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# **Establishing the efficacy of a telephone-based police response to domestic abuse: Hampshire Constabulary's Resolution Centre**

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*Final Report*

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# Establishing the efficacy of a telephone-based police response to domestic abuse: Hampshire Constabulary's Resolution Centre

## Introduction

As a result of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review, Hampshire Constabulary was faced with finding annual saving of £80m per year (c. 16% of the total budget). Along with a restructure of frontline policing, a review was taken to establish the most efficient way to respond to low-risk reports that did not require a police attendance, but which at the time attracted one. The review recommended that a Resolution Centre be formed within the call-management department to receive all grade-3 (standard response) and grade-4 calls (seeking advice or a non-police matter).

The Resolution Centre was designed to be able to investigate and resolve any report that did not require an officer to attend in person and which enquiries could be made remotely.<sup>1</sup> The Resolution Centre is staffed by a combination of investigators and call-handlers, specifically:

- 3 Sergeants and 3 Supervisors (Police Staff) equivalent to 1 per shift of each
- 3 shifts comprised of:
  - A Shift - 8 Police Constable and 9 Police Staff
  - B Shift - 10 Police Constables and 9 Police Staff
  - C Shift - 11 Police Constables and 9 Police Staff

Approximately one-fifth of Resolution Centre staff are part time or work a flexible working pattern. Most of the officers and staff within the Resolution Centre have been with the force for a significant period of time. Four new members of police staff were assigned to the Resolution Centre; however, they had a tutor and a structured Learning Development Review process to complete to ensure close monitoring of their performance. Training was the typical provision for officers prior to coming to the Resolution Centre and the usual arrangements for disseminating content to members of police staff.<sup>2</sup>

In 2015, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of the Constabulary (HMIC) identified that Hampshire Constabulary's approach to domestic abuse included a new, untested component with the

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<sup>1</sup> See Rowlandson (2016). *Report on the effectiveness of the Resolution Centre in responding to incidents of Domestic Abuse*. Hampshire Constabulary.

<sup>2</sup> To enhance the skills of Resolution Centre staff with regard to responding to domestic abuse, a local IDVA provider (Aurora New Dawn) provided a bespoke training package during May-June 2016. This was perceived as being an extremely beneficial session that fully explained not only the basic details required for completion of the DASH risk assessment but also delved deeper in to the rationale behind each of the questions and the need to probe the answers given in order to provide context to the yes/no responses. As this training was delivered after the sampling of cases for this research, it should not be considered as a possible explanation for the findings.

implementation of the Resolution Centre.<sup>3</sup> Rather than the usual practice of allocating such cases for a 'slow time' allocation when officers were free of grade-1 (immediate) or grade-2 (priority) deployments, from April 2015 a telephone-based response was being provided to 'grade-3 domestics' in Hampshire. Consequently, thirteen percent of all domestic abuse incidents in Hampshire were being dealt with via the RC (equating to approximately 1000 victims per year).

Although Hampshire Constabulary consulted with partner agencies, survivor groups, the National Domestic Abuse lead DCC Louisa Rolfe and the Contact Management lead ACC Alan Todd on an informal basis in the development of the Resolution Centre's approach, there was no evidence available at that time to confirm the suitability of implementing a telephone-based response for (any type of) domestic abuse incidents. This led the HMIC to consider its use to be problematic.

The HMIC raised concerns that the quality of risk assessment and the subsequent investigation of domestic abuse incidents referred to the Resolution Centre might be lesser than those incidents where officers had been deployed. In December 2016, following concerns raised by HMIC and the absence of evidence based conclusions around the effectiveness of the Resolution Centre, Hampshire Constabulary ceased this practise. All domestic abuse incidents in Hampshire, regardless of grade, currently receive deployment.

The research commissioned by Hampshire Constabulary to establish the efficacy of providing a telephone-based response to grade-3 domestic abuse cases is the basis of this report, which answers the following questions:

- Do significant differences exist in the quality of the initial response provided by Resolution Centre staff compared to deployed officers and subsequently the proportion of incidents that are classified as crimes?
- Do significant differences exist in the DASH risk assessments carried out over the telephone in the Resolution Centre compared to those carried out face-to-face by deployed officers?
- Do significant differences exist in the investigative outcomes of cases referred to the Resolution Centre compared to those dealt with via deployment?

The next section provides more detail about the operational practices of the Resolution Centre, before describing the methodological approach to the research, which commenced during the summer of 2016.

## **The Resolution Centre**

All domestic abuse incidents classified as requiring a grade-1 (within 15 minutes) or grade-2 (within 60 minutes) response are deployed direct to R&P (response and patrol) units and do not come to the Resolution Centre. In these cases the attending officer usually completes the DASH risk assessment.

The Resolution Centre adheres to the following protocol<sup>4</sup> in order to determine whether it is the suitable unit to provide the initial response. Grade-3 domestic incidents that are allocated to the RC

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-hampshire/>

<sup>4</sup> See Annex 3: Resolution Centre DA Procedure in Rowlandson (2016). *Report on the effectiveness of the Resolution Centre in responding to incidents of Domestic Abuse*. Hampshire Constabulary.

are immediately assessed through a triage process as to whether the incident is suitable for initial management by the Resolution Centre or whether it needs attendance by a response officer. Full triage is to be completed in accordance with an assessment of Threat, Harm, Opportunity and Risk (THOR) factors, and should highlight why the case is suitable for the Resolution Centre to make initial contact. Incidents that automatically will be suitable for the Resolution Centre include:

- Non-crime incidents where the incident report and the DASH risk assessment can be completed by telephone, no significant THOR factors are identified at the point of triage and the parties are not cohabitating.

Incidents that may be suitable for Resolution Centre include the following:

- Malicious communications;
- Harassment (first report);
- Low level public order;
- Non-recent criminal damage; and,
- Historic crimes with no support for formal action and no significant THOR factors identified.

After triage, any incidents deemed to be unsuitable are returned to the Control Room to be deployed. For example, the Resolution Centre would not complete DASH risk assessments on the phone for the following incidents:

- The offence involves a recent assault with injury/ harassment or stalking with violence (all passed back to the Control Room as a grade-2).
- High risk markers for involved parties within the last 12 months.
- Breach of a restraining order/bail conditions/court bail (passed back as grade-2 or gateway if victim will not support for visit).
- Victim and offender cohabit (passed to response and patrol for attendance).
- The RC will also escalate the incident for deployment if further information obtained during the initial risk assessment indicates the incident should have been a grade-2 deployment.

All incidents that are assessed as unsuitable for the Resolution Centre will be allocated to the appropriate department to progress, including:

- Any incident that has been incorrectly graded, which fits the grade-1 or grade-2 criteria, and requires deployment will be reassigned to the Control Room for deployment.
- Any incident that needs face to face attendance but does not fit criteria for a grade-2 response will be raised for deployment.
- Any incident of a serious nature that will require investigation but has no immediate safeguarding concerns (e.g. historic sexual abuse) will be reassigned to the appropriate investigations team.

Cases deemed suitable for a Resolution Centre response receive the following actions, which will be checked by the shift supervisor:

- All domestic abuse reports to be raised for priority call back regardless of the nature of the report.
- Resolution Centre officer allocated for further review and contact with informant if the report is appropriate to remain within the Resolution Centre.
- If further review identifies any issue that makes the report unsuitable for Resolution Centre then actions as per triage stage – deployment or allocation to correct department.

- If further review confirms the report is suitable for initial contact then full details to be obtained and DASH risk assessment completed. The Resolution Centre will complete the DASH risk assessment on the telephone and use this to inform a grade of standard, medium or high risk.
- Historic reports of crime are picked up when completing the DASH and recorded under Home Office Counting Rules. Non-crime domestic incidents will then be recorded properly to reflect any violence in the past and these incidents will be raised for deployment if appropriate.
- Following the report being obtained and the risk assessment completed a further review will be required regarding any further actions:
  - Crime identified and safeguarding/THOR issues raised – Deployment.
  - Crime identified with no immediate safeguarding/THOR issues raised and further investigation required – Onward task to local investigation team.
  - Crime identified, however of a low level and either no complaint or no opportunity to prosecute and no THOR factors identified – suitable for report to be completed by Resolution Centre. This will be reviewed by a Detective Sergeant.
  - No offences identified and no THOR factors identified – suitable for Resolution Centre to complete report. This will be reviewed by a Detective Sergeant.
- In all cases where Resolution Centre has completed the DASH risk assessment a task will be forwarded to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to review and confirm the grading. It is the responsibility of Resolution Centre staff to then confirm which team has responsibility for safeguarding:
  - High/Medium risk – Additional safeguarding completed. All high risk gradings are dealt with by the DA safeguarding teams who conduct the visit. All medium risk gradings are allocated to a Neighbourhood Policing Team officer for contact to be made to complete a DASH and discuss further safeguarding.
  - Standard risk – No additional safeguarding. Only standard risk gradings are not followed up with further safeguarding assessment and contact.

The operations protocol described above is the result of refinements to the procedures initially implemented in April 2015. It has been formalised into operations since September 2015.

To summarise, the Resolution Centre's operations protocol has been carefully designed to identify and provide an effective response to a small subset of cases, representing a particular type of domestic abuse incident. It aims to weed out the higher risk cases from the outset (e.g. those where there is any assault or violence, where court or police conditions have been breached, where both parties are still cohabitating, where there is an extensive history of domestic abuse, or where police need to attend to verify the safety of children present) so that they may be dealt with by other units.

## **A natural experiment**

Because of Hampshire Constabulary's decision to change its practice, the research benefits from a natural experimental design. Grade-3 domestics referred to the Resolution Centre in 2016 can be compared to similar grade-3 domestics allocated for deployment in 2017. Thus, the type of case remains similar but the initial police response changes from one provided via telephone to one provided in person. Rarely does such a neat comparison emerge in the field of policing studies without the imposition of a randomised experiment, which although rigorous can be cumbersome and costly,

reasons that often preclude their implementation. The change in Hampshire's policy during 2016 was therefore highly advantageous from a research perspective.

The methodological approach involved collection and analysis of the following sources of data:<sup>5</sup>

- 1) A sample of domestic abuse incidents during the first three months of 2016 to determine the overall profile of domestic abuse incidents referred to the Resolution Centre (e.g., victim, suspect, and offence characteristics).
- 2) A comparison sample of domestic abuse incidents received by the force one year later (the first three months of 2017) that would have been referred to the Resolution Centre but instead received deployment, including the same variables as above. The full dataset (2016 and 2017) includes approximately 1000 cases (including both incidents and crimes).
- 3) A random sub-sample from this dataset received more in-depth analysis via collection of the full details from the DASH risk assessment (i.e. each response to the 27 items and any qualitative comments provided). As the DASH forms are held as separate Word documents these must be retrieved manually, with significant resource implications. Despite this, a random sample of 200 from the first three months of 2016 and 2017 (n=400 in total) were obtained for analysis.
- 4) Perspectives of staff in the Resolution Centre and partner agencies to determine their views on the benefits and limitations of the current approach.

## **Contribution to knowledge**

The current study makes three significant contributions to knowledge. First, it affords a unique opportunity to test domestic abuse risk assessment delivered by police in a more 'clinical' environment versus the usual 'field' setting. Unlike other areas of research and practice in violence risk assessment, which draw upon clinical psychologists' use of structured tools in healthcare settings, British risk assessment with domestic abuse victims is typically undertaken by frontline police officers often at the time of, or shortly after, the incident.<sup>6</sup> This approach developed to structure the discretion of officers as they responded to 'domestics', to ensure they gathered a consistent level of information to aid investigation and more robust and defensible decision-making. Conducting risk assessments 'in the field', however, has a number of challenges. Frontline police officers are not trained as clinical psychologists or social workers; therefore, it is perhaps unreasonable that they should be expected to deliver the same level of diagnosis and treatment given the situational pressures of police work.<sup>7</sup> Situational factors that may compound the challenge of obtaining full and accurate information during the initial incident include: the victim may be injured, upset or minimising the abuse as part of their survival strategy; there may be children present; it may be late at night; the victim may be fearful of reprisal, etc. Responding to a call for service is an often rushed and stressful endeavour, not always

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<sup>5</sup> The research received ethical approval from the School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (ref SREC/2207).

<sup>6</sup> Robinson, A. L. (2010). Risk and intimate partner violence. In Kemshall, H & Wilkinson, B. (Eds.) *Good practice in risk assessment and risk management* (3rd Edition) (pp.119-138). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

<sup>7</sup> Medina, J., Robinson, A. L., & Myhill, A. (2016). Cheaper, faster, better: Expectations and achievements in police risk assessment of domestic abuse. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 10(4): 341-350.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/police/paw023>

the best setting for establishing the rapport necessary for securing a full disclosure to sensitive questions, as illustrated by the following quote:

*“Her whole life is upside down and now this police officer that she hasn’t even probably set eyes on before is going to ask her all these personal questions, 27 of them, and it’s not even eye-to-eye contact because it’s a matter of the officer having their head down getting these questions answered.”<sup>8</sup>*

Research suggests that the level of disclosure by victims is often less than it would be at a different time or in a different setting (e.g., a couple of days after the incident, in a safe environment), as this practitioner explains:

*“With the sexual question on the police risk assessment... 95% of the time they answer ‘no’ and you go back, and I don’t know the percent but an awful lot of the time [victims] say ‘well actually he did make me do this, or this did happen....’ [But] obviously they’ve got a male police officer asking them that, and it may be more difficult for them to disclose that, especially if there’s just been a crisis.”<sup>9</sup>*

Although extant research has demonstrated the challenges confronting practitioners charged with conducting risk assessments ‘in the field’, to date there has not been an opportunity to test the possible benefits from providing an alternative setting for police to identify and assess risk. The Resolution Centre is more akin to a ‘clinical’ environment, allowing us to understand the influence of this different context on police practice.

Second, this research enables a focus on those types of non-violent cases that tend to be overshadowed in research focussing on ‘high risk’ domestic abuse. Offences such as harassment, malicious communications and criminal damage make up a large proportion of ‘domestics’ coming to the attention of police. These might be viewed as ‘rubbish’ work by police officers under pressure to respond quickly and effectively to a large volume of incidents on a busy shift.<sup>10</sup> Although reasonably considered to be relatively minor offences, it is important to recognise that they could form part of a pattern of serious abusive behaviour. The current study can facilitate a more detailed understanding of the risk factors identified in non-violent offences, with implications for promoting police recognition of the risk that may be present in these types of relatively ‘low level’ cases.

Third, the current research makes a practical contribution to knowledge by revealing how policing can be organised to improve performance for certain types of domestic abuse incidents. In the context of steadily increasing demand and austerity-era reductions in police resources, robust evidence is needed to inform how police can deliver services to *all* domestic abuse victims in the most efficient but also effective ways.

In conclusion, this report provides timely findings to establish the efficacy of a telephone-based police response to domestic abuse by demonstrating the positive benefits of undertaking risk assessment in an alternative setting away from ‘the field’, and the improved investigative outcomes that are more likely to follow.

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<sup>8</sup> Robinson, A. L., Myhill, A., Wire, J., Roberts, J. and Tilley, N. (2016). *Risk-led policing of domestic abuse and the DASH risk model*. London: College of Policing. <http://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Pages/Police-support-victims-of-coercive-control.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> Robinson, A. L. (2009). *Independent Domestic Violence Advisors: A process evaluation*. School of Social Sciences: Cardiff University.

<sup>10</sup> Myhill, A. and Johnson, K. (2016). Police use of discretion in response to domestic violence. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 16(1), 3-20.

## Research Findings

### Section 1. Overview data (n=1032)

The sample made available for analysis included all grade-3 domestic abuse cases that were allocated to the Resolution Centre for a telephone-based response over a 3-month period in 2016, followed by a similar group of grade-3 cases allocated for deployment over the same 3-month period in 2017. This resulted in a total of 1032 cases (Table 1).

**Table 1. Sample overview**

	Allocation of cases		Total
	Resolution Centre	Deployment	
Jan 2016	117	0	117
Feb 2016	239	0	239
Mar 2016	247	0	247
Jan 2017	0	156	156
Feb 2017	0	138	138
Mar 2017	0	135	135
Total	603	429	1032

As previously explained, in 2016 force policy resulted in all grade-3 domestics being allocated to the Resolution Centre for a telephone-based response. The majority of cases remained with the Resolution Centre for the duration, however, some went on to be progressed to other units after the initial response (Table 2).

**Table 2. OIC unit**

	Progression of cases (OIC Unit)					
	2016		2017		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Resolution Centre	376	70.7%	3	0.7%	379	39.6%
CID	69	13.0%	29	6.8%	98	10.2%
R&P	33	6.2%	349	81.9%	382	39.9%
Other	54	10.2%	45	10.6%	99	10.3%
Total	532	100.0%	426	100.0%	958	100.0%

The majority of the cases involved female victims and male suspects (Table 3). There were no statistically significant differences in these findings from one year to the next (chi-sq=.293; df=1;  $p=.627$  for victims and chi-sq=.716; df=1;  $p=.418$  for suspects).

**Table 3. Sex of the parties involved**

		Allocation of cases					
		2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Victim's sex	Female	397	69.0%	303	70.6%	700	69.7%
	Male	178	31.0%	126	29.4%	304	30.3%
	Total	575	100.0%	429	100.0%	1004	100.0%
Suspect's sex	Female	89	27.4%	129	30.2%	218	29.0%
	Male	236	72.6%	298	69.8%	534	71.0%
	Total	325	100.0%	427	100.0%	752	100.0%

The ages of victims and suspects were similar, with most being in their 30s (Table 4). The average age of the parties involved did not vary significantly from year to year ( $F=.701$ ;  $df=1$ ;  $p=.403$  for victims and  $F=.487$ ;  $df=1$ ;  $p=.486$  for suspects). However, the proportion of cases with missing data was much higher in 2017 (61% missing compared to 13% missing in 2016).

**Table 4. Ages of the parties involved**

		2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed	
		age of victim	age of suspect	age of victim	age of suspect
N	Valid	578	321	200	196
	Missing	25	282	229	233
Mean		35.75	36.42	34.83	35.62
Minimum		8	15	16	16
Maximum		88	86	82	74

Most domestic abuse cases in this sample involved 'violence without injury' ( $n=399$ ) (Table 5). The most common types of offences within this 'violence without injury' category were malicious communications ( $n=127$ ), followed by harassment ( $n=114$ ), common assault ( $n=89$ ) and sending letters to cause distress ( $n=42$ ).

Most, but not all, of those cases where the offence classification was 'not stated' involved non-crime incidents ( $n=421$  out of  $n=425$ ), and the deployment sample had a much higher proportion of cases

classified in this way (62.9% compared to 25.7%), a difference which was statistically significant (chi-sq.=164.99; df=12; p=.000). However, where cases were classified as crimes, the samples were similar in that the bulk of the incidents were considered to fall within the 'violence without injury' category.

**Table 5. HMIC offence classification**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1b Violence with Injury	46	7.6%	25	5.8%	71	6.9%
1c Violence without Injury	285	47.3%	114	26.6%	399	38.7%
2a Rape	9	1.5%	0	0.0%	9	0.9%
2b Other Sexual Offences	4	0.7%	0	0.0%	4	0.4%
3b Robbery of Personal Property	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
4a Burglary	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
4b Vehicle Offences	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
4c Theft from the Person	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%
4f All Other Theft Offences	48	8.0%	8	1.9%	56	5.4%
5a Criminal Damage	18	3.0%	9	2.1%	27	2.6%
8 Public Order Offences	32	5.3%	1	0.2%	33	3.2%
9 Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	2	0.3%	1	0.2%	3	0.3%
NOT STATED	155	25.7%	270	62.9%	425	41.2%
Total	603	100.0%	429	100.0%	1032	100.0%

Following on from the table above, the majority of cases had a crime recorded when they were dealt with by the Resolution Centre (69.7%), whereas this was true for only a minority of cases in the deployed sample (34.3%) (Table 6). This difference was statistically significant (chi-sq.=126.79; df=1; p=.000). Given that similar types of cases were being responded to (i.e. grade-3 domestics), this difference is likely the result of the type of initial response received (i.e. incidents dealt with by the Resolution Centre were more likely to be classified as crimes compared to incidents dealt with by response officers).

**Table 6. Crime classification**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Crime	420	69.7%	147	34.3%	567	54.9%
Non-crime	183	30.3%	282	65.7%	465	45.1%
Total	603	100.0%	429	100.0%	1032	100.0%

Overall, most cases in both samples were evaluated as ‘standard’ risk (Table 7). Overall, only a small proportion of cases was judged to be ‘high’ risk, due to the nature of grade-3 domestics, which are expected to be less risky (e.g., because the perpetrator is not present and/or there has been no physical violence).

However there was a statistically significant change from one year to the next in the proportion of grade-3 domestics judged to be ‘medium’ or ‘high’ risk (chi-sq.=38.89; df=2; p=.000). In 2016, when the cases were risk assessed via telephone in the Resolution Centre, nearly twice as many cases were judged as ‘medium’ risk (31.2% compared to 18.5%) and triple the proportion was judged to be ‘high’ risk (7.9% compared to 2.4%). This difference is likely due to the change in how risk assessment was practiced from one year to the next (discussed in further detail in the next section of this report).

**Table 7. Risk grade**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Standard	341	60.9%	325	79.1%	666	68.6%
Medium	175	31.2%	76	18.5%	251	25.8%
High	44	7.9%	10	2.4%	54	5.6%
Total	560	100.0%	411	100.0%	971	100.0%

The most common disposal types for cases allocated to the Resolution Centre were ‘victim not support/withdrawn’ (42%), ‘other incident non crime’ (24%) and ‘victim supports/evidential difficulties’ (16%) (Table 8).<sup>11</sup> In contrast, the most common disposal types for cases allocated for deployment were ‘other incident non crime’ (62%) followed by ‘victim not support/withdrawn’ (19%) and ‘victim supports/evidential difficulties’ (5%). The difference between the samples in terms of disposal codes was statistically significant (chi-sq.=204.30; df=22; p=.000).

To summarise, the main difference between the samples, from initial classification through to the disposal code, was in the proportion of incidents considered to be non-crimes, which was far higher when grade-3 domestics were allocated for deployment rather than dealt with by the Resolution Centre.

<sup>11</sup> In a recent HMIC (2017) inspection the ‘victim not support/withdrawn’ disposal code was critiqued as being overused and forces identified as having high levels (including Hampshire) have been required to produce and submit an action plan to that sets out an analysis of how this code is used (see also <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/domestic-violence-pushing-responsibility-prosecutions-victims-convictions-hmic-zoe-billingham-a7706446.html>).

**Table 8. Disposal type**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A1 CHARGED	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
A2 SUMMONSED	5	0.8%	0	0.0%	5	0.5%
A3 CHARGED - ALTERNATE OFFENCE RULE	4	0.7%	0	0.0%	4	0.4%
ADULT RESTORATIVE DISPOSAL (ARD)	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
B1 SIMPLE CAUTION	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%
B2 CONDITIONAL CAUTION	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
CC1 TRANSFER CRIME	5	0.8%	1	0.2%	6	0.6%
CC2 CANCEL AVI	5	0.8%	2	0.5%	7	0.7%
CC3 CANCEL DUPLICATE/PART OF CRIME	5	0.8%	4	0.9%	9	0.9%
CC4 CANCEL ERROR	15	2.5%	7	1.6%	22	2.1%
COMMUNITY RESOLUTION	3	0.5%	0	0.0%	3	0.3%
E1 PENALTY NOTICE FOR DISORDER	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%
INVESTIGATION TO SUPPORT ACTION AGAINST SUSPECT NOT IN PUBLIC INTERE	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.1%
NEW	11	1.8%	27	6.3%	38	3.7%
NO SUSPECT IDENTIFIED - ALL LOE INVESTIGATED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE	36	6.0%	6	1.4%	42	4.1%
NZ OTHER INCIDENT NON CRIME	147	24.4%	266	62.0%	413	40.0%
OUTCOME 20 OTHER AGENCY POLICE - FORMAL ACTION NOT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	2	0.2%
PROSECUTION LIMIT HAS EXPIRED - NAMED SUSPECT IDENTIFIED	6	1.0%	6	1.4%	12	1.2%
VICTIM DECLINES/UNABLE TO IDENTIFY OFFENDER - SUSPECT NOT IDENTIFIED	5	0.8%	4	0.9%	9	0.9%
	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	2	0.2%

VICTIM NOT SUPPORT/WITHDRAWN	251	41.6%	80	18.6%	331	32.1%
SUPPORT - NAMED SUSPECT IDENTIFIED						
VICTIM SUPPORTS/EVIDENTIAL DIFFICULTIES - NAMED SUSPECT IDENTIFIED	97	16.1%	21	4.9%	118	11.4%
YOUTH CONDITIONAL CAUTION	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
Total	603	100.0%	429	100.0%	1032	100.0%

Certain disposal codes are indicative of 'formal police action' and these are known as 'FAT outcomes'. FAT outcomes include charges, summonses, cautions, penalty notices and community resolution. The 'FAT rate' is a key performance indicator and therefore important to compare for cases going through the Resolution Centre versus deployment. For context, the FAT rate for all domestic abuse crimes recorded in the force was 10.9% in the twelve months leading to February 2017 (this would include the full spectrum of offences not just the grade-3 cases analysed for this report).<sup>12</sup>

Table 9 shows that the FAT rate in 2016 was higher compared to 2017 (3% compared to 0.5%), a difference which was statistically significant (chi-sq.=8.37; df=1; p=.005). Nearly all of the FAT outcomes achieved (18 of 20) were for cases initially dealt with by the Resolution Centre. Broadly speaking, these outcomes were achieved for cases involving violence (n=6), harassment (n=6), breach of non-molestation orders (n=3) and other (n=3). It should be noted that the majority of these cases (16 of 18) were progressed to other units following the initial response by the Resolution Centre, in line with the operations protocol previously discussed (see also Table 2).

**Table 9. Formal Action Taken**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
FAT outcomes No	585	97.0%	427	99.5%	1012	98.1%
FAT outcomes Yes	18	3.0%	2	0.5%	20	1.9%
Total	603	100.0%	429	100.0%	1032	100.0%

<sup>12</sup> Police and Crime Commissioner (2017) Force performance profile.  
[https://www.hampshire.police.uk/.../63/Force\\_Performance\\_Profile\\_-\\_Feb\\_2017.pdf](https://www.hampshire.police.uk/.../63/Force_Performance_Profile_-_Feb_2017.pdf)

## **Section 2. DASH data (n=400)**

From the sample of 1032 cases, a random sample of 400 cases (n=200 from 2016 and n=200 from 2017) was selected for retrieval of the complete data from the DASH risk assessment forms.

Analyses were performed that indicated no statistically significant differences between the full sample (n=1032) and the DASH sample (n=400) in terms of incident or person characteristics.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the themes arising from the analysis of the DASH sample can be considered representative of the full sample.

The type of relationship between the victim and suspect is an additional piece of information available for the DASH sample (Table 10). Roughly 7 in 10 cases involved victims and suspects who were in an 'ex-heterosexual relationship'. This did not change to a statistically significant extent from one year to the next (chi-sq.=4.64; df=7; p=.704); however, the Resolution Centre dealt with nearly twice as many incidents involving 'other family' and 'siblings'.

**Table 10. Relationship type**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Child to parent/grandparent	16	8.5%	14	7.7%	30	8.1%
Civil Partnership	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	1	0.3%
Ex heterosexual relationship	132	69.8%	130	71.4%	262	70.6%
Ex same sex relationship	2	1.1%	5	2.7%	7	1.9%
Heterosexual relationship	11	5.8%	11	6.0%	22	5.9%
Married	10	5.3%	11	6.0%	21	5.7%
Other family	9	4.8%	5	2.7%	14	3.8%
Siblings	9	4.8%	5	2.7%	14	3.8%
Total	189	100.0%	182	100.0%	371	100.0%

The DASH form was completed in less than 24 hours for a majority of cases, regardless of whether the risk assessment was carried out in the Resolution Centre or 'in the field' (Table 11). The length of time did not differ to a statistically significant extent between these two samples (F=2.34; df=1; p=.127).

<sup>13</sup> The following comparisons were all non-significant: victim sex (chi-sq.=.051; df=1; p=.833), suspect sex (chi-sq.=.141; df=1; p=.744), offence type (chi-sq.=8.46; df=12; p=.748), disposal code (chi-sq.=27.52; df=22; p=.192).

**Table 11. Number of days between incident and DASH completion**

	year					
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0	98	49.7%	99	51.6%	197	50.6%
1	63	32.0%	70	36.5%	133	34.2%
2	11	5.6%	13	6.8%	24	6.2%
3	6	3.0%	1	0.5%	7	1.8%
4	3	1.5%	1	0.5%	4	1.0%
5	5	2.5%	2	1.0%	7	1.8%
6	3	1.5%	0	0.0%	3	0.8%
7	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
8	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	1	0.3%
9	2	1.0%	2	1.0%	4	1.0%
10	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
11	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	1	0.3%
14	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	1	0.3%
22	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
23	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
30	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	1	0.3%
37	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
46	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
Total	197	100.0%	192	100.0%	389	100.0%

As previously highlighted, cases were more likely to receive a 'medium' or 'high' risk classification (as opposed to 'standard') when the risk assessment was carried out by the Resolution Centre. As Table 12 shows, this is likely a function of the Resolution Centre's cases having a significantly higher mean total risk score<sup>14</sup> (9.6) compared to cases risk assessed via deployment (7.8) ( $F=9.25$ ;  $df=1$ ;  $p=.003$ ).

<sup>14</sup> The total risk score was computed by summing all of the 'yes' answers to the DASH items.

Table 12. Total risk score

	year						
	2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed		Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
0	1	0.5%	9	4.7%	10	2.6%	
1	6	3.0%	13	6.8%	19	4.9%	
2	9	4.5%	12	6.3%	21	5.4%	
3	13	6.5%	15	7.9%	28	7.2%	
4	11	5.5%	12	6.3%	23	5.9%	
5	11	5.5%	14	7.3%	25	6.4%	
6	18	9.0%	15	7.9%	33	8.5%	
7	16	8.0%	16	8.4%	32	8.2%	
8	18	9.0%	17	8.9%	35	9.0%	
9	14	7.0%	5	2.6%	19	4.9%	
10	8	4.0%	8	4.2%	16	4.1%	
11	12	6.0%	6	3.1%	18	4.6%	
12	8	4.0%	7	3.7%	15	3.8%	
13	11	5.5%	11	5.8%	22	5.6%	
total score of DASH items	14	2	1.0%	7	3.7%	9	2.3%
15	5	2.5%	5	2.6%	10	2.6%	
16	6	3.0%	4	2.1%	10	2.6%	
17	6	3.0%	3	1.6%	9	2.3%	
18	3	1.5%	3	1.6%	6	1.5%	
19	7	3.5%	2	1.0%	9	2.3%	
20	2	1.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.5%	
21	5	2.5%	2	1.0%	7	1.8%	
22	2	1.0%	2	1.0%	4	1.0%	
23	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	
24	1	0.5%	3	1.6%	4	1.0%	
25	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	
26	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	
31	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	
Total	199	100.0%	191	100.0%	390	100.0%	

It is also noteworthy that of the 10 DASH forms that did not contain a single 'yes' response, 9 were from the deployment sample. They also were responsible for 13 of the 19 DASH forms with only one 'yes' response. Furthermore, there was a pattern of more missing data ('not stated' responses) within the deployment sample, across the majority of DASH items.

An overview of responses given to each of the individual DASH items, for the Resolution Centre sample and the deployment sample, is provided in Appendix A. What this analysis clearly shows is a pattern whereby telephone-based risk assessment is producing higher levels of disclosures compared to risk assessments performed face-to-face. Of the 28 risk factors, 24 yielded higher rates of disclosure when obtained via telephone, 12 to a statistically significant extent ( $p < .05$ ). These differences in disclosure rates between the Resolution Centre and deployment samples are depicted in Table 13 (positive values indicate higher disclosure rates obtained via telephone-based risk assessment).

**Table 13. Differences in disclosure rates across DASH items**

16.8%	15. Jealous/control
14.6%	27. Criminal history
10.2%	19. Sexual abuse
9.2%	10. Step-children
9.1%	14. Abuse getting worse
9.1%	21. Hurt anyone else
9.0%	17. Threats to kill
8.6%	13. Abuse more often
8.4%	2. Frightened
8.1%	5. Suicidal
7.6%	16. Weapons
7.2%	20. Other perpetrator
6.8%	3. Afraid
6.1%	25. Perp suicidal
5.2%	23. Financial issues
4.7%	4. Isolated
4.5%	22. Mistreated animal
2.8%	18. Strangle/choke
2.7%	24. Perpetrator problems
2.5%	9. Pregnant
2.0%	26. Breach bail/injunctions
1.6%	28. Firearms
1.4%	1. Injury
1.1%	11. Hurt children
-1.5%	7. Child contact
-1.8%	8. Harassment
-2.1%	12. Threatened children
-8.5%	6. Separate

The four risk factors with higher prevalence rates obtained via deployment (i.e. the negative numbers in the table above) perhaps reveal the types of questions officers felt were most relevant for these types of offences (e.g., harassment, malicious communications): separation; conflict over child contact; constant texting, calling contacting, harassing, etc; and making threats towards the children.

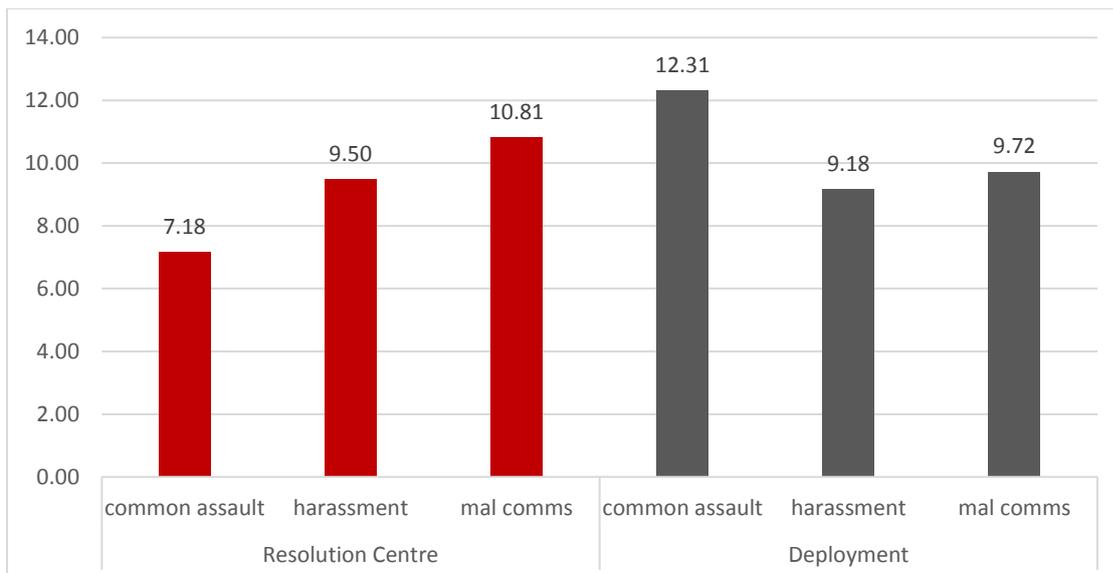
Another way to look at the difference in risk assessment between the two samples is to compare the DASH items with the highest prevalence. The items most likely to receive a 'yes' response are summarised in Table 14. The same 'top 5' risk factors were present in both samples, yet the prevalence rate (i.e. percentage of victims responding 'yes') was far lower in the deployment sample. This could be due to a reluctance to ask all of the DASH questions 'in the field' and/or the manner in which officers were asking the questions was less conducive to victims responding affirmatively. Either way, their risk assessment of grade-3 domestics yielded fewer disclosures.

**Table 14. Most prevalent risk factors**

Resolution Centre	Deployment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationship separation (n=100; 52%)</li> <li>Jealous/controlling behaviour (n=94; 48%)</li> <li>Perpetrator problems (n=94; 49%)</li> <li>Perpetrator criminal history (n=96; 50%)</li> <li>Victim very frightened (n=80; 41%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationship separation (n=115; 61%)</li> <li>Perpetrator problems (n=87; 46%)</li> <li>Perpetrator criminal history (n=67; 35%)</li> <li>Victim very frightened (n=62; 33%)</li> <li>Jealous/controlling behaviour (n=59; 31%)</li> </ul>

An additional set of analyses on the DASH data considers how risk judgments vary according to the type of offence, and how they might also differ depending on whether they originate in the Resolution Centre compared to ‘in the field’. Recall that grade-3 domestic consist mainly of offences such as common assault, harassment and malicious communications. Figure 1 shows the total risk score for each of these main types of offence, for both the Resolution Centre and deployment samples, illustrating the differences in risk judgments across offence types. Resolution Centre staff tend to see malicious communications as the riskiest type of case, followed by harassment and then common assault. The reverse pattern is evident for risk assessments generated via deployment. Here the riskiest case was perceived to be common assault, followed by malicious communications and lastly harassment. Although these are averages, it does reinforce the message that the practice of risk assessment, and what information it generates, differs depending on whether it takes place over the telephone or face-to-face.

**Figure 1. Differences in total risk scores across offence types**



Finally, a comparative analysis was undertaken of the actual DASH forms in terms of the level of detail they contained and the nature of the comments that were included. Redacted DASH forms for February 2016 (n=87) and February 2017 (n=76) were provided for analysis (total n=163). After selecting cases involving intimate partner rather than familial incidents to enable a more straightforward comparison (n=122), a 10% random sample was selected for each month (total n=12). An overview of this small but randomly generated sample, which includes an equivalent spread of risk grades across the two months, is provided in Table 15.

Key points to note from this analysis are that DASH forms generated in the Resolution Centre were more likely to have (1) comments provided on each 'yes' response, (2) a greater amount of helpful information provided within these comments, and (3) a higher overall word count. Although the *quantity* of words cannot necessarily be equated to the *quality* of the risk assessment, it does suggest a greater level of care and attention to detail on the Resolution Centre's DASH forms.

**Table 15. Comparison of DASH forms**

	<b>Resolution Centre</b>	<b>Deployment</b>
1 – standard risk	<p>RMS #168</p> <p>Male victim in an ex heterosexual relationship.</p> <p>3 'yes' responses, each with additional comments. Detailed comments provided e.g. "He believes that it [perpetrator's alcoholism] started when they decided not to continue for a child of their own when they suffered the third miscarriage. He is very sympathetic to her going through that but now has to protect [daughter] from her."</p> <p>(159 words in total)</p>	<p>RMS #23</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship.</p> <p>5 'yes' responses, with a small amount of detail provided on these e.g. "he has poked child in the past" for Q11. Also, some of the comments provided for 'no' responses indicated that they could or should have been recorded as 'yes' responses e.g. "He was controlling previously when we were together 9 years ago, incidents were reported to Met Police" for Q15 which had a no response.</p> <p>(65 words in total)</p>
2 – standard risk	<p>RMS #202</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship.</p> <p>4 'yes' responses, each with additional comments. Comments were also provided on some of the other items with 'no' responses e.g., "In 2013 perpetrator was mentally assessed due to concerns, he was believed to be making it all up and had not been diagnosed with any MH problem."</p> <p>(155 words in total)</p>	<p>RMS #75</p> <p>Male victim in an ex heterosexual relationship.</p> <p>6 'yes' responses, with comments provided to most e.g. "victim says perpetrator is controlling but would not elaborate on it" for Q15. Comments were also provided for a couple of 'no' responses e.g. "no injury – victim is simply upset that perpetrator is contacting him" for Q1.</p> <p>(130 words in total)</p>
3 – standard risk	<p>RMS #281</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship.</p> <p>8 'yes' responses, with comments provided on 7. Overall, the comments provided were not very detailed e.g., "my ex husband gets very angry when my new partner is with me and our son" for Q3. Case was referred to CID and achieved a FAT outcome.</p> <p>(79 words in total)</p>	<p>RMS #136</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship.</p> <p>4 'yes' responses, some with a great amount of detail added. A particularly detailed response in relation to a threat of rape in Q19.</p> <p>(261 words in total)</p>

4 – medium risk	<p>RMS #180</p> <p>Male victim in an ex heterosexual relationship. 9 'yes' responses, 8 of which had additional comments e.g., "I have had a message from her mother saying she is going to go to my sister's work place and humiliate me" for Q20.</p> <p>(188 words in total)</p>	<p>RMS #114</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship. 8 'yes' responses, of which 4 had additional comments. Overall, a very small amount of detail was provided e.g. "MH and alcoholic" were comments written for Q24.</p> <p>(48 words in total)</p>
5 – medium risk	<p>RMS #327</p> <p>Male victim in an ex heterosexual relationship. 8 'yes' responses, each with additional comments. A lot of detail provided – even to items with no responses – including controlling behaviour and suicidal thoughts e.g., "I have been having recent thoughts of suicide. I have had all my pills on the bed out of their packets. A friend of mine just happened to ring at that point. I was a bit relieved as if they hadn't rung I don't think I would be here now" for Q5.</p> <p>(303 words in total)</p>	<p>RMS #126</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship. 8 'yes' responses, with comments provided on 7. A lot of detail provided, even to items with 'no' responses e.g. "In general, victim stated that she was not frightened of perpetrator and that he has never been violent to her, but she is frightened of his behaviour and that concerns her. When they were together he would punch walls and hit his head, etc." for Q2.</p> <p>(255 words in total)</p>
6 – high risk	<p>RMS #231</p> <p>Male victim in an ex heterosexual relationship. 8 'yes' responses, each with additional comments. A good level of detail was provided for each, including sensitive disclosures about suicidal thoughts and controlling behaviour. Concluding comment that "[perpetrator] displays controlling behaviour crying to him down the phone and asking him to come round then being verbally and physically aggressive towards him."</p> <p>(394 words in total)</p>	<p>RMS #66</p> <p>Female victim in an ex heterosexual relationship. 14 'yes' responses, with a small amount of detail added for 9 of the items e.g. "he plays mind games" for Q15 and "thinks he has mental health as he apparently 'sees things'" for Q24.</p> <p>(193 words in total)</p>

# Conclusion

## Summary of key findings

Capitalising on a natural experiment in Hampshire Constabulary, this research utilised police officially recorded data to directly compare a sample of grade-3 domestic abuse incidents that received a telephone-based response from the force's Resolution Centre to a similar sample of incidents dealt with by the same force one year later that received the standard provision of 'slow time' deployment.

A summary of the key points:

- Grade-3 domestics represent a substantial proportion of police business (approximately 13% of reports to police, equivalent to 1000 victims per year in Hampshire Constabulary).
- Grade-3 domestics typically involve 'violence without injury' offences such as common assault, harassment and malicious communications.
- Grade-3 domestics are anticipated to be lower risk, because they involve less serious offences and the parties are not cohabitating.
- Grade-3 domestics dealt with by the Resolution Centre were more likely to be classified as crimes compared to incidents dealt with via deployment. In other words, Resolution Centre staff were more likely to identify 'missing' crimes in the course of an investigation that were subsequently recorded under Home Office Counting Rules.
- In addition to recording a significantly higher proportion of crimes, cases initially dealt with by the Resolution Centre achieved more positive investigative outcomes (with a significantly higher rate of cases resulting in Formal Action Taken).
- The DASH form was completed in less than 24 hours for a majority of cases, regardless of whether the risk assessment was carried out in the Resolution Centre or via deployment.
- Although the speed of completion was similar, there was more missing data in the DASH forms completed by deployed officers. Further analysis showed a higher level of quality information within DASH forms generated in the Resolution Centre.
- Grade-3 domestics risk assessed via telephone in the Resolution Centre resulted in nearly twice as many 'medium' risk cases, and triple the proportion of 'high' risk cases.
- This is likely a function of the Resolution Centre's cases having a significantly higher mean total risk score (i.e. the summed total of 'yes' responses to the DASH questions) compared to cases risk assessed via deployment.
- This higher total risk score is a result of telephone-based risk assessment yielding higher rates of disclosure across the majority of DASH items, compared to those obtained via deployment. This is particularly true for sensitive questions such as sexual abuse.
- Risk judgments in the Resolution Centre seem to be more highly attuned to 'seeing' risk in cases that do not involve physical violence, such as harassment and malicious communications. For these types of offences, telephone-based risk assessments generate higher DASH risk scores compared to those carried out 'in the field'.

## **Discussion and recommendations**

This research has provided a robust comparison of police practice in two different contexts: the more 'clinical' setting of the Resolution Centre compared to face-to-face interactions between police and citizens 'in the field', in order to answer the following questions:

- Do significant differences exist in the quality of the initial response provided by Resolution Centre staff compared to deployed officers and subsequently the proportion of incidents that are classified as crimes?
- Do significant differences exist in the DASH risk assessments carried out over the telephone in the Resolution Centre compared to those carried out face-to-face by deployed officers?
- Do significant differences exist in the investigative outcomes of cases referred to the Resolution Centre compared to those dealt with via deployment?

A clear pattern of findings emerged, which taken together demonstrate the efficacy of providing a telephone-based response to certain types of domestic abuse incidents. Specifically, a detailed and formalised operations protocol has been embedded into the work of the Resolution Centre and all evidence suggests this is leading to a higher quality response overall to grade-3 domestics. The initial response provided by the Resolution Centre results in more crimes being recorded and more investigations that result in formal police action. The practice of risk assessment appears to be more comprehensive and detailed, generating a higher number of disclosures and more cases classified as 'medium' and 'high' risk. Due to the robust methodological approach of the research, these positive findings can be directly attributed to the setting where the police work was performed, rather than any differences in case characteristics. The evidence gathered in this report leads to the following conclusion:

***Providing a professionally-delivered response over the telephone to a carefully triaged subset of grade-3 domestic abuse incidents, which is subject to a high degree of supervisor monitoring and review, and is coordinated with other relevant police units, results in performance outcomes that exceed the standard provision of 'slow time' deployment.***

This conclusion, based on quantitative analysis of official police data, is consistent with the qualitative perceptions of partner agencies delivering services in the Hampshire police force area. As one practitioner from a local charity providing specialist services to survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence explained:

*"This is not a surprise, [as] the Resolution Centre had more time and the model of working over the phone is not new to gaining trust from survivors. DVA services across the country do this on a daily basis, it enables a completely different communication type and the physical presence of a police officer in uniform can be incredibly intimidating to a survivor, even community officers like PCSOs are in uniform and this can prevent disclosure."*

Research demonstrating the various challenges to frontline practitioners charged with conducting risk assessments 'in the field' was previously highlighted (pages 7-8). Findings from the current study go some way towards identifying how these challenges may be overcome, at least for some types of domestic abuse cases.

*“The Resolution Centre are skilled telephonists in the sense that they understand the subtle cues that victims need to feel trust and further disclosure, the subtle pauses, the nuanced indicators a victim will give you that require further gentle exploration... My experience is that too often [response and patrol] officers are looking for physical injury in terms of assessing risk, you and I both know that the absence of physical injury does not mean there is an absence of risk. The Resolution Centre were not doing this. Hence being able to pursue more coercive control and harassment / stalking issues than deployed officers.”*

In addition to providing a robust empirical insight into the important influence played by the environment in which risk assessment is undertaken, this study also contributes to knowledge by highlighting the risk profile of grade-3 domestics, which typically involve non-violent offences such as harassment and malicious communications. The research illustrated that higher disclosure rates across the majority of DASH risk items were generated by Resolution Centre staff, and that a greater proportion of cases were subsequently classified as ‘medium’ and ‘high’ risk, allowing for more appropriate levels of safeguarding of these victims. Although these offences are by definition less serious than those receiving a grade-1 (immediate) or grade-2 (within 60 minutes) deployment, they are by no means devoid of risk and officers must be able to recognise this. The research showed that this was more likely to happen if grade-3 domestics were risk assessed in the Resolution Centre.

Previous research has revealed the importance of providing multiple methods by which victims can communicate with agencies in order to disclose abuse and request help. For example, evaluation research in a Sexual Assault Referral Centre revealed that 23% of advocacy was delivered over the telephone.<sup>15</sup> Telephone-based advocacy was also found to be instrumental in the delivery of an advocacy service for male victims of domestic abuse.<sup>16</sup> Telephone contact might be preferable for some victims, and/or it might be more preferable at some stages in a victim’s journey to recovery and a life free from fear. The current study suggests it can provide a helpful and complementary aspect of a holistic police response, if carefully delivered. A telephone-based response cannot replace all face-to-face contact, but under certain circumstances it should be seen as a positive option.

In conclusion, additional research is recommended to replicate and extend the findings from the current study. In particular, it would be useful to evaluate the extent to which telephone-based risk assessment is used in other agencies (police and non-police), to increase our understanding of the key ingredients for positive outcomes. It would also be useful to access victims’ views on the provision of a telephone-based response, especially if they could contrast it with their own previous experiences accessing police via other methods.

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<sup>15</sup> Robinson, A. L., Hudson, K. & Brookman, F. (2009). *A process evaluation of Ynys Saff, the Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Cardiff: Final Evaluation Report*. School of Social Sciences: Cardiff University. <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/23404/1/CardiffSARC.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Robinson, A. L. & Rowland, J. (2006). *The Dyn Project: Supporting Male Victims of Domestic Abuse*. School of Social Sciences: Cardiff University. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.538.716&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

## Appendix A: Comparative analysis of DASH items

The table below provides an overview of responses provided to the individual DASH questions for a random sample of 400 domestic abuse cases allocated to the Resolution Centre in 2016 and for deployment in 2017. The yellow highlighted figures indicate the higher prevalence of that risk factor (Resolution Centre vs Deployment), and the red asterisk (\*) indicates whether this difference is statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ).

		Allocation of cases			
		2016 - RC		2017 - Deployed	
		N	%	N	%
1. Has the current incident resulted in injury?	no	191	96.5%	187	97.9%
	yes	7	3.5%	4	2.1%
2. Are you very frightened?	no	116	59.2%	129	67.5%
	yes	80	40.8%*	62	32.5%
3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence?	no	116	63.4%	125	70.2%
	yes	67	36.6%	53	29.8%
4. Do you feel isolated from family and friends i.e. does your abuser try to stop you from seeing friends/family/GP or others?	no	161	81.7%	165	86.4%
	yes	36	18.3%	26	13.6%
5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?	no	133	67.9%	145	75.9%
	yes	63	32.1%*	46	24.1%
6. Have you separated or tried to separate from your abuser within the past year?	no	91	47.6%	74	39.2%
	yes	100	52.4%	115	60.8%
7. Is there conflict over child contact?	no	137	69.9%	130	68.4%
	yes	59	30.1%	60	31.6%
8. Do they constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you?	no	125	62.8%	116	61.1%
	yes	74	37.2%	74	38.9%
9. Are you currently pregnant or have you recently had a baby (in the past 18 months)?	no	165	84.2%	163	86.7%
	yes	31	15.8%	25	13.3%
10. Are there any children or step-children that are not in the household? Or are there other dependents in the household?	no	147	77.0%	162	86.2%
	yes	44	23.0%*	26	13.8%
11. Has the perpetrator(s) ever hurt the children/dependents?	no	175	93.6%	179	94.7%
	yes	12	6.4%	10	5.3%
12. Has the perpetrator(s) ever threatened to hurt or kill the children/dependents?	no	186	99.5%	182	97.3%
	yes	1	0.5%	5	2.7%
13. Is the abuse happening more often?	no	135	68.9%	148	77.5%
	yes	61	31.1%*	43	22.5%
14. Is the abuse getting worse?	no	133	67.9%	147	77.0%
	yes	63	32.1%*	44	23.0%

15. Does the perpetrator(s) try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous?	no	103	52.3%	132	69.1%
	yes	94	47.7%*	59	30.9%
16. Has the perpetrator(s) ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?	no	170	87.2%	181	94.8%
	yes	25	12.8%*	10	5.2%
17. Has the perpetrator(s) ever threatened to kill you or someone else and did you believe them?	no	166	84.7%	179	93.7%
	yes	30	15.3%*	12	6.3%
18. Has the perpetrator(s) ever attempted to strangle/choke/suffocate/drown you?	no	174	88.8%	175	91.6%
	yes	22	11.2%	16	8.4%
19. Does the perpetrator(s) do or say things of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else?	no	167	86.1%	181	96.3%
	yes	27	13.9%*	7	3.7%
20. Is there any other person that has threatened you or that you are afraid of?	no	172	89.1%	183	96.3%
	yes	21	10.9%*	7	3.7%
21. Do you know if the perpetrator(s) has hurt anyone else?	no	142	73.6%	157	82.6%
	yes	51	26.4%*	33	17.4%
22. Has the perpetrator(s) ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?	no	173	89.2%	177	93.7%
	yes	21	10.8%	12	6.3%
23. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on them for money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?	no	134	68.4%	139	73.5%
	yes	62	31.6%	50	26.5%
24. Has the perpetrator(s) had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or otherwise), alcohol or mental health leading to problems leading a normal life?	no	99	51.3%	102	54.0%
	yes	94	48.7%	87	46.0%
25. Has the perpetrator(s) ever threatened or attempted suicide?	no	122	63.5%	131	69.7%
	yes	70	36.5%	57	30.3%
26. Has the perpetrator(s) ever breached bail/an injunction and/or any agreement for when they can see you and/or the children?	no	175	91.1%	176	93.1%
	yes	17	8.9%	13	6.9%
27. Do you know if the perpetrator(s) has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history?	no	96	50.0%	122	64.6%
	yes	96	50.0%*	67	35.4%
28. Does the perpetrator(s) have a firearm/shotgun certificate or access to firearms?	no	182	92.9%	169	94.4%
	yes	14	7.1%	10	5.6%
	Total	199	100.0%	52	100.0%