing with violence generally (and domestic violence would obviously fall within this clause if it came to seeking possession). Is this enough to be able to answer “yes” to this part of the indicator?

A: No – the question is clear when it asks for a **specific clause stating that perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered grounds for eviction.**

**10. Has the local authority funded and developed a domestic violence education pack in consultation with the wider domestic violence forum?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they generally do not address the reality of male victims or provide sign posting and means of access for male victims focusing upon female & gay. The forums exclude those organizations concerned with male victims therefore the packs will be deficient.**

Q: Question 10 of the indicator relates to education packs but we are a district council with no remit for schools. Do we still need to provide and promote a pack or can this be left to the county council?

A: *It is the responsibility of the authorities which come within the scope of BVPI 225 to produce and promote an education pack and to ensure that it is easily available. Those operating within a 2 tier authority should work in partnership with the county council and domestic violence forum to develop a domestic violence education pack*

**11. Has the local authority carried out a programme of multi-agency training in the last twelve months covering front line and managerial staff in at least two of the following groups: housing staff, social services staff providing services in the local authority area; education staff; health staff; and front line police officers?**

**Yes this breaks the law as it practiced by almost all local authorities as they generally do not address the reality of male victims or provide sign posting and means of access for male victims focusing upon female & gay. The training excludes those organizations concerned with male victims therefore the training will be deficient**

*DCLG has not received any queries relating to this part of the indicator.*

**Scope of the BVPI**

## DUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



DCLG receives many queries on the scope of BVPI 225, in particular on the omission of county councils. Careful consideration was given to the scope of BV225. Including county councils would mean that a number of the sub-indicators which make up BVPI 225 could not then be included, since they would not be applicable to county councils. It was felt that this would have weakened the indicator as a whole. The indicator in its current form plays an important role in bringing on local authority performance at a district level, which was considered a priority. Good local authorities will continue to work within county structures to ensure that domestic violence is dealt with at a strategic level.

2008/5/13 John Bentham <[John.Bentham@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:John.Bentham@communities.gsi.gov.uk)>:

Hello Paul - BVPI 225 ran from April 1st 2005 to March 31 2008.

(I understand it was an expansion of BVPI 176 which was the 'no. of domestic violence refuges per 10,000 population which are provided by or supported by the local authority'. Unfortunately I can't find the exact wording nor work out how long it was in place.)

John

In the entire of England & Wales under an enquiry at the time to Local Authorities, regarding the BVPI analysis as above, it was found out that only two local authorities asked realised that the BVPI 255 was unlawful and ignored it as a result, others were fearful of Government Sanctions if they did not comply and perform.

In short the entire of funding and policies at national and local levels were discriminatory and unlawful, based upon an arbitrary choice to help one victim but not another, by an accident of birth, IE by Gender 50% of the population were excluded from help if they needed it, this was not upon as was stated "that victims were overwhelmingly female" but on a misdirection of data and facts that skewed public perceptions, public policy and practice on a national level.

In addressing these issues in one local area The Isle of Wight it took several years to get across the facts to the Isle of Wight Council and the Police on the Isle of Wight that that their policies and/or practices were discriminatory and unlawful. This was eventually recognised at policy holder level the Isle of Wight Council Engaged in a complete Review in 2009 and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police instituted a dual risk assessment policy for both alleged perpetrator and alleged victim in all cases, but on the Isle of Wight Only.

The results of the two policy review and the change in police practice resulted in all partner agencies adopting a dual risk assessment practice on an Isle of Wight wide basis.

In the 1sy two weeks of implementation, two male victims, who were being processed as perpetrators, were found to be very high risk victims, IE at risk of Murder and were immediately put into MARAC. In both these cases their persecutors were in a refuge being helped and the high risk victims were out in the cold.

It was established by the use of this simple, easy and low cost tool that the ignored, by public policy, part of the population, male victims could be helped.

The FOI was instituted to assess the extent of any use of Dual Risk Assessment on a Nationwide Basis with the policy being the key lead agency, as they would reflect the multitude of other partner agencies in any area.

The intent of this FOI was, as a matter of public protection to use this as a basis for producing this report, to be published and disseminated to the police, local, regional and national government for policy review and to if needs be to be a basis for judicial review at all levels.

Whilst things have changed, challenges at local level have enabled at least the recognition that males suffer, but the fundamentals of the issues have not been addressed in the main

## DUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



and the course previously set is still being followed, this is especially true with the discriminatory legislation going through the Welsh Assembly as of this date.

Latest 2011/2012 figures show an increase in reported incidence for both men and women, 7% of women and 5% of men were estimated to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.2 million female and 800,000 male victims.

This summarised report establishes that all but a few constabularies and local areas in the UK have any formal dual risk assessment policy or practice in place and that this coupled with the historic framework, identification of high risk males being treated as perpetrators by default without risk assessment and this means there are likely significant numbers of males not receiving assistance, especially in the very high risk category

This report has been produced as a means to:

1. Highlight the Issues
2. Demonstrate that single risk assessments do not give a balanced picture
3. Show that single risk assessments cause risk
4. Be used as a means to change public perception
5. Be used as a means to change police and local authority policy

The draft report was published early in response to the proposed legislation in Wales that would put DV gender discrimination into statute and to show that the current practices and policies of various public agencies and authorities in Wales in regards to such are unlawful and so would the legislation be in regard to any discrimination in policy practice or funding and in regard to services. A pre action notice of Judicial Review was provided. ( This is of course only if there are no amendments to the Legislation proposals and and practices, funding & services regimes so that they fit needs. )

The FOI Public Data Requests & Responses are available at

[http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/user/advocacy\\_fund\\_dv1](http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/user/advocacy_fund_dv1)

It should be emphasised that this report is not complete and the included responses and tabulation are not fully compiled.

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Wednesday, 13 February 2013

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Amendments to the definition of domestic abuse lowers the age classification to 16 or over and for the first time recognises controlling and coercive behaviour over a pattern ACPO lead on domestic abuse Chief Constable Carmel Napier said:

"On average two women a week and one man every seventeen days are murdered by their current or former partner. Around one in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, and according to the 2010/11 British Crime Survey five per cent of men and seven per cent of women experienced domestic abuse in the past year. The same survey also found that women between 16-24 years of age and men aged 16-34 were more likely to suffer relationship abuse than any other age range.

"We also know that domestic abuse may often include coercive control. Coercive control is a complex pattern of abuse using power and psychological control over another - financial control, verbal abuse, forced social isolation. These incidents may vary in seriousness and are often repeated over time. However, coercive control was not previously reflected in the government's definition of domestic violence.

"ACPO supports the Home Secretary's amendments to the cross-Government definition of domestic violence announced today, following consultation in December 2011. The amendments to the definition are key in helping to raise awareness and enable effective prevention working in partnership with all agencies.

"Domestic abuse ruins lives, in some cases it ends in homicide. This amended definition will help us all to work together to defeat this dreadful crime."

The new definition of domestic violence and abuse now states:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

"Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

"Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim." \*

\* This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

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