Examining implementation of the Stable and Acute dynamic risk assessment tool pilot in England and Wales

Carol McNaughton Nicholls, Meg Callanan, Robin Legard, Wojtek Tomaszewski, Susan Purdon and Stephen Webster

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Key implications

The research evaluated implementation of the Stable & Acute 07 (S & A) pilot. This policy introduced an assessment tool for police and probation staff to use in identifying factors predictive of imminent offending among sexual offenders. Improved identification of these factors might improve sexual offender management by helping to: identify appropriate treatment/intervention; assess offender progress; and monitor risks presented by offenders in the community. This research focused on the application of the tool rather than its efficacy and found the following.

Police and probation staff valued the use of the tool because they felt it improved their own skills and in turn enhanced risk management practice. In particular they reported:

- increased awareness of critical issues;
- more targeted response to high risk offenders – e.g. more home visits;
- improved partnership working based on clearer shared information yielded by the tool.

The tool therefore shows good promise, but the pilot highlighted some important potential limitations.

- Models for delivery varied by area which is not a defendable longer-term position.
- There were concerns about the reliability of the tool. When this was tested by different experts and officers rating the same cases, different results were achieved.
- Some officers raised concerns that having identified offenders' needs, routes to address these were not always open to them.

A number of developments are therefore needed to improve implementation should the use of this tool be adopted more widely. Adequate resources are critical to underpin this.

- First, robust selection and training of staff to implement the S & A. As part of staff training and to ensure robust ethical practice, inter-rater reliability exercises should be conducted to ensure that different raters are consistent in their risk assessment of the same sexual offender.
- Second, support should not stop when training ends. Staff reported that they require ring-fenced time to conduct S & A assessments adequately. Access to local and national support to seek advice about challenging cases would also help maintain high quality standards.
- Third, further integration of police and probation information systems would support the cross-agency use of S & A and reduce the potential for duplicate assessments.
- Finally, wider roll-out of S & A and developments to training and support processes should be appropriately re-evaluated to ensure the positive outcomes identified in this study are further built upon to the benefit of agencies, offenders and the wider community.
Summary

Context
- This report presents evaluation findings from the Stable and Acute 07 (S & A) dynamic risk assessment pilot in England and Wales. The S & A provides a structured method for identifying and measuring dynamic or changeable risk factors predictive of sexual offence recidivism. Two complementary assessments are used: Stable (assessing learned behaviours and personal skills) and Acute (assessing factors that in the last hours or days are shown to be predictive of imminent sexual offending).
- The pilot of the S & A commenced in 2008 across 22 areas, with selected Police and Probation Services or a single agency (police or probation) adopting the tool into their assessment practice. Areas were provided with no additional resources to implement S & A during the pilot.

Approach
- The aim of the study was to evaluate the S & A pilot and inform a decision on future national roll-out, including recommendations regarding staff training, implementation and delivery processes. The focus of the evaluation was therefore on the process of implementing the S & A, rather than an evaluation of the tool itself.
- Qualitative interviews were conducted with 30 operational staff using the S & A in their routine assessments across ten case study areas, 15 police officers and 15 probation officers. Thirteen strategic staff overseeing the pilot were also interviewed and seven sexual offenders that had been assessed using the S & A. Qualitative data were analysed using the Framework method.
- Quantitative monitoring data collected during the pilot were analysed. Demographic information and a Stable score was provided for 126 offenders, demographics and an Acute score for 117, and demographics, a Stable and Acute assessment for 79. An inter-rater reliability exercise was also conducted to examine consistency of assessment. Ten case files were rated by officers trained to use the S & A and expert raters who are accredited S & A trainers. Each file was rated by at least two officers and two experts, with each completing one Stable and one Acute assessment per file. The results were analysed to provide reliability coefficients that could be compared against similar peer-reviewed evidence.

Results
Motivation for involvement and training
- Areas volunteered to take part in the pilot. Reasons given by interviewees for involvement included the need for a dynamic risk assessment tool and a desire to be at the forefront of new policy developments. From the interviews, it was evident that there were different levels of motivation and expertise from officers involved in the pilot from the outset which had a bearing on S & A delivery and outcomes.
● S & A training lasted for two days and consisted of an overview of the theory and evidence for the assessment and a number of practical exercises. Training outcomes reported by the interviewees included: enhanced operational skills, such as interviewing techniques; increased substantive knowledge, such as a greater awareness of dynamic risk factors; and an awareness of implementation challenges, given the resources available.

● Feedback from officers using the S & A indicated that a one size fits all training approach struggled to meet their diverse needs and experiences. As such, on completion of the training some officers who were interviewed felt confident using the S & A and motivated to incorporate it into their practice, or conversely, unsure of the value and practical implementation of the S & A into their assessment regime.

Process of delivery

● The S & A was reported to be used in a range of ways within and between organisations and areas, and was adapted to fit with officers’ existing practice. The Stable assessment was reported to take approximately one to two hours to complete (depending on familiarity with the case, nature of the interaction or depth of information required, and the individual’s experience of using the S & A) and were conducted over one or two occasions. Acute assessments were reported to take between ten and forty minutes and were conducted on multiple occasions. Both assessment timings were reported to shorten with experience.

● Officers interviewed said they did not complete S & A assessments with their entire caseload. Rather they selected offenders on the basis of case familiarity and the perceived compliance of the individual.

● Differing levels of collaborative offender -- officer assessor relationships were reported. The value of collaboration for enhancing trust and rapport, and assisting to support offenders in treatment and management goals was identified by interviewees. However, there was also concern amongst some officers that collaborative approaches provide offenders with opportunities to manipulate outcomes.

● Discussing risk factors pertaining to sexual preoccupation, sex as coping and deviant sexual preference, was problematic for some of the officers interviewed. Obtaining evidence to score items relating to emotional identification with children and hostility to women was also reported to be difficult. Officers said they adapted the S & A question guide with UK appropriate language and reported that the existing scoring guide has a North American focus less relevant to UK operational contexts.

Interface with risk management regimes

● Variation in routine practice reported by interviewees between police and probation officers had implications for the models of delivery respective agencies implemented. Police reported that they tended to have less regular and planned contact with offenders, with their role less conducive to regular or collaborative assessments than probation officers.
Benefits of the S & A as a common police/probation tool were reported to include: a common language around dynamic risk assessment; opportunity for triangulation with police and probation comparing similar assessments; and the potential for increased information sharing.

Outcomes
- Officers who were interviewed said they found that utilising the S & A provided substantive development of knowledge, enhanced professional practice around confidence and consistency in decision making and a systematic framework for questioning offenders and assessing their risk.
- The S & A assessment process was reported as potentially providing offenders with the opportunity to develop awareness of risk factors, facilitate engagement with supervision and provided a professionalised, standard approach to questioning. However, there were concerns from officers that upon identifying needs with offenders, routes to address these were not always open to them.

Implications
- Future use of the S & A should be underpinned by clear guidance concerning the aims and objectives of the tool expected at that time, who should be assessed, how assessments should be conducted and the results interpreted.
- Staff training should be extended with the content and duration provided based on development needs. Appropriate measures should be in place in to ensure that officers have the time and support necessary to complete high quality S & A assessments in their day-to-day role.
- Any modifications to the S&A or wider roll-out of the tool should be subject to further empirical scrutiny and advice sought from the original authors of the S & A.
1. Introduction and background

Context
The literature concerning sexual and violent offenders risk has expanded its focus from static risk prediction (historical factors shown to be statistically predictive of future sexual and violent offending) to the nature of dynamic risk factors. In a recent paper, Hanson et al. (2007) classify dynamic risk factors as either Stable (learned behaviours and personal skills / self management problems) or Acute (factors that last only hours or days) and are shown to be predictive of imminent sexual offending. There are three benefits of adopting the Hanson et al. Stable / Acute classification of dynamic risk factors. First, they can help identify targets for intervention that, if changed, will have the effect of reducing the likelihood of reoffending, and second, whether a sexual offender is making meaningful progress against set treatment targets. Third, they help supervising officers to monitor the risk presented by sexual offenders in the community. Given recent initiatives that have placed effective risk management toward the top of the policy agenda (i.e. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Integrated Offender Management), there is a clear need for reliable and valid risk assessment instruments for both clinicians and supervising officers working with sexual offenders in England and Wales.

To this end, in 2008 the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) began a pilot of the Stable and Acute dynamic risk assessment tool (hereafter S & A) (Hanson et al., 2007) across Police and Probation Services in 224 areas of England and Wales. The S & A provides a structured method for identifying and measuring dynamic risk factors that are predictive of sexual offence recidivism. Comprised of two separate but related scales, S & A consists of an initial assessment of Stable items and subsequent follow-up assessment of Acute items. The Stable consists of 13 items. The emotional identification with children item is omitted from the scale if the offender does not have a child victim. Each Stable item is rated as either zero, one or two where zero is low and two high risk, to give a total score out of 26 for offenders with child victims or 24 for offenders with adult victims. The Acute consists of four items that provide a score for sex/violence and three items that are scored and added to the sex/violence score.

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4 Monitoring data was returned from 22 areas, therefore this is taken as the number involved in the pilot.
violence score to provide an overall risk of recidivism. Each item can be scored between zero and two as above (see Appendix D for Stable and Acute tally sheets).

Despite some evidence that S & A is predictive of both sexual and violent recidivism and that trained supervising officers can reliably use the instrument (Hanson et al., 2007; Fernandez, 2008), supporting studies have been developed using North American samples. The S & A tool has not been tested for efficacy in England and Wales. Consequently, there is the need to evaluate the use of the tool within English and Welsh operational environments. It is in this context that the current study was commissioned, which was not designed to test actual efficacy but evaluate the implementation of the pilot.

The pilot
The S & A pilot was introduced and managed by NOMS. Police and Probation Services from across England and Wales were invited to volunteer to take part. There were no additional resources or ring-fenced time made available for area or staff involvement. Training was provided by an accredited S & A trainer in central locations over two days. On completion of the training, officers adopted the S & A into their usual assessment practice. NOMS provided advice on: how to use the tool when individual requests were made; newsletters to the areas updating overall progress; received monitoring data from officers using the tool.

Aims and objectives of the research
This report presents the findings of research commissioned to examine the implementation of the pilot of the S&A dynamic risk assessment tool in England and Wales. The focus of the evaluation was, therefore, on the process of implementing the S & A, rather than an evaluation of the tool itself.

The objectives of the study were to:

- inform a decision on future national roll-out, including recommendations regarding staff training, implementation and delivery processes and considerations for future impact evaluation;
- provide advice on how to integrate S & A with existing assessment tools;
- provide a summary of monitoring data collected on offenders subject to the pilot, and dynamic risk factors identified;
- provide a summary of any actions taken in regard to those risk factors.

Methods
The research consisted of three distinct strands: qualitative depth interviews with strategic and operational staff\(^6\) and sexual offenders\(^7\) in ten case study areas; assessment of inter-rater reliability (IRR); and quantitative analysis of S & A monitoring data\(^8\). Fifty individuals took part in interviews across the ten case study areas: 15 probation officers, 15 police officers, 13 strategic staff and seven offenders that were currently or had recently been under S & A management. Fourteen officers also took part in the IRR exercise, using anonymised case files to complete retrospective S & A assessments under test conditions. These assessments were compared between officers and also with the scores of expert raters. Full details of the research methodology, sample and recruitment process can be found in Appendix A.

It is important to clarify that this report is primarily a qualitative investigation. Quantitative monitoring and IRR data have been triangulated where appropriate to illustrate key trends. These findings reflect the range and diversity of pilot S & A 07 attitudes and behaviours, and the variety of the experiences that are present in the wider police and probation population using the instrument. However, as is the case with all qualitative research, the numbers of participants expressing particular views or exhibiting particular behaviours is not reported as this has no statistical significance and no numeric conclusions about the wider population could be drawn.

Structure of the report
The findings presented here are taken directly from the analysis of the interview data provided by staff and offenders involved in the pilot. Where relevant, monitoring data or IRR results are used for illustrative purposes. Chapter 2 discusses officers’ and strategic staff’s motivation for initial involvement, their training and how the pilot was implemented. Chapter 3 examines models of delivery adopted by officers and the format and content of the S & A, while Chapter 4 focuses on the interface the S & A process had with existing risk management regimes. Chapter 5 presents the outcomes of the pilot and in Chapter 6 conclusions and recommendations are presented.

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6 Operational staff were defined as using the S & A to assess offenders; strategic staff were those with a strategic role that did not actually use the S & A but managed those that did and included chief and assistance chief probation officers, detective sergeants, detective inspectors and detective chief inspectors. There was some overlap between roles (i.e. staff with a strategic role also using the S & A with a small number of cases). Staff were informed of the nature and purpose of the research and signed consent forms to confirm their agreement to take part.

7 Offenders had been convicted of a sexual offence and were subject to police/probation/MAPPA supervision.

8 Demographic data and Stable assessment scores were returned for 126 cases; Demographic data and an Acute score for 116 cases; and Demographic data; Stable and Acute scores for 79 cases.
2. **Motivation, selection and training**

When operational policies are introduced, the nature and extent of staff motivation, selection and training has a bearing on the delivery and outcomes of the intervention. In this chapter, strategic and operational staff motivation for being involved in the pilot identified during the interviews are discussed. Staff experiences of the S & A training are also outlined. Key training outcomes identified by the interviewees are then summarised.

**Motivation for involvement**

**Strategic staff**

Strategic staff described in the interviews their motivation for involvement in the pilot being underpinned by the following two key features.

**Need for comprehensive assessments**

At the time of the pilot, probation and police officers reported that they were conducting the majority of their risk assessments using instruments that only account for static or historical factors, such as Risk Matrix 2000 (RM 2000). However, some sexual offenders in officers’ caseloads were presenting a current risk of harm and this was recognised by staff as not being comprehensively addressed in these assessments due to the limited incorporation of current dynamic factors within the process. Consequently, strategic staff recognised clear added value of the pilot, in that dynamic risk assessment was a missing component from the suite of current assessments available.

**Forefront of policy development**

Alongside the desire to conduct comprehensive risk assessments, some strategic staff interviewed reported being keen to have their department involved in new policy developments, ensuring that their staff were working at the forefront of innovative practice. There were two secondary impacts of embracing innovation that underpinned the motivation to be involved that interviewees reported. First, adopting the S & A was felt to enhance the skills of staff and provide opportunities to ensure good practice. Second, some strategic staff said that they had opted in to the pilot because the officers working for them were highly experienced. Consequently, it was anticipated by strategic staff in these areas that there was little risk that the pilot would detrimentally affect performance despite the additional resources that would be required to implement the S & A:

> ’We decided to pilot it in [area] because it’s a good [unit] but also because we had officers there who had an awful lot of experience. And we felt that we wouldn’t be at any risk by piloting, that’s, the bottom line, pilots are very important but have to be managed carefully. Because this is over and above what we do, what we’ve been doing so its extra work for them.’ (Strategic staff: police, area D)
That the areas involved were ‘self-selected’ could indicate that those volunteering for the pilot represented especially proactive and established public protection regimes. They were not, however, necessarily representative of all areas, especially those with existing weaknesses, and this should be considered when plans for potential future roll-out are considered.

Operational staff
Two reasons for involvement in the pilot emerged from the accounts of operational staff and are shown below.

Logistical decision making
For logistical reasons, some officers reported that they were nominated by senior staff and informed that they were taking part because they were the only members of staff available in their area. This was at times described as a last minute decision, for example, replacing a colleague who could not attend due to illness. Operational pragmatics thus dictated who was involved in the pilot. However, alongside this, the desire to develop personally was also evident from staff interviews.

Professional development
Operational staff involved in the pilot discussed in the interviews a personal interest in enhancing their working practice and understanding the psychology of sexual offenders. Consequently, some reported that they actively volunteered to take part, rather than being co-opted in. These officers said that they were comfortable in their current role and actively sought out an opportunity to develop professionally. Despite the expertise evident amongst some officers, this was not reported to be the case in all areas. Limited training on managing and assessing sexual offenders was described by some staff. This meant they were keen to gain the additional training that the pilot offered in order to enhance their knowledge of effective risk management.

It is clear from the interviews, therefore, that a diverse range of officers, with differing levels of motivation, skills, experience and expectations, were involved from the outset and those attending the S & A training entered the pilot from very different vantage points. This may have had a bearing on how the training programme was received and assimilated into operational practice, and is discussed in detail below.

Training
S & A training was delivered over two days by accredited trainers from North America. The course took place in centrally located residential training centres across England.

Recruitment
An inconsistent picture emerged from the interviews regarding which staff members were selected to attend the training and use the S & A across the pilot areas. Strategic staff and
operational staff reported that they attended from some areas. However, in other areas, only operational staff discussed attending the training and said that their managers had limited awareness of the pilot. Interviewees had also described feeling confused if only police or probation attended from a given area:

‘I think I had an email, so I knew just the vague sort of bare bones of it, but nothing really. I knew that it was with police as well, but I was really disappointed that [my area’s] police didn’t seem to be part of it once we’d got to the training. I kind of thought that should have been better worked out.’ (Operational staff: probation, area E)

Regarding pre-course information, officers described having either received limited information or a great deal of information, at times ‘too much to take in’. The inconsistency of training entry indicates that officers’ experiences of being involved differed markedly from one another. Whether this was due to systemic approaches from their area, such as email information not being passed on, or due to actual differences in how the pilot was implemented could not be ascertained from interviews. Having adequate information prior to the training was discussed by interviewees as generating positive perceptions of the pilot and motivation for engagement. Conversely, an overload of complex material was described as being off-putting and indicating the S & A was a potentially difficult process to implement prior to officers receiving formal training.

**Delivery**

The interviewees said that the training consisted of an overview of the theory and evidence for the S & A assessment, and then a number of practical exercises using the S&A assessments with other course participants. Identical course content was provided to all officers involved in the pilot. However, given the variation of previous experiences, motivation for involvement, and operational role it is unsurprising that officers experienced the training differently. Key themes to emerge from the interviews regarding the training, encompassed the following.

**Content and materials**

Feedback from staff interviews indicates that the one size fits all training approach struggled to meet the diverse experiences and needs of officers in the pilot. For example, whilst the content was praised by interviewees for being interesting and informative, the course was also reported by some to be ‘theory heavy’ and demotivating. However, there were aspects that were universally appreciated amongst those interviewed. For example, the role play exercises were singled out as being especially useful and suggestions were made that these could be developed in future training. Regarding training materials, these were unsurprisingly described as having a North American slant and suggestions were made that they could benefit from having a UK operational focus.
Length and logistics
As was the case regarding content, comments from interviewees on the length of the course varied, underpinned by the diverse backgrounds of delegates. Participants that discussed having little experience of interviewing and assessing sexual offenders, or of theoretical perspectives on offender behaviour, suggested that two days did not provide adequate time to be trained. That is, the volume of information could not be processed. However it was also reported that two days training was adequate.

‘I did find it very useful, although it was quite heavy on theory on the first day, but there were a good amount of practical stuff and using the tool. Although, had I not already had some practice of working with sexual offenders and thinking about those sorts of things, I think I would have found it quite hard to get my head around.’ (Operational staff: probation area A)

The diverse range of staff backgrounds and training perceptions may have had a bearing on how the S & A was implemented during the pilot. This is discussed further in chapter three. In the next section, specific training outcomes are explored.

Training outcomes
Police and probation officers described three key training outcomes:

- developed operational skills -- such as interviewing technique, with which to enhance working practice and ensure the right questions were being asked;
- increased substantive knowledge -- a greater awareness of dynamic risk factors and why these are important to assess;
- recognition of potential implementation challenges -- some officers expressed that, post-training, they felt resources currently available would make mainstreaming S & A assessments into their day- to- day practice problematic as they would require extra time with each case to complete the assessment.

Given findings reported in the sections above, these three training outcomes could have been underpinned by staff operational role, previous experience and current motivation for involvement in the pilot. Consequently, staff tended to leave training feeling either confident or unsure about utilising S & A. The dimensions comprising feelings of uncertainty and confidence are described in subsequent sections.

Confident
The officers that described, post-training, a high degree of comfort using the S & A included both police and probation. Officers confident using the S & A reported the training as having been useful and that the S & A process had a good fit with their current risk management practices. For example, officers may have always been alert to changes in lifestyle,
substance use or the sexual interests of the sexual offenders they managed, but now had a framework for asking about and assessing these factors with them:

‘The Stable form is a useful structure...then again, these are absolutely things that we would always be asking. But it’s a useful way of recording that information.’ (Operational staff: probation, area G)

Consequently, officers that felt confident using the S & A did not report that it added new areas to their risk assessment practice, rather, it reaffirmed and enhanced what they already did.

Unsure
Officers who discussed feeling unsure using S & A on completion of the training, reported a range of concerns. For example, the S & A process was perceived to not fit well with their current working practice, in that it duplicated existing assessments or required a time frame that was not conducive to particular operational realities:

‘We police by consent. All the offender has to do is let us in his home. He can say a couple of words to us. He doesn’t have to speak to us. So to introduce a risk assessment like that where it’s taking at least two hours in an offender’s home was a bit much really.’ (Operational staff: police, area J)

Officers also discussed a lack of confidence in their ability to use the S & A because, for example, they did not feel they had the requisite interviewing skills to complete each of the sections with sexual offenders. This was especially pertinent to the Stable assessment, which was described by officers to be lengthier and require more detailed information from the offender than the Acute to complete.

Therefore, a polarisation of training outcomes, between officers who were confident using the tool and appreciated the value it could add to their work, and officers unsure of how to implement S & A and to how it would enhance their practice, existed from the outset of the pilot. This was not along clear lines of a police/probation split. Police officers could report to be highly confident and supportive of the S & A, whereby others described that they felt confused about how it would fit with their work, and vice versa for probation. However, police officers had less experience of assessing dynamic risk factors than probation colleagues, who routinely completed Offender Assessment System (OASys) assessments. Consequently, the police may have had a steeper learning curve than probation officers in terms of skills and experience to comfortably use the S & A. However, this may have also increased police officers’ motivation to use the S & A, as police interviewees reported that the tool provided a way to assess dynamic risk factors that was ‘missing’ from their current practice. Conversely, the S & A was reported to be another layer of assessment for some probation staff to
complete that, whilst valuable due to the non-sexual offender specific nature of OASys, may have provided a degree of repetition to their work. The interface of S & A with existing risk management regimes is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, the next section of the report describes how the interviewees described how the S & A was implemented.
3. Models of delivery

The authors have discussed in the proceeding chapter that police and probation officers reported diverse motivation, expectations and understanding regarding how they were to engage with the pilot. Officers within and between areas said that they used the S & A in a range of different ways. In this chapter the models of delivery that developed as operational staff implemented the S & A are presented and discussed.

Process of delivery

It was clear from the in-depth interviews that three overarching organisational and policy factors had a bearing on the broad process of delivery. First, officers implemented the S & A to fit with their existing risk management practice. The pronounced difference between police and probation officers’ practice that was reported was the regularity, duration and nature of contact with sexual offenders in their day-to-day practice. This is explored in greater detail in Chapter 4, but could have had implications for the models of delivery possible for officers to apply. Second, the level of MAPPA management an offender was subject to was also described by officers as having a bearing on pilot implementation. For example, the regularity of contact that an agency has with an offender is associated with a MAPPA management level of one, two or three, with three being the highest and most regularly visited/assessed and therefore most able to conduct regular Acute assessments. Finally, there were also regional variations in regularity, volume of assessments and models of delivery, across areas (see Table AM1, Appendix B). For example, in one area only Acute assessments with offenders were completed; another adopted a ‘co-operative model’ with both police and probation working jointly to complete assessments9 at regular intervals. Officers stated that this variation may be explained by the apparent lack of guidelines available from the outset:

‘It needs to be rolled out with proper guidelines, proper instructions, because otherwise you’re going to get, just in England and Wales alone forty-three forces doing it forty-three different ways, which is totally self defeating. So it, I think yeah its, its a good tool and you know it, its going to be beneficial to us but it needs to be properly rolled out. Once something is rolled out from the centre it’s very much a case of ‘oh well just get on with it’, there is nothing to refer back to, no guidance from within, and that’s why you’re going to have forty-three different ways of doing it from 43 different forces.’ (Strategic staff, police, area H)

Selection of offenders

The monitoring data indicated that individual officers completed between one to sixteen Stable assessments each, with an average of four per officer. Thus officers were unlikely to have applied S & A assessments to their entire caseload, but rather selected a subsection. Given that police and probation areas were not provided with any additional resources

9 Given the MAPPA arrangements promote inter-agency working it may be surprising that this was explicitly adopted in only one area.
to engage with the pilot, and coupled with the pilot occurring when officers’ capacity was reported by them to be particularly pressurised, interviewed officers deemed it to be logistically impossible for their entire case loads to be assessed:

‘I would have liked to have used it on every offender, but there’s time implications with that. What I did was hand-pick, ones that were high-risk, or I perceived as high-risk.’ (Operational staff: police, area E)

‘I think [the S & A] could have been [resource intensive], if [officers] applied it as what the training session says. But, they’ve watered it down, so that they can still feed into the pilot, but it’s not taking as much time as potentially it could so doesn’t indicate the level of resources really needed.’ (Strategic staff: police, area D)

Interviewees acknowledged that this was not an ideal position for the pilot and discussed concerns that for a risk assessment tool to be reliable and robust it should be applied across all offenders and in a robust manner. If this was not possible, officers felt that clear guidelines regarding with whom and when to complete an assessment should be provided. In the absence of resources and standard guidance regarding case selection, officers said that they used two key criteria to select S & A cases; these encompassed the following.

**Case familiarity**

Officers wishing to test the S & A but with limited time said that they completed assessments with offenders whose case they were familiar with. A key factor that underpinned the selection of familiar cases was the degree of compliance an offender had with the supervision process. For example, some officers interviewed felt that a valid S & A assessment relied on ‘quality information’ provided by offenders, whereby ‘quality’ was associated with compliance. In addition, there were concerns that non-compliant offenders would be difficult to assess and that exploring offending behaviour, sexual preoccupation and lifestyle in the detail required could indulge those who enjoyed recounting such information. Despite the influence of compliance, strong case familiarity was not reported as driving the selection of all offenders in the pilot. For some officers a lack of familiarity with a case was also a reason to complete a Stable assessment. Here, the S & A was seen as a way to gather rich information on ‘new’ sexual offenders being managed as a means to enhance the assessment process and information they held on offenders:

‘The stable one you usually cover a lot of this information anyway when you’re doing PSR, so I tried to use it for people I’d just got, new cases, where I’d normally be asking these types of questions. You could previously lack information in all of those areas [assessed in the Stable] frankly, our file information is a bit rubbish, you’re very reliant on [offenders] version of what’s going on for them.’ (Operational staff: probation, area A)
### Extent of case load

The level and variance in officers’ caseload was also described as an influence on their selection. For example, probation officers with a generic case load said they had a small number of sexual offenders therein, whereby completing assessments with all those that agreed to take part could number just one or two. This contrasted markedly to officers with a high sexual offender caseload. As discussed above, some officers stated that they tended to select a subsection of offenders on the basis of their compliance and existing familiarity. However, the bearing of experience and confidence was evident where some officers described having selected cases that were on the border between risk levels or where the offender’s lifestyle was in a state of change. Here, S & A was seen as a key tool in assisting with these sensitive and important assessment issues rather than being utilised on relatively ‘easy’ cases.

Having described the features underpinning pilot case selection, the nature and extent of offender collaboration in the assessment process is the next defining feature of delivery identified during the pilot.

### Collaboration with offenders

The *what works* literature regarding the assessment and treatment of sexual offenders clearly indicates an association between collaborative officer/offender relationships and accurate and effective outcomes. For example, collaboration is intended to assist offenders in engaging with assessment and owning the outcomes for action.\(^\text{10}\) Collaboration between offenders and officers reported in the interviews could be set on a continuum (illustrated in Figure 3.1).

![Figure 3.1: Collaboration with offenders](image)

At one end was a high degree of collaboration that included discussing the scores and risk factors that were flagged in the assessment with the offenders; at the other end there was

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non-collaboration, with the offender unaware of the pilot or assessment process. In the middle, a ‘typical’ reported level of collaboration was that of the offender being informed of the pilot of a new risk assessment process but given no further information.

‘I am not certain that I was told this was an experimental tool, or perhaps I was told this is a new risk assessment we’re trialling...there were questions...and I had to answer them and I think there was a space at the bottom of each page for a written answer.’ (Offender three)

That offenders assessed using the S & A were selected due to their compliance was also described by officers to probably impact on them agreeing to take part with few queries, as the following quote illustrates:

Interviewer: ‘With the people that you’re using the S & A with, are they aware that you’re using this tool with them?’

‘No. Well, one of them was. But he was very compliant, and he’d do anything for us, and I just said, “Look, we’ve got this new risk assessment tool, would you be interested in helping us out and going through some of the questions?” And he was fine, yea.’ (Operational staff: police, area A)

Differing levels of collaboration could, to some extent, be explained by officers’ operational role. For example, some police officers reported a perceived hostility towards them from offenders. This was contrasted with the relationship offenders were perceived by staff to have with probation officers. Here, probation was viewed as being there to ‘support’ offenders, alongside their management. Police officers also described short, unplanned visits compared to probation colleagues, who were felt to have had more time and regular planned contact with sexual offenders.

‘We have to be careful with police [using the S & A] because they don’t have as much contact, even when they are managing a category one, level one offender, their contact with a sexual offender is minimal. We are the one, the probation service that will see this offender every week, for the specific length of time, or once a fortnight, or every three weeks. It’s a different process and it’s a different level of engagement and [police] are engaging with the offender in a different way to us, so [the S & A] its probably more likely to be of benefit to the people that are working with an offender on a more regular basis, than the monitoring type role that the police tend to have with them.’ (Strategic staff: probation, area A)

‘It’s [S & A] a good idea but practically will it work? Knowing what its like to go and do these visits, Probation, they’ll do a visit but its all by appointment and we don’t work like
that, so its easier if the offender knows they’re going to Probation at a certain time and you’ve got an hour, whereas we’re knocking on the door, the TVs on, the phones going, people are coming in.’ (Operational staff: police, area I)

It was reported that probation officers’ work may be more conducive to completing regular Acute assessments and having a collaborative assessment process whereby the offenders can use their assessment results to measure movement towards treatment goals, rather than singularly assess the risk of recidivism. One area in the pilot adopted an explicitly co-operative model of assessment, with both police and probation completing the initial Stable assessment together and the lead agency then completing the Acute.

Value of collaboration
In keeping with the evidence presented in the preceding chapter regarding the differing levels of officer experience and expertise with sexual offenders, some officers discussed being unsure of the added value of collaborative approaches for assessing offenders. On the one hand, obtaining adequate information with which to manage and assess offenders was perceived as reliant on having a good collaborative relationship.

However, at the other end of the spectrum, there was concern reported amongst some officers that providing ‘too much’ information on the assessment process equipped sexual offenders with knowledge to manipulate assessors and ‘work the system’:

‘I can imagine some people that I’ve supervised looking this [S & A] up and finding out how to come out as a low score. Cause I think its quite open to being manipulated because a lot of it is on self report. I think its the same problems that we’ve always had in terms of assessing the risk, its not unique to this.’ (Operational staff: probation, area B)

However, that offenders may use awareness of an assessment process to exploit the results in their favour is not exclusively a concern of the S & A. Psychometric tests, for example, could also be researched online and scoring guides discovered, yet these instruments tend to have the support of all staff and organisations. Therefore, to ensure offenders are adequately assessed and managed, it is important that a suite of tools, processes and agencies are involved and triangulated – as is the intention with MAPPA. In addition, it was evident from some interviews that the fear of collaboration was due to a lack of understanding and therefore also a training issue, discussed as a recommendation in Chapter 6.

Style and format of the assessment
Information sources
As the authors have described in Chapter 2, some staff felt that they left the training feeling uncertain and this uncertainty had a bearing on their operational practice during the pilot.
Consequently, it was clear from some staff interviews that there was diverse practice regarding the range and types of information that could be used to conduct S & A. For example, some officers felt that only information obtained directly from the offender should be used in the assessment. This rendered the assessment obsolete with non-compliant offenders and was arguably not an effective use of sparse resources. In contrast, there were examples of staff that used a range of different information sources to complete the S & A, such as a review of the case file, other assessments and observations made at a home visit.

“You can sit in the house and someone will say they’re not in a relationship and they don’t have any access to kids, and you’ll see a picture of a child on a shelf and you say, “well who’s that?” “Oh that’s me sister’s child”. “Right, well do you see them?” And you can tell just by their reactions that either they’re lying to you or they do see the sister, they do have access to that child.” (Operational staff: police, area I)

Here, using a range of information was felt to be important for the overall assessment process as it served to strengthen the evidence base supporting judgements. Both police and probation officers used additional sources to complete the S & A assessment. However, as officers were not always clear what additional sources of information could validly be used, clear guidance here for operational staff was described as necessary. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Materials: language and format
When asked to reflect on the scoring guide and tally sheets, officers described this material as useful to read and user-friendly to complete, respectively. However, the language was discussed as ‘Americanised’:

“I think one of them is “do you feel you’ve had a fair shake in life?” That’s not something that I would naturally say and its probably more of an American terminology.’

(Operational staff: probation, area E)

As a consequence of the North American focus of the materials, one officer developed a UK interview schedule to assist assessments during the pilot. This is potentially a useful step forward and requires further attention should the pilot be extended.

The authors have described in earlier sections how some officers felt sceptical about the veracity of some self-report information provided by offenders. As such, some police and probation officers suggested having two columns on the S & A tally sheets – one to note the offenders’ answers to questions and another to note the assessors perception of this. Altering the format of the tally sheets in this way would allow for a distinction to be made between the sources of the information used to assess an offender’s current dynamic risk. However, this was recognised by the officers as making assigning a final score potentially challenging and
clear guidelines would have to be provided regarding which information took precedence. For example, if self-reported information from an offender indicated they were a zero on an item, but additional intelligence indicated that they were a one, there is ambiguity as to which should be counted as the final score.

**Completing Stable assessments**

Stable assessments took place during scheduled and unscheduled meetings with offenders at their accommodation, probation offices, or when they attended police stations to sign the sexual offenders register. The Stable assessment was completed over one or two sessions with offenders and took between one to two hours. Officers described having initially referred to the scoring guide regularly and that the interview could be rigid and unwieldy. One officer for example recounted the process of going through the entire question set for one item:

> ‘Things like current romantic relationships, number seven, it says “all couples have some problems from time to time, what sort of problems have you had? What did you do about them? How are these problems now? Are these things still a problem?” It’s a big loaded question, and I think for a lot of these guys it needs to be simple and clear and a question, as opposed to a whole bundle of questions.’ (Operational staff: police, area A)

However, once officers became familiar with risk factors, they reported that the process became relaxed and they adapted questions to suit the individual interaction. The unwieldy first process was felt by some to be a natural outcome of adopting a new assessment process rather than indicative of the S & A. The length of time taken was also reported to reduce with experience. Despite these positive messages, some officers who found their initial assessment difficult to complete lost motivation, and cited this as a reason for ‘opting out’ of the pilot. This indicated that some officers required additional support and time to complete the assessments that was not available.

When the assessment interview was over, officers would complete the tally sheets from their notes when they returned to the office, at times subsidising information from additional intelligence that they held about the offender. With non-compliant/non-collaborative cases, officers reported that they would ‘ask around’ the issues they needed information on to complete a Stable assessment. This could then be triangulated with existing information held on the offenders to complete the assessment process.

**Completing Acute assessments**

Evidence from the depth interviews suggests that Acute assessments took between ten to forty minutes to complete. If an officer was familiar with the offender, and their circumstances had remained the same since the last contact, then the Acute assessment was a simple, short exercise. The value of the assessment was that officers had a systematic checklist of dynamic risk factors to consider before and after the visit. For offenders whose circumstances had
changed, the Acute assessment could be used to gauge the level and seriousness of changes that had occurred since previous contact and assess the implication this had for recidivism. However, for officers, especially police officers, in some areas, that rarely had repeated contact to measure change, the Acute was perceived as having less value than the Stable assessment. Conversely, in another area, only Acute assessments were completed by police officers because the Stable was not deemed appropriate given the nature of the officers work (see Table AM1, Appendix B). Therefore, there appeared to be from the interview data no clear pattern regarding which assessment was most relevant to which agency (police or probation).

**Reflections on individual risk factors**

To some extent the success of the pilot can be assessed by the extent to which officers who were interviewed felt that the items accurately captured the nature of UK sexual offenders risk and how accessible this information was during interview and file review. Officers’ thoughts on these issues are explored in the sections below.

**Stable**

Police and probation officers tended to describe Stable factors as relevant and useful to explore with offenders, but to varying degrees. Problems arose due to two key issues: difficulty discussing the risk factor; and, an inability to obtain evidence with which to rate the risk factor.

**Discussing risk factors**

Difficulty discussing risk was particularly evident in three important areas that are highly predictive of sexual offence recidivism: sexual preoccupation, sex as coping, and, deviant sexual preference. Given the extent of some officers’ experience, it is perhaps unsurprising that inexperienced officers described asking directly about sex challenging. For some, this anxiety was underpinned by the fear that asking about such issues could in some way indulge offenders by allowing them to recount offences and sexual fantasy.

‘And, I think some people would struggle perhaps with the sex and preoccupation, some of the questions in that are a bit, urgh! I think there’s probably colleagues that would really find that quite difficult.’ (Operational staff: probation, area H)

It was also noted by offenders that these could also be uncomfortable areas of questioning for both them and their supervising officers. Those offenders who had been through the prison Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP) were more experienced in discussing sexual urges and aware of the need for them to do so. However, they also noted that they would have refused to be compliant with these questions before they experienced treatment. However, a key finding from the interviews was that, compared to unstructured supervision meetings, having a series of formal questions to work through legitimised asking about sensitive or challenging topics.
**Obtaining evidence**

In addition to the difficulty of asking questions about sexual behaviour, challenges were also discussed by officers regarding sourcing adequate information about some items. Here, assessing the extent to which a sexual offender emotionally identifies with children was described as being particularly problematic:

> ‘The emotional thing with children is always a difficult one, even in people who will admit the offence, they’ll admit that they’ve done it, they’ll admit that its wrong but it’s that emotional ID with children that they can’t seem to acknowledge and take responsibility for, so that’s quite a difficult one to do.’ (Operational staff: probation, area H)

As already noted, the Stable assessment was usually perceived as requiring a degree of collaboration from the offender to obtain the requisite information. It is, however, important to note that prior to using the S & A, police officers interviewed reported that they did not have a systematic or consistent checklist to guide their sexual offender assessments. Therefore, despite variance to how the S & A was applied during the pilot, officers said that it introduced a greater degree of consistency to working practice than had previously been the case.

**Acute**

In contrast to the position with Stable items, Acute items were described on the whole as being straightforward to assess. For example, *substance abuse, rejection of supervision* and *collapse of social support* were deemed by interviewees to be highly visible and accessible factors to score. In contrast, *victim access* and *sexual preoccupation* were reported as relying on information provided by the offender and careful questioning by the assessor. For example, *victim access* was sometimes rated as a higher risk than may actually have been the case, with officers reporting interpreting living in the community as a means to have victim access:

> ‘Victim access is a difficult one because, potentially, it’s always going to be really high for some people because they’re in the community; victims are everywhere.’ (Operational staff: police, area A)

Such views point to a key training need for officers regarding the way in which sexual offenders have particular victim preferences, such as gender and narrow age ranges, and other associated behaviours. Consequently, young people or women per se are not potential victims for the vast majority of sexual offenders.

The inter-rater reliability exercise also highlighted the degree of subjectivity that could occur in assessing Acute dynamic factors, with similar factors and episodes in an offender’s

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life perceived as being more or less harmful by different officers and scored accordingly (see Table IRR 3 . Appendix C). Thus, despite the Acute assessment being perceived to be straightforward, risk factors appeared to be interpreted differently in the same case, or officers missed out certain information that other officers did not. This indicates the need for extensive training and national standards/guidance if each factor is to be interpreted and identified reliably by different officers in different contexts. These guidelines are discussed further in Chapter 6.
4. Interface with risk management regimes

Effective management of sexual offenders in the community necessitates a multi-method and agency approach. This chapter discusses the current risk assessment practices of the police and probation service and explores their perceived strengths and weaknesses. It goes on to reflect on partnership working between police and probation in relation to the risk management of sexual offenders in the community. This is followed by a discussion of how the S & A could integrate into these current practices with particular reference to information sharing between the Police and Probation Services.

Risk assessment of sexual offenders within the Police and Probation Services

Risk Matrix 2000\textsuperscript{12} (RM2000) is the primary risk assessment tool used by the police. A static measure of risk of re-conviction RM2000 takes into account a range of historical factors and provides an assessment of risk based on the statistical likelihood of re-offending. RM2000 assessments are used to inform the management of sexual offenders in the community, feeding into MAPPA meetings and influencing resource planning. In general, officers reported that RM 2000 was a useful starting point for assessing risk and was felt to be a quick and easy tool to use. In addition, interviewees placed value on the fact that it was a nationally recognised tool that was defensible in courts of law. However, it was also felt to be limited by the fact that it only took into account static factors and was felt to be unresponsive to changing circumstances and dynamic risk issues.

The Offender Assessment System is the primary tool used by the Probation Service to assess risk of harm and re-conviction. OASys incorporates economic, social and personal factors into the assessment and the outcomes are used to manage risk, inform MAPPA meetings, and feed into management plans for offenders on licence. OASys assessments are updated every 16 weeks or more regularly if an offender’s circumstances have changed. Probation officers were also familiar with RM 2000 and would use this with their OASys assessments in the risk management of sexual offenders.

Stable and Acute 07 in comparison to current risk assessment practices

For both police and probation, views varied in terms of how far officers felt the S & A risk assessment tool contributed positively to their current risk assessment practices. In relation to RM 2000, officers felt it added a dynamic component that took into account current circumstances that were missing from the RM 2000 assessment and this was viewed positively. However, some police officers felt that they already collected a great deal of this

information as part of their current procedures. Due to the diverse range of implementation strategies that were adopted across the pilot by officers, and their own reported confusion regarding the interface S & A could have with RM 2000, there was insufficient evidence to assess which tool should take precedence when total scores do not correspond. A robust second pilot that also encompassed a reconviction study would have to be carried out to provide such evidence.

It was acknowledged that S & A formalised the risk assessment process and it was this formalisation that was highlighted as a particular benefit by officers, particularly those at a strategic level who welcomed the tool for providing a structure to assessments which would help ensure consistency of approach:

‘I would hope that most officers would naturally consciously, raise their awareness about [an issue]. So, when they get back into the office, even if the Risk Matrix says that this person should be a low. They would be actually managing them, possibly as a high… but what the Acute does I think, is it actually puts it in stone. You have to consider it. It’s like a little tick box I suppose. and that’s what I like about it from a manager’s side. Because then I know that the officers out there are considering those points and I can see clearly that they’re doing that.’ (Strategic staff: police, area H).

In the case of probation officers who predominantly used OASys for risk assessment, participants welcomed the use of a tool designed specifically for sexual offenders, which encouraged them to think about factors that they may not have included in an OASys assessment. Another potential benefit identified was that the S & A offered a framework for issues to cover at each supervision session, ensuring a continued focus on the individual offender’s dynamic and current risk.

**Stable and Acute 07 as a common risk assessment tool**

In the context of current risk management practice and partnership working between the Police Service and the Probation Service described above, there was a very positive response to the concept of a common dynamic risk assessment tool to be used by both probation and police. Several benefits were highlighted by both operational and strategic staff interviewed.

- **A common language** -- a shared tool could provide the two services with a common language around risk that would facilitate discussion at MAPPA meetings and general partnership working between the police and probation.
- **Triangulation** -- by using the same assessment tool, police and probation would be able to compare assessments. Where assessments were similar, this would act as confirmation of the risk assessment made. Where differences in assessment occurred, this would provide an opportunity for discussion with a view to ultimately reaching a consensus that would improve the risk management of the offender concerned.
Increased information sharing -- a shared common assessment tool, could increase information sharing between police and probation around key issues relevant to assessing risk; this would ensure that all parties were aware of what factors should be monitored and what information it was important to pass on to colleagues in other agencies.

Integration of S & A into current risk management practices – police/probation
As discussed in Chapter 3 and above, the different environments in which police and probation officers operate have implications for how the S & A could be integrated into current risk management practices. Within these differing contexts, officers highlighted a number of specific issues to be considered when exploring how to integrate the S & A into current police or probation practice.

Resources
For police officers interviewed, the time required to conduct an S & A risk assessment was notably longer than the usual risk assessment approach underpinned by RM 2000. If officers were required to complete the full assessment for their entire caseload, this was felt to have significant resource implications. In the case of probation officers, there was also a general perception that the S & A was time-consuming, particularly if conducted in addition to OASys and RM 2000. Consequently, it was felt that any roll-out would need to take into account the additional resources required, both in terms of completing assessments and in giving officers enough time to follow up assessments and instigate changes in risk management based on the outcomes of assessments.

Environment
For some police officers, completion of the S & A risk assessment during a home visit was raised as a concern. The environment was felt by some to be inappropriate for a lengthy and in-depth discussion with an offender. Lack of privacy in a hostel or communal living area was an issue, and some officers also felt there were safety concerns for officers required to complete an in-depth assessment with an unco-operative or resistant offender in an insecure environment. Related to this issue, some officers also raised the concern that the tool could potentially raise difficult and sensitive issues for an offender and that there was a duty of care to only conduct this form of assessment within a controlled environment.

Frequency of contact
The frequency of contact police officers had with offenders varied considerably depending on their assessed level of risk. This fact raised the question of how effective it would be to complete Acute assessments with offenders who were only seen once every six months to a year. The majority (78%) of police officers completed one Acute assessment for each offender during the pilot, while, in comparison, probation officers were more likely to
complete multiple Acute assessments with 69% of offenders assessed by probation, being assessed on the Acute, three or more times (see Appendix B, Table AM9). These findings suggest that the regularity of contact probation staff had with offenders supported the use of a dynamic risk assessment tool. It is important to note, however, that a large number of the sexual offenders monitored by the police are not in contact with probation. Therefore, the use of S & A solely by the Probation Service would mean that many sexual offenders currently being monitored would not be assessed using the tool.

Role
As already highlighted in this report, there was a perception amongst some police officers involved in the risk management of sexual offenders that there was a conflict between their role as law enforcers and the use of the Stable element of the S & A which required a different type of engagement with the offender:

‘I don’t see this Stable assessment as an appropriate tool for a police officer who is coming at an offender in a completely different way... in a law enforcement way. You know, there’s a lot we’ve got to get through to an offender on a visit. For us then to be required to sit down with that person and ask them the sort of questions, valuable questions, within the Stable, is inappropriate.’ (Operational staff: police, area I)

However, not all police officers shared this view and there were officers who described incorporating the Stable element of the tool successfully into their practice. For probation officers, it was arguable that the use of S & A required less change to their existing practices, although time was an issue.

Information sharing – recording and sharing assessments
Various suggestions for recording S & A assessments were made, and importance was placed on having a user friendly and straightforward interface that minimised burden on staff time. In the Probation Service, the inclusion of the assessments on OASys was generally the preferred option, although other options included recording assessments on offender management contact logs. In the case of the Police Service, including the assessments on ViSOR13 where RM 2000 is currently recorded was preferred. As discussed earlier, a challenge for integrating S & A into current practice will be how to share assessments between police and probation and this will need careful consideration as access to shared information systems is currently limited. It was also felt that MAPPA meetings were an important forum for sharing and discussing assessments and that if the S & A was rolled out more widely it could be used to inform MAPPA decisions.

13 ViSOR is a UK-wide system used to store and share information and intelligence on those individuals who have been identified as posing a risk of serious harm to the public.
Interface with current risk management tools and partnership working

As discussed earlier, the value of S & A from the perspective of probation officers was the extent to which it offered a more accurate measure of dynamic risk for sexual offenders than the current OASys system of generic risk assessment. As such, probation officers felt that the S & A should be used alongside OASys. There was generally felt to be some overlap between S & A and OASys and suggestions for integration included having an additional page in OASys to record S & A assessments and only completing the Stable or Acute assessment when certain factors were flagged up during the OASys. However, concerns were raised here regarding how often it would be feasible to update OASys with changes in the dynamic level of risk as currently changing one element of the OASys requires a review of the whole assessment. One suggestion given was to incorporate changes in dynamic risk based on the S & A at each 16-week OASys review. For police officers, combining RM2000 assessments with S & A was felt to be the preferred option as the latter provided the dynamic measure that was previously missing. However, officers were unclear as to how they should do this or what actions to take should the RM 2000 and Stable or Acute assessment not correspond. As already noted, due to the reported lack of guidance and ensuing diverse range of implementation strategies that were adopted across the pilot, there was insufficient evidence to provide a rigorous assessment of how RM2000 and S & A should interface. A robust second pilot that encompassed a reconviction study would have to be carried out to provide such evidence.
5. Outcomes and rater-reliability

This chapter sets out the range of outcomes that could be identified from the pilot of the S & A for operational staff, existing risk management practices, and the offenders being assessed. The risk factors that were identified from the monitoring data and the results of the IRR are also discussed.

Operational staff

Substantive development

Staff members who had little previous experience of working with sexual offenders reported that the training provided a range of new information, theories and skills that could be used to enhance their work practice, regardless of their involvement in the pilot. For example, they would consider the items on the S & A tally sheets with all of the offenders they managed now without necessarily completing a formal assessment. Despite selecting limited numbers of their caseload to complete full S & A assessments, awareness of dynamic risk factors and how to identify them filtered into the assessments conducted across officers’ case-load. Understanding of dynamic risk in the assessment process was now used alongside the myriad of other sources of information to make decisions, whether or not an S & A assessment was explicitly completed. Thus involvement in the S & A pilot reportedly led to the incorporation of enhanced knowledge, understanding and a process to assess dynamic risk. This met a need in the assessment process that officers felt had previously been missing. This was particularly pronounced for police officers who had previously used only RM2000:

‘With a structured interview like [S & A] you would still get the diversionary tactics, you would still get [offenders] rambling about all sorts, but this allowed you to evidence it. This allowed you to say with the Risk Matrix if somebody is scored as a low and your gut feeling was that he was a more significant risk, you could always raise the bar. But to lower the bar you had to be able to evidence it and gut feeling wasn’t enough to lower the bar, but definitely enough to raise the bar, so I think we needed something in place that does allow you to say, “this person at this particular time isn’t the risk he’s showing on the Matrix.”’. (Operational staff: police, area H)

Professional development

Officers reported that the use of the S & A during the assessment process brought explicit improvements by providing increased consistency and confidence to their decision making:

‘I think one of the biggest positives [of the S & A] is having that [standardised approach], if you’re seeing these people on a regular basis, it becomes an interviewing assistant if you like, to have some questions to fire away and “oh, I didn’t know that” and then you go further into that, its helpful to prompt some sort of conversation.’ (Operational staff: police, area H)
Prior to using the S & A, officers did not necessarily have a standard approach that they adopted at each assessment encounter. The S & A assessment provided a consistent, replicable framework. Whilst this was cited by officers as positive outcome of the pilot, as has been reported in this research, variation in how officers implemented the S & A and which offenders they assessed using it may still have limited the overall value of the tool for providing a standardized approach. Nevertheless, S & A explicitly provided a framework for potential standardisation, and ensured that each of these risk factors was explored with each case rather than in an ad hoc manner.

Challenges
There were outcomes of involvement in the pilot that challenged operational staff interviewed. This especially concerned resources, or lack of them. It is important to contextualise this concern. The pilot was implemented without any additional resources being provided at a time when officers and strategic staff reported stretched capacity. Completing S & A assessments added time and administrative duties onto each assessment encounter which officers stated had previously been conducted in a more ad hoc manner. The S & A added additional paper work and required a set length of time with an offender that was described by some officers as not part of their normal working practice or that could be accommodated by them. The cumulative effect of completing the S & A could significantly contribute to officers’ workloads, and could prompt them to formally or informally opt out of the pilot by not completing any further S & A assessments. For example, one officer completed only two Stable assessments during the pilot as illustrated below:

‘I found it very long, I just found it very difficult in reality. I was struggling to get this in in an hour and I thought okay, well maybe the next one might be quicker. And he was the same, you know, there’s so many questions in here’. (Operational staff: police, area E)

In addition to resource concerns, some officers reported being unsure of the value or relevance of the S & A and indicated a sense that their work could be deskilled by their involvement in the pilot. For example, discomfort questioning offenders about sexual preoccupation or hostility to women could highlight a lack of confidence in assessing sexual offenders that had previously been concealed. Suggestions for addressing these challenges are provided in Chapter 6.

Risk management practices
A range of actions were reported to have been taken by police and probation officers as a result of S & A assessments. This included sharing the information gathered from assessments in MAPPA meetings, increasing the number of home visits to an offender whose risk was felt to have increased, adapting risk management plans, drawing on assessments in writing Pre-Sentence Reports (PSRs) and collaboratively engaging with partner agencies including police, probation, housing and mental health services to address
issues raised. In discussion of actions taken as a result of S & A assessments, some concerns were raised in relation to having adequate resources or infrastructure to respond to and address risks highlighted by use of the tool.

At an organisational level, a number of outcomes were identified by interviewees. First, the ability to evidence risk assessment decisions, both internally as part of day-to-day risk management practices, and externally within the MAPPA framework and as part of the judicial process. Officers were hopeful that the S & A would provide this evidence base to enable them to make defensible risk management decisions, although this was partly dependent on the tool being recognised and accepted by all partner organisations.

Offenders
From the perspective of police and probation officers using the S & A and offenders themselves, a range of positive outcomes were identified for offenders.

Owning and managing risk
Using the tool with offenders helped to challenge particular attitudes and behaviour which would ultimately help them to manage their own risk more effectively. Offenders echoed these views and described the process as helpful in reminding them of potential risks. In one case, for example, an offender was seeking to improve his social networks after the assessment highlighted limited social support as an area of concern.

Facilitated engagement with supervision
It was reported by officers during the interviews that the S & A process fostered a more open and relaxed discussion that encouraged offenders to discuss areas of risk frankly. It was also suggested that by engaging the offender in detailed discussions of their risk they would, in turn, feel more supported:

‘.the offender will feel more supported because it’s more detailed and more focusing on their needs…Majority of them don’t want to be back before the court…This is really addressing the things that they need to be looking at, and being discussed, because if you get into that conversation, with some of the things that officers may find more difficult to talk about, you’re going to be talking actually about the things that you really need to be talking about, and unpicking and giving them… relapse prevention strategies.’

(Strategic staff: probation, area E)

Offenders described the Stable element of the S & A as providing a supervision meeting with more structure and focus where the use of open-ended questions elicited more information than previous discussions. Offenders also reported being asked about areas of risk, particularly around sexual behaviour and fantasies that they had not been asked about before, and they felt that these were important areas of risk that should be discussed and addressed.
Needs-based provision
More generally, officers also felt that improved risk management that identified risks and targeted resources more effectively would impact positively on offenders by meeting their needs and reducing their risk levels. For this outcome to operate effectively, however, there would need to be resources available to work with offenders to explicitly address these needs. Alongside these positive outcomes, however, some negative outcomes were also raised:

Negative emotional impact
As discussed in Chapter 4, some officers said that by encouraging offenders to discuss and think about their offending without providing them with a safe environment in which to do so, the S & A could raise issues that may have the potential to destabilise them:

‘We’re bringing a lot of these things up… talking about their offending and then all of a sudden we go, “Right thanks very much, see you then” and they’re left without any, any monitoring or… anything there to stop them then [going] out and re-offending because we’ve just left them.’ (Operational staff: police, area J)

Unco-operative offenders/deniers
In addition to increasing negative effect, it was also felt by officers interviewed that the S & A may not be suitable for use with offenders who are unco-operative or in denial of their offence. The personal and in-depth nature of the tool was felt to have the potential to increase hostility and lead to further rejection of supervision which would ultimately increase risk:

‘I don’t think with a denier you’d want to approach things like sexual preoccupation, sex drive and… sex as coping and sexual interests at the beginning and possibly not ever because there are ways of working with denial but that’s likely to shut it down and, you know, you’d never get it opened up… they’re entrenched in their denial and that would make them very angry and you’d never pull them out of it, well you’d have a lot of difficulty. It would definitely have a negative effect.’ (Strategic staff: probation, area G)

Relevance to offender types
Sexual offenders are not a homogeneous group. Therefore, an important test of the S & A is its ability to identify risk factors across all offence types in England and Wales. The S & A has thus far been validated on Canadian sexual offenders. It is intended to be used to assess adult males in the community. However, the knowledge and understanding that officers gained about dynamic risk factors from their involvement in the pilot prompted discussion in interviews of their consideration of whether similar risk factors should be considered when assessing populations such as female sexual offenders, those aged under 16, non-sexual violent offenders, or sexual offenders in prison. Caution should be adopted, however, as the
S & A has not been validated with these populations. Officers discussed two specific types of sexual offender when exploring the wider relevance the S & A.

**Internet offenders**

Internet offenders tend to receive community sentences so form a significant part of police and probation officers’ caseloads. Consequently, officers spent some time considering the efficacy of the S & A with online offenders. On the whole it was felt that the risk factors explored using the S & A had relevance for Internet offenders. In addition, the divide between contact and non-contact offenders was felt to be a false one by some staff. That is, Internet offenders may be at risk of contact offences and therefore should have their risk assessed in the same manner as contact offenders.14

**Non-English speakers**

The S & A was also used during the pilot to assess offenders who did not speak English, where a translator gathered relevant information. Officers found this to be a laborious but useful exercise where the S & A framework allowed for additional information to be probed that the officers would not normally have obtained via a translator. However, using a translator led to some concern regarding how valid and reliable the actual scores were, or how universal the risk factors were across cultures.

The final section of the chapter explores the extent that multiple officers could reliably score the same case and is a critical aspect of the evaluation.

**Reliability**

Testing the extent to which different officers could reliably apply S & A scores to the same offender was important for two reasons. First, it ensures that sexual offenders are being appropriately managed on the basis of an accurate risk assessment. Second, from an ethical perspective, to ensure an individual offender would be rated and managed the same way irrespective of the officer rating them or area where the assessment took place. The methods used to test inter-rater reliability and full results of the exercise are presented in Appendix A (methodology) and Appendix C (results) but in summary it involved ten case files each being assessed by at least two officers (from a pool of 14) and by two expert raters (from a pool of four). The Stable and Acute items and total scores given by each rater were compared to establish the degree to which they agreed.

Based on the results of this exercise, inter-rater reliability was very poor (full statistical details are available in tables IRR1, IRR2 and IRR3, Appendix C). The Stable scores were found to be considerably more reliable than the Acute, but the reliability scores for Stable were still not

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14 Internet offenders may also refer to those convicted of ‘grooming’ under Section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act, as well as those convicted of child abuse material production/possession/distribution. Thus they are not necessarily offences without contact.
high when tested statistically or against other similar studies that have assessed the inter-
rater reliability of dynamic risk assessments (Fernandez, 2008; Webster et al., 2006). That is, low to moderate agreement across the Stable items translated to very moderate agreement on the total scores. For the Acute scores there was very low reliability, for the individual components and overall.

Important caveats to these findings have to be made. The reliability exercise, as discussed in Appendix A, relied on officers scoring pre-existing case files. The quality and depth of information available in each case varied. This method loses the depth of observation and information gathering that can be obtained via an actual interview with the S & A intended to be completed after a face-to-face interview. Nevertheless data from the depth interviews with officers made clear that non-compliant offenders were assessed using additional information such as case files, and that information regarding an offender’s circumstances was often incomplete, relying on self-reporting even when a face-to-face meeting occurred. In addition, the aim of the exercise was to examine reliability between raters scoring the same information rather than the quality of the information.
6. Recommendations

The outcomes discussed in Chapter 5 clearly highlight the positive influence of S & A on community risk assessment. However, delivering the pilot was not without its challenges and implementation was reported by strategic staff and officers to have suffered due to lack of guidance. In this final chapter, a series of recommendations for future practice are presented that seek to provide solutions to the challenges identified.

Need for a consistent and defendable model of delivery

During the pilot, models of delivery varied between officers and areas. A range of factors underpinned these models that were identified from the interview data, including officers’ role, case loads, offenders’ MAPPA level, officers’ previous experience, reason for using the S & A, and the resources and guidance available. If the S & A is to be adopted nationally, it is first important that policy, strategic staff and officers using the tool are clear about the aims and objectives of the instrument and how it sits within broader risk management processes. To this end, it would also be beneficial for further use of the S&A to be independently verified by an expert group of professionals, for example the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel. This will ensure that any decisions taken regarding the ensuing use of the S & A are consistent, robust, defendable and ethical.

Two potential aims for future use and the associated resources required are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim of S &amp; A</th>
<th>Requires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guide to be used with other tools to inform the assessment processes of selected offenders in a caseload</td>
<td>Clear national guidelines, training in basic use and interviewing skills with sexual offenders, consistent ongoing support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent, reliable and legally defensible risk assessment of all sexual offenders across England and Wales</td>
<td>As above plus: additional training and support, clear national guidelines and standards, inter-rater reliability tests, extensive ring-fenced time and resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irrespective of how the S & A is adopted, challenges identified in the interviews cut across the two potential models and broadly encompassed: preparing staff for using the tool, procedures and processes supporting ongoing practice; and integration with existing risk management systems. Recommendations to address these issues are described below.

Preparing officers for S & A: staff selection and training

To ensure high quality delivery of the S & A, staff identified a number of factors that could be introduced at the training stage. These encompassed the following.
Pre-training assessment/screening
The analysis of the interview data showed that differing levels of officer skills and experience had a bearing on how S & A was delivered, especially regarding interview technique and experience of sexual offender management. To ensure that officers’ training needs are effectively identified and addressed, the following researcher recommendations are made.

- A brief pre-training assessment process could be completed to ascertain the extent of officers’ substantive knowledge, experience and expectations. This information could then be used to allocate staff to courses containing content that fully met their needs.
- A screening process could also be implemented with strategic staff. Again, this could gather information about the extent of substantive expertise with sexual offenders and explore the level of support that would be provided to operational staff using the S & A. This information would help policy ensure a consistent implementation plan and that adequate support was offered to operational staff in each area.

Training in effective questioning techniques
Effectively interviewing sexual offenders in order to identify and manage risk can be a challenging exercise that requires considerable skill. It was clear from the interviews that some officers reported they had not received training on effective interviewing techniques prior to taking part in the pilot. Whilst the pilot assisted to hone these skills, a key area of concern for some officers was that it would be challenging to question non-compliant offenders to obtain the requisite information to complete S & A. It has been identified through this research that additional training modules being provided to officers managing sexual offenders that focus on questioning and interviewing techniques could provide generic skills to enhance the assessment process and their confidence. This could potentially assist officers that found discussing certain S & A items such as sex as coping, especially challenging.

Course content to meet diverse needs
Given the diverse background and experience of officers reported in the interviews, a one size fits all training package that lasts for two days is not the most efficient use of resources. As suggested, a pre-training screening exercise would enable course content to be tailored to differing levels of need, especially regarding theories that underpin sexual offenders’ behaviour, the nature of offenders risk, and interviewing skills.

Potentially, one course could be developed similar to HM Prison Service’s SOTP staff training. The first set of sessions could cover the foundations of effective practice with sexual offenders (such as understanding theory, nature of risk, asking effective questions) and would be targeted at less experienced officers. The second set of sessions could focus on practically assessing items on the S&A instruments with a range of offender types and categories, and be suitable for those who have successfully completed the first set, and officers who had few training needs identified via the pre-screening exercise.
Regardless of their experience, officers were clear during the interviews that an increased number of practical exercises and role play would also strengthen the training. Rather than officers questioning each other during exercises, it was suggested that external staff / trainers could be used for the role play to heighten authenticity. It is recommended, due to the findings presented here, that to ensure high quality, robust and ethical practice, the final part of the course could cover an assessment of test reliability. Officers would rate a case file or video-taped offender interviews. Scores would be compared to a ‘gold standard’ with only those who have passed the reliability assessment accredited to use the instrument.

**Local area training provision**

Officers said that travelling to attend training courses across England and Wales could create logistical difficulties and had resource implications. Consequently, local area training could help meet this challenge. To facilitate this, staff from both police and probation, at operational and strategic levels, would first have to be trained as trainers to a national standard, following screening. These staff members could act as S & A ‘experts’ in each area and then provide training and on-going support to assist with local level roll-out. This role would have resource implications for the staff involved with ring-fenced time required to ensure success.

**Supporting ongoing use**

**Clear guidelines**

Limited resources and organisational capacity meant that only a subsection of offenders in each area were assessed using the S & A. However, within this limited sample, different organisations and areas used different criteria to select offenders for assessment. This could be based on perceived risk to the community or officer, or the extent the offender would collaborate or comply with the assessment. Following discussion with staff, it was evident that guidelines could have promoted greater within-agency and cross-area consistency regarding when and with whom to complete a S&A assessment given that officers reported it was not possible to complete assessments with their entire caseload. If such guidelines existed during the pilot they were either not identified by officers or not adequate to meet their needs, indicating greater or more effective dissemination should be adopted in the future should these be developed. Given the different operational aims and contexts of the Police and Probation Services, guidelines would have to be role specific and provide a number of options that could be adopted to fit with existing operational demands.

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that guidelines regarding the extent of collaboration required should be based on the peer-review literature regarding the impact of collaboration on effective risk assessment. Training and supporting guidance should then equip and support officers to collaboratively assess offenders where possible. Guidance on completing consistent and robust monitoring data could also ensure that future analysis of such data can be completed without the dataset limitations encountered during the pilot, which will be essential for ongoing monitoring of S & A outcomes. To this end, two manuals
could be developed – one aimed at strategic staff and one at operational staff – outlining in detail implementing the S & A into their work. Indeed, given the variation of implementation between police and probation, guidance manuals could be further developed to incorporate how each service should specifically implement the S & A.

UK version
When reflecting on the language and format of the S & A, some officers felt that the instrument could benefit from having a UK version of the question / topic guide. In addition, tally sheets with greater space provided for notes to indicate factors with conflicting risk information were felt to be beneficial. Changing the S & A this way would only be defensible should the tool be used in England and Wales as a guide. The S & A has been tested and validated for use in its original from. Alterations to materials would require research work to be commissioned that assessed the reliability and validity of the revised S & A. The first stage in this process may be to seek further information from the authors of the S & A regarding its adaptability within the UK before further piloting and testing commenced.

Aftercare
The findings from the research indicate that to ensure consistent high quality delivery and provide support for officers using the S & A, a set of aftercare measures could be implemented. This could include a national advice hub that advises all areas on S & A assessment issues and co-ordinates the national training for local area ‘experts’. To supplement this, a series of refresher seminars and meetings at both national and local levels could be implemented by the ‘local area experts’ to monitor quality and maintain staff engagement. Finally, to ensure that officers have the resources required to complete S & A to a high standard, it was felt to be critical that strategic staff who supervise officers have a clear understanding of the assessment process.

Integration with existing risk management regimes and tools
Both police and probation welcomed the S & A for providing a common tool and shared language across their agencies. Based on the research findings, the following recommendation can be made to improve future partnership working.

Triangulating with existing assessments
Officers were unanimous in that the dynamic items and sexual offender focus of the S & A filled an important gap in the suite of current assessment tools available. However, how the S & A sits alongside RM2000 and OASys assessments was a point of concern. Specifically, some officers were unsure how the actual scores fit together or what action to take should an offender be high on one tool and lower on another. Guidelines on this issue would need to be developed for future roll-out. One suggestion may be to use specific areas in the OASys assessment as a ‘trigger’ to complete a Stable assessment, or Acute assessment should a Stable have been completed recently, with an offender.
The S & A provided a useful guide for officers that informed the assessment process. Coupled with the range of assessment tools available – intelligence, inter-agency working and MAPPA framework that currently exists – the addition of the S & A was cited as leading to enhanced practice and meeting an identified gap in assessing dynamic risk for police and probation officers. Beyond this, based on the available evidence, further claims cannot be made. Additional testing, piloting, access to support, training, guidance and resources for agencies using the S & A would be needed to do so.
Appendix A - Methodology

The study was based on three distinct strands that included: depth interviews with strategic and operational stakeholders and with sexual offenders in ten case study areas; assessment of inter-rater reliability; and quantitative analysis of S & A monitoring data.

Depth interviews
Qualitative depth interviews were conducted in ten case study locations involved in the pilot. These areas were purposively selected to ensure geographical spread and a mixture of areas where both police and probation or only one agency (police or probation) were taking part in the pilot. Offenders interviewed were also recruited from these areas, with the operational staff interviewees acting as gatekeepers.

Recruitment
The interviews with staff were arranged through individual contacts, and further information regarding the research sent to each via email. At this point, operational staff were provided with consent forms and information to use with offenders they were in contact with, to either obtain consent for their files to be anonymised and provided to the research team for the purposes of the IRR, or if they had been assessed using the S & A, to provide consent for the research team to contact them and request that they take part in a depth interview regarding this experience. In some cases officers could not identify any offenders they managed whom it would be appropriate to raise either of these consent issues with. This was particularly so for offenders who had been assessed using the S & A. If they were unaware that a new assessment process had been used, the officer was understandably reluctant to raise this with them for the purpose of the research. Officers usually selected to complete S & A assessments with a small proportion of their caseloads and were, by the time of the research, not necessarily in contact with any offenders assessed using the S & A. Therefore, obtaining consent from offenders to contact them for interview or to anonymise and use files proved to be a difficult process, requiring lengthy negotiation with the staff acting as gatekeepers.

Consent to obtain and anonymise the files of ten offenders was eventually obtained. To ensure the secure transport and anonymisation of what was clearly sensitive information, the research team travelled to collect and anonymise the files. In some cases the lengthy process of anonymisation was completed by interviewees and the files collected during interviews.

Sample
The aim of the purposive sample was to ensure diversity across geographical locations, mixed or single agency involvement and the characteristics of staff and offenders. Due to the limited number of officers involved it was not always possible to purposively sample in this
way, rather all of the staff involved in the pilot were interviewed; this led to some areas having naturally greater coverage than others, often reflecting the overall number of staff involved in the pilot there.

**Table A1.1: Depth interview sample by area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service configuration</th>
<th>Area code</th>
<th>Strategic</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Probation</th>
<th>Offenders</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation only</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation only</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police only</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police only</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table A1.2: Operational staff sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service configuration</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Police</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different ranks of strategic staff, responsible for different roles, were interviewed. The most relevant staff member to be interviewed differed across areas, indicating the extent to which there was variance in the way the pilot was implemented and managed across areas. In one area, the two staff trained and using the S & A also had strategic roles overseeing their respective agencies. These staff members have been included in the operational staff sample as they had used S & A assessment with a cross-section of offenders, but indicate the complexity of the sample characteristics.

**Table A1.3: Strategic staff sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service configuration</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conduct of depth interviews**

When possible, operational staff interviews were conducted on a face-to-face, one-to-one basis with a researcher. This was usually in a private room at the office of the staff member being interviewed. In two cases, due to time constraints, paired interviews were conducted instead. In one further case, a telephone interview was conducted as the officer worked part time and a date to conduct a face-to-face interview proved difficult.
Strategic staff interviews were carried out in a similar manner. One was in a small group interview (of three) and another paired. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes to one hour 45 minutes and were digitally recorded. A topic guide was used to guide the discussion. The areas covered in both the operational and strategic staff interviews were similar and allowed for a comparison to be made across the staff interviews during the analysis. The face-to-face and confidential nature of the interviews allowed for a deep exploration of processes regarding the implementation and operation of the pilot, and a space for reflective comments from the interviewees regarding their views of the pilot and of the S & A and their organisational context.

Data management and analysis
Data were managed using the Framework approach developed by the National Centre for Social Research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This involves summarising verbatim transcripts into a matrix organised by themes and sub-themes as well as by individual cases within a thematic chart. The managed data were then interpreted with the aim of identifying and categorising the range of phenomenon present in the study population.

This approach ensured that data management was comprehensive and consistent and that links with the verbatim data were retained. The thematic charts allow for the full range of views and experiences to be analysed and compared and contrasted both across and within cases, and for patterns and themes to be identified and explored. A separate framework was developed with relevant themes pertaining to the offenders’ interviews and the interview transcripts analysed in the same manner. In addition, fieldwork logs and interview summary sheets were completed after each interview. This ensured that the sample was clearly labelled and key themes emerging from the interviews were immediately apparent and could be compared across cases as the fieldwork developed.

Rater – reliability
The inter-rater-reliability exercise consisted of five key stages.

In the first instance, a number of case files had to be accessed that would provide the information with which the Stable and Acute assessment could be completed. Collating such files proved to be a difficult and lengthy endeavour. Offenders had to provide written consent, via their supervising officers, for files to be used in this manner.

After a lengthy process, consent was obtained for the necessary ten files to be obtained. However, the quality of the information, risk level of the offender or nature of his offence could not be sampled or controlled for. To ensure a secure transfer of these data, researchers travelled to the relevant officer’s place of work throughout England to pick the files up and often had to anonymise them before leaving the building, which could take up to seven hours. In a number of cases, officers themselves anonymised the cases provided,
which were then picked up by researchers. Again this was a lengthy exercise for already busy officers.

The ten files that were used in the exercise consisted of four Internet offenders, four that had a child victim, one mixed offence (Internet and child victim) and one that had an adult victim.

The second stage of the rater-reliability required the recruitment of officers that could act as raters. Given the number that had opted out of the pilot or that had not used the S & A for some time, the number that these could be drawn from was relatively small. Fifteen officers were recruited as raters and allocated files. An additional two agreed to take part: however, this was after the allocations and a number of assessments had been completed and so were unable to take part.

The third stage of the rater-reliability stage was to obtain the completed assessments. Each officer rated two cases and completed a Stable and Acute for each. To ensure that officers had ring-fenced time to complete the assessment, two rater days were held at office premises. On the second day, five raters were unable to attend due to illness and other unforeseen circumstances. Thus a third exercise was completed by two of these raters at a later date to ensure each file was rated by at least two officers.

Table A1.4: Rater sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A fourth stage running concurrently was the rating of the files by expert raters. These were recruited from the existing pool of accredited S & A trainers. Four expert raters were recruited, two male and two female. Each rated five files. Thus each file was rated by two experts and at least two, usually three, officers trained in the S & A.

The fifth and final stage was to input the scores to a specially designed database and analyse the results. The results of this are presented later in Appendix C.

Analysis of monitoring data

Data collection

Monitoring data consisted of the returned tally sheets and completed demographic form that accompanied each offender and their suite of assessments. The forms were sent by officers to NOMS who populated the databases. Three separate forms for data were prepared: Stable form, Acute form and Demographic form. Stable and Acute forms followed closely in structure to the actual tally sheets used in assessment.
Challenges with the data

Processing the data turned out to be a rather difficult task and encountered a number of problems. The most important issue was related to the fact that a large number of offenders' unique identifiers, which were crucial for merging the information across the datasets, were used inconsistently across the forms. Consequently, it was initially not possible to match a large portion of the information across the forms. The process of correcting the identifiers took a substantial time and proved to be only partially successful.

A further challenge related to the fact that in some cases incomplete information was returned. A full set of information on a given offender should consist of one Demographic form, at least one (normally one) Stable form, and at least one (normally more than one) Acute form. However, the data for a substantial number of offenders only covered one or two of the three components. Consequently, the final sample sizes were as follows.

- Demographic forms: data on 177 offenders were provided.
- Stable forms: 194 forms in total were returned, of which 190 could be fully used in analyses.
- Acute forms: 538 forms in total were returned, referring to 190 offenders. There were between one and twenty assessments per offender, as detailed in the results section below.

Due to the inconsistencies in offenders identifiers', as described above, the total number of cases that could be used in the analyses based on merged data were as follows.

- Demographic & Stable – 126 offenders.
- Demographic & Acute – 117 offenders.
- Stable & Acute – 128 offenders.
- Demographic & Stable & Acute – 79 offenders.15

The inconsistencies in the identifiers and the fact that for many offenders the full set of information (i.e. all three forms) was not available were main sources of missing data. Once the information was available, and could be merged across the forms, there were no major problems with incomplete information (i.e. the forms typically were fully completed).

Reliability of the data

It is difficult to assess the reliability of the data provided because there is no benchmark information to use as a yardstick (e.g. no statistics on the whole population of sexual offenders). However, there were some concerns about the reliability of the information provided in Demographic forms. Specifically, there was a discrepancy in the information related to the age of victim (i.e. whether

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15 Two of the offenders had two different Stable forms assigned to them. However, a closer investigation of these double assessments suggested that it was unlikely that they referred to the same persons. Consequently these had to be omitted from analyses based on merged data (reducing the number of the Stable assessments to 190).
the victim was a child) provided by Stable and Demographic forms. This may suggest that the information provided by Demographic forms should be, in general, treated with some caution.

Methods of analysis

Most of the analyses were based on simple descriptive statistics, which covered calculating proportions of offenders in a given category and/or average Stable and Acute scores for different categories of offenders. Also, simple transition rates were calculated when analysing changes in the Acute risk category.

However, some of the more advanced analyses were based on multivariate modelling using appropriate regression techniques. The key feature of multivariate regression analysis is that the relationship of each of the offender’s characteristics to an outcome takes into account any possible confounding influence of other characteristics. However, it is important to note that whilst this analysis can detect significant relationships between the characteristics of an offender and the risk assessment score, the analysis does not unravel the cause and effect in the relationship.

Regression models allow one to predict an outcome (also called the dependent variable) from a set of variables that may be continuous, categorical, dichotomous (i.e. two-categorical), or a mix of any of these. Which type of regression model is applied depends much on the nature of the outcome variable. If the outcome is approximately continuous, as in the case of the average Acute total score, a linear regression model is used. The model predicts the difference in the Acute score associated with each explanatory variable.

If the outcome is not a continuous variable, a model from the family called logistic regression models is most often used. If the dependent variable has more than two categories and they can be meaningfully ordered (as in the case of Stable or Acute risk categories, i.e. low, moderate, high), ordinal logistic regression is applicable. If the dependent variable has more than two categories and the ordering is not obvious (as it is with transitions between the Acute risk categories, i.e. no change, increase, decrease), a version called multinomial logistic regression would be applied. The analysis generated over 30 tables of output. However, only results deemed most relevant have been presented here (Appendix B).

Caveats regarding generalisations

The results from the quantitative analyses should be mainly used in a descriptive way. That is, to give an insight into the characteristics of the group of the offenders assessed using Stable & Acute tool, given the conditions of this pilot study. Any attempts to generalise the findings to a wider population of offenders warrant two major caveats. Firstly, due to a low sample size, in most of the cases the power of a statistical test would be too low for the observed differences to be statistically significant according to standard criteria. Secondly, the representativeness of the pilot sample was not formally assessed and it would be very difficult to assess how typical, in a statistical sense, the analysed sample of offenders is.
Appendix B – Monitoring data

Number of assessments
The number of offenders assessed, and the number of forms returned, varied by area. Table AM1 shows the number of completed forms sent by each of the areas, as well as the number of offenders for whom the full information set (Demographic, Stable and Acute forms) had been returned.

Table AM1: Number of assessments returned, by area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area number (and case study code)</th>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Acute</th>
<th>Dem &amp; Stable &amp; Acute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (B)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (D)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (I)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (E)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (J)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (H)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (A)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (G)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (C)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (F)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic forms – overview
Table AM2 presents the distribution of selected socio-demographic characteristics for the 183 offenders for whom the information was provided. Other characteristics (such as OASys and OGRs scores) are not presented due to a large number of missing data or inconsistencies in the format in which the information was provided.
| **Table AM2:** Selected socio-demographic characteristics of offenders |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| **Age**                     | N   | %   |
| 19-30                       | 32  | 18.4|
| 31-50                       | 85  | 48.9|
| 51+                         | 57  | 32.8|
| **Offence type**            |     |     |
| Internet offence            | 41  | 23.3|
| Indecent exposure           | 12  | 6.1 |
| Indecent assault            | 78  | 44.3|
| Rape                        | 17  | 9.7 |
| Other                       | 28  | 15.9|
| **Victim’s gender**         |     |     |
| Female                      | 135 | 76.7|
| Male                        | 37  | 21.0|
| Other                       | 1   | 0.6 |
| N/A                         | 3   | 1.7 |
| **Victim’s age**            |     |     |
| Under 13                    | 74  | 41.8|
| 13-16                       | 64  | 36.2|
| Over 16                     | 28  | 15.8|
| N/A                         | 11  | 6.2 |
| **Relationship to the victim** |     |     |
| Stranger                    | 71  | 40.1|
| Known but not related      | 74  | 41.8|
| Related                     | 22  | 12.4|
| N/A                         | 10  | 5.7 |
| **Previous convictions**    |     |     |
| No                          | 83  | 46.9|
| Yes                         | 88  | 49.7|
| N/A                         | 6   | 3.4 |
| **Offender aware of the pilot** |     |     |
| No                          | 50  | 28.3|
| Yes                         | 127 | 71.8|
| **Offender in contact with their family** |     |     |
| No                          | 50  | 28.3|
| Yes                         | 126 | 71.2|
| N/A                         | 1   | 0.6 |
| **MAPPA level**             |     |     |
| Level 1                     | 122 | 73.1|
| Level 2                     | 37  | 22.2|
| Level 3                     | 8   | 4.8 |
| **MAPPA category**          |     |     |
| Cat 1                       | 152 | 93.8|
| Cat 2                       | 3   | 1.9 |
### Summary

- Half of the offenders assessed were between 31 and 50 years of age, a third were over 50 and one in five were 30 or younger.
- The most frequent offences were indecent assault (44% of offenders) and Internet offence (23%).
- Three-quarters of the victims were females.
- According to the demographic form, eight out of ten victims were aged under 16 and over half of those under 13. However, this statistic is not consistent with the information collected with the Stable forms (see the next section).
- Four out of ten offenders were strangers to their victims, the same proportion were known but not related; one in eight offenders were related to their victim.
- Half of the offenders had previous convictions (of any kind).
- Seven out of ten offenders were aware that they were participants of the pilot study.
- Three-quarters of the offenders were assigned MAPPA level 1, and one in five MAPPA level 2; one in twenty offenders were assigned MAPPA level 3.
- More than nine out of ten offenders were assigned MAPPA category 1 (see footnote on page 6 for category definition).
- A third of the offenders were assigned a high or very high RM 2000 score.

### Stable assessments – an overview

Table AM3 shows the distribution of scores for each of the items on the Stable form as well as the distribution of the total scores.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table AM3: Distribution of the Stable assessment scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Significant social influences</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity for relationship stability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional ID with children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hostility toward women</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General social rejection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of concern for others</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impulsive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor problem-solving skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative emotionality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex drive/ Sex preoccupation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex as coping</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These results demonstrate that capacity for relationship stability, deviant sexual preference and general social rejection were the items on which more offenders scored higher. Conversely, emotional ID with children and hostility toward women were the items where a vast majority of offenders scored zero.

Table AM4 shows an average score for each item, distinguishing between the offenders with a child victim and those without a child victim.

Table AM4: Average scores for Stable assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Child victim</th>
<th>No child victim</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant social influences</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity for relationship stability</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional ID with children</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility toward women</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General social rejection</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of concern for others</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsive</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor problem-solving skills</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotionality</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex drive/ sex preoccupation</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex as coping</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant sexual preference</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-operation with supervision</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score</td>
<td>10.36</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>8.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results indicate the following:

- Sexual offenders with a child victim had a higher overall Stable score than offenders without a child victim.
- Sexual offenders with a child victim scored consistently higher than offenders without a child victim, with the exception of hostility toward women and impulsive items, where the scores for the two groups are on a par.
- Table AM4 confirms that, overall, capacity for relationship stability and deviant sexual preference were the highest scored items, while emotional ID with children and hostility toward women were the lowest-scored items.

**Acute assessments – overview**

Table AM5 shows the distribution of the Acute scores (both specific items and the overall scores).

**Table AM5: Distribution Acute assessment scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex/Violence (4 factors)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim access</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual preoccupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejection of supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>72.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other (3 factors)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional collapse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The highest scored item was victim access and the lowest collapse of social support.

**Frequency of Acute scores**

In 80 cases, offenders were assessed using the Acute form more than once, as shown here in Table AM6.

| Table AM6: Number of acute assessments per offender |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| N     |     |     |
| 1  | 110 | 57.9 |
| 2  | 22  | 11.6 |
| 3-4 | 20  | 10.5 |
| 5-6 | 17  | 9.0  |
| 7-20 | 21  | 11.1 |
| Total | 190 | 100.0 |

Table AM7 explores the timing between the assessments for the same offenders by showing the average gap between the first and last assessments, as well as the average gaps between two consecutive assessments.
The offenders with seven plus Acute assessments were assessed twice as frequently as those with two to six assessments.

Models of delivery
This section presents an overview of how the pilot was implemented in different areas and by different types of Services (Police/Probation).

The number of offenders assessed, and the number of forms returned, varied by area. Table AM2 showed the number of completed forms sent by each of the areas, as well as the number of offenders for whom the full information set (Demographic, Stable and Acute forms) were returned. These figures demonstrated that it would not be possible to disaggregate any analysis into areas due to the number of assessments per area being too small. In a similar fashion, Table AM8 presents the total number of offenders’ assessments returned by different services, as well as the number of the offenders with the full information available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service type</th>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Acute</th>
<th>Dem &amp; Stable &amp; Acute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-operative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of the offenders were assessed by the Police Service: about 72% of all Demographic forms and about 61% of Stable assessments were provided by the police. About 24% of Demographic forms and 36% of Stable assessments were completed by the Probation Service. There was also one pilot area where the Police and Probation Services co-operated on the project (there were two officers working on the same cases); this model of delivery of the pilot covered about 4% of the offenders assessed.

However, as evident from Table AM8, the proportion of Acute assessments delivered by the Services does not correspond with the proportions of Stable or Demographic forms completed. Namely, the Probation Service provided a majority of the Acute assessments,
accounting for 58% of the total number.

In terms of the complete sets of assessments (i.e. all of the Demographic, Stable and Acute forms being returned), just over 60% of those came from the Police Service, 30% from the Probation Service and just under a tenth from the area when the co-operative model was implemented.

The co-operative model seemed to have worked well in the area where it was implemented – all three forms were returned for all the offenders assessed in this area. However, since this model was implemented in one area only, it cannot be sure whether the observed results provide statistically robust evidence of the effectiveness of the model. For this reason, the co-operative model will not be considered in further analyses.

**Acute assessments**

In principle, each pilot area was expected to provide one demographic form and one Stable assessment per offender, while the number of Acute assessments per offender was generally expected to be higher. This section presents an overview of the pilot delivery in terms of the number of assessments per offender completed by different services and the average timing between the assessments based on the monitoring data only.

Table AM9 shows the distribution, as well as the average, of the number of assessments made per offender, depending on the type of service making the assessments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of assessments per offender</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Probation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost eight in ten offenders assessed by the police (78%) had only one Acute assessment completed and almost nine in ten (87%) had one or two assessments. By contrast, seven in ten offenders assessed by the Probation Service had three or more assessments completed, and as many as eight in ten had more than one assessment completed. On average, each offender supervised by the police had 1.7 Acute assessments completed while the
The corresponding figure for an average offender assessed by the Probation Service was 5.3 (the difference is statistically significant). This suggests that a different approach to implementing the pilot was taken by different services. Variation in approach was discussed throughout the preceding report.

Table AM10 investigates the issue further by looking at the timing between assessments for those offenders who had more than one Acute form completed\(^\text{16}\), split again by service type.

**Table AM10: Average time between assessments, by service type (in months)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service type</th>
<th>Average time between first and last assessment</th>
<th>Average time between two consecutive assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
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On average, just over three months passed between first and last assessments and just under a month between two consecutive assessments. However, there are differences between the services, with probation officers doing more frequent assessments than police officers. On average, offenders supervised by the police were assessed every 43 days (1.4 month), while those supervised by the probation staff every 18 days (0.6 month). This resulted in an average time between the first and the last assessment being about four months for the police and 2.5 months for the probation staff.

**Relationships between demographics characteristics and Stable and Acute scores**

The aim of this final part of the quantitative analysis presented is to illustrate relationships between various socio-demographic characteristics of offenders and the Stable and Acute score they received.

**Stable and Acute scores in relation to key Demographic characteristics**

Table AM11 presents average total Stable and Acute scores for selected characteristics of offenders.

**Table AM11: Average total Stable and Acute scores for selected characteristics of offenders**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Acute</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
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</table>

16 Obviously, the time between assessments for those with a single Acute assessment is zero.
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value (Mean)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Indecent exposure</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Known but not related</td>
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<td>Offender with contact with their family</td>
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<td>Child known/related</td>
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</table>

Summary:

- Younger offenders score slightly higher than older offenders on Stable, and much higher on Acute.
- Internet offenders score much lower Stable and Acute.
- Victim’s gender does not make any difference in terms of Acute score; however offenders whose victim was male score slightly higher on Stable.
- Offenders who are strangers to victims tend to score slightly higher on both Stable and Acute.
- Those with previous convictions score substantially higher on both Stable and Acute.
- Offenders aware of the pilot had higher Acute scores but lower Stable scores.
- Offenders’ contact with family did not seem to make a difference in scores.
- Higher MAPPA level, as well as higher RM 2000 score, were very strongly related with higher Stable and Acute scores.
- When victim’s age, type of offence and relationship with victim are combined, offenders with child victims who are strangers score highest on both S & A, followed by the offenders with an adult victim who is a stranger. Internet offenders have much lowers S & A scores than the rest.
Appendix C – Reliability results

The tables overleaf present the raw data from the inter-rater reliability exercise. The first table shows the Stable scores and the second the Acute scores. The rows of the tables represent the cases rated by each rater. The second column gives the case type, and the third column details whether or not the rater was an expert.

It is clear from the raw data that there is considerable disagreement between raters on their scoring of cases. For the Stable three category summary score (high, moderate, low risk) for just three cases out of the ten do all raters agree. For Acute there are no cases for which there is complete agreement between raters. Furthermore, there is disagreement between experts as well as the non-expert raters. So, even without summary reliability statistics it is clear that the reliability of the scoring is at best moderate.

There are a number of statistical indices of reliability, but the one probably most commonly used for continuous or ordinal data is the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC). (See, for example, Shrout and Fleiss (1979).)\(^{17}\) The ICC is calculated as the percentage of all variance in scores that is between-case variance. If raters are completely reliable then all the variance in scores would be between cases and there would be no variance in the scores within cases. In this instance the ICC would be equal to one. If in contrast all of the variance in scores is within-case variance then the ICC would be equal to zero and this would be interpreted as zero reliability. Inevitably almost all ICCs fall between zero and one and the interpretation is that the closer the score is to one the greater the reliability.

There is no consensus about how high an ICC needs to be for the reliability to be considered ‘high’. But certainly most of the ICCs calculated for the Stable and Acute scores (see Table IRR 1) are at best ‘moderate’. Most would be considered low.

The ICCs presented below have been calculated using MIWin. This allows for components of variance to be calculated in a multi-level setting with cross-classification. Given that each case was scored by up to four raters with each rater scoring either two or four cases, three components of variance are needed: between case; between rater; and error variance. The ICC is then calculated as the between-case variance divided by the total of the three components. Table IRR 1 shows the ICC values for the Stable and Acute scores, overall and then excluding the expert raters. (Note that because the expert rates did not agree we could not use their scores as ‘gold standard’ against which non-expert scores could be assessed.)

It is clear from the table that some items of the total scores were assessed reasonably reliably, such as hostility towards women and deviant sexual preference. But these are the exceptions. For most items, reliability is fairly poor and then, when summed, generate low reliability in the total scores.
**Stable assessments**

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<th>Capacity for relationship stability</th>
<th>Emotional ID with children</th>
<th>Hostility toward women</th>
<th>General social rejection</th>
<th>Lack of concern for others</th>
<th>Impulsive</th>
<th>Poor problem solving skills</th>
<th>Negative emotionality</th>
<th>Sex drive/preoccupation</th>
<th>Sex as coping</th>
<th>Deviant sexual preference</th>
<th>Co-operation with supervision</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>High (3)/Moderate (2)/Low (1) Risk</th>
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## Acute assessments

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<th>Rejection of supervision</th>
<th>Emotional collapse</th>
<th>Collapse of social support</th>
<th>Substance abuse</th>
<th>Sex/violence sum</th>
<th>Recidivism risk total</th>
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# Appendix D – Sample S & A tally sheets

## STABLE-2007 – TALLY SHEET

Subject name: __________________________________________________________________________

Place of scoring: _________________________________________________________________________

Date of scoring: ____________      Name of assessor: ___________________________

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<tr>
<td>Capacity for relationship stability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional ID with children</td>
<td>(Only score this item for child molesters)</td>
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<td>Co-operation with supervision</td>
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Sum for final total

(Out of 24 for those without a child victim, see Tab 8, page 36 for definition of a “child”) 26

**Deviant sexual interests in possible remission.** An offender who has scored a ‘two’ based upon historic facts can have their ‘deviant sexual interest’ score reduced by one point if the following is present: the offender is involved in an age appropriate, consensual, satisfying sexual relationship of at least one year’s duration while ‘at risk’ in the community with the absence of behavioural indicators of ‘deviant sexual interest’ for two years.

If the presence of this relationship has been confirmed by a credible, independent, collateral contact and the above condition applies, a ‘negative one’ may be entered in this score box, reducing the offender’s overall score by ‘one’.

Revised total taking ‘deviant sexual interests in possible remission’ into account

Interpretive ranges: 0 – 3 = Low, 4 – 11 = Moderate, 12+ = High
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### Scoring capacity for relationship stability

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**ACUTE-2007 – TALLY SHEET**

Subject name: ____________________________________________

Place of scoring: __________________________________________

Date of scoring: ____________      Name of assessor: ___________

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<th>General recidivism score (Sum all seven factors)</th>
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<td>• Sexual preoccupation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Copy these scores over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rejection of supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td>Copy these scores over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emotional collapse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collapse of social supports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Substance abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex/Violence total (Sum of four factors)</th>
<th>General recidivism risk total (Sum of all seven factors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Sex and violence risk and general recidivism risk**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex/Violence nominal categories (Sum of four risk factors)</th>
<th>General recidivism risk nominal categories (Sum of all seven risk factors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low priority 0</td>
<td>Low priority 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate priority 1</td>
<td>Moderate priority 1 - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High priority 2+ (plus)</td>
<td>High priority 3+ (plus)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E – Staff interview topic guides

Experiencing the implementation of the pilot of the Stable and Acute dynamic risk assessment tool

OPERATIONAL STAFF INTERVIEWS

Introduction to the topic guide

We wish to encourage participants to discuss their views, perception and attitudes in an open way without excluding issues which may be of importance to the study. Therefore, unlike a survey questionnaire or semi-structured interview, the questioning will be responsive to the issues raised in the course of the interview.

The following guide lists the key themes, sub-themes and questions to be explored at each interview. It does not include many follow-up questions like `why’, `when’, `how’, etc. as it is assumed that participants’ contributions will be fully explored throughout in order to understand how and why views are held.

As much as possible we wish to avoid collecting information on the full name, address or general location an offender lives at. Please note this at the beginning and try to avoid this in the interview.

Discretion should be used regarding coverage of questioning. For example, in cases where the officer has only used the tool with one person and this has already been described, then it would not be appropriate to ask him/her to elaborate two further cases. If a topic has previously been discussed in the course of general discussions regarding the S & A 07 then it may not require further probing.

Throughout this guide, the risk assessment tool is referred to as the S & A 07. It may be useful to ascertain the terminology used by the participant for the tool from the outset and substitute this as it may differ between participants.

Text in italics denotes instructions to interviewer.

Examining the implementation of the pilot of the stable and acute dynamic risk assessment tool

Staff interview topic guide 13.01.09

Aims and objectives:

The Stable and Acute Dynamic Risk Assessment Tool 2007 (hereafter S & A 07) is currently being piloted. This research aims to examine the implementation of the pilot and meet the following objectives.

- Examine the implementation and delivery of the pilot of S & A 07 in England and Wales
- Provide a summary of monitoring data being collected (and collect further information) on offenders subject to the pilot, and dynamic risk factors identified.
- Provide a summary of any actions taken in regard to those risk factors.
• Provide advice on how best to integrate S&A 07 with existing assessment tools.

• Inform a decision on future national roll-out, including recommendations regarding staff training, implementation and delivery processes and considerations for any future impact evaluation.

1. Introduction

Aim: to introduce the research project and outline the interview conduct

• Introduce self and NatCen.

• Introduce the study: commissioned by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to examine the implementation of the pilot and consider how the tool could best be rolled out in the future. However, NatCen is independent from the MoJ.

• Details about participation
  - voluntary nature of participation
  - digital audio recording of interview
  - confidentiality, who and how findings will be reported to
  - length of interview – 1.5 hours
  - confirm that we wish to avoid using full names or addresses of any offenders mentioned or locations that they live in
    - any questions participant has at this stage about the research
    - written consent – ask the respondent to sign both forms, retain one and return one
    - turn on recorder

2. Background

Aim: to set participants’ experience of the S & A 07 in the context of both the area and of their prior experience. Explore the context in depth using probes to ascertain how they assess risk when not using/prior to using the S & A 07 and also the ethos and history of treatment/assessment in the case study area.

• Introduce self, specify professional position and previous experience of working with sex offender.
  - police/probation/mixed area
  - their specific role in the area
    • area management/assessment of sex offenders generally
    • treatment provider
  - current caseload (sex offenders)
  - typical working day
  - risk assessment tools previously used/use alongside S & A 07
  - motivation for working with [SOs - explain?]

Move on once the context of how they operated before or when not using the S & A 07 is set

3. Implementation and training

Aim: to explore participant’s knowledge and opinion of how the S & A 07 was implemented in his/her area. To explore what training and support has been made available or taken up by the participant’s to assist them implement the S & A 07...

• Describe process of implementation in area – PROBE FOR
  - who introduced the pilot
  - prior knowledge of S & A
  - nature, extent and efficacy of information received (policy docs, letters, briefings – local or from MoJ)
  - opt-in or out-of use – why were they selected
• compulsory use with entire caseload or selective  
• basis of case selection for pilot

• Nature and extent of S&A 07 training. PROBE FOR

Logistics
  o information sources and prep time  
  o pre course material / reading  
  o any training available not used

Delivery
  o timing  
  o location  
  o duration  
  o trainer  
  o content  
  o materials

Outcomes
  o efficacy of training  
  o what was particularly useful  
  o what else should they know  
  o suggested improvements to training (probe on all the delivery points above)

• Describe nature and extent of ongoing support in place
  o supervision arrangements and adequacy (peer support or formal line management)  
  o difficult cases (who can they ask for advice)  
  o overall responsibility for decisions and implementation of the tool  
  o adequacy of support  
  o what would enhance it

4. Delivery process

Aim: to explore the process of S & A delivery in each area.

Referral
• Process of referral of offenders for S & A
  o timing (before actual assessment)  
  o nature and extent of information received regarding prior history  
  o adequacy of process  
  o suggestions to improve

Delivery
• Describe how they deliver the S & A (take us through a hypothetical case)
  o location  
  o timing (per stable and acute tool, per session and number of sessions)  
  o information sources used (essential and desirable)  
  o extent of collaboration with offenders  
  o description of tool to offenders (what do they call it – how do they ‘sell it’)  
  o standardised process for all or differ between offender types  
  o appropriateness of different offender types for use of tool

Using the S & A tally sheets as a prompt go through:
  o adequacy of prompts/questions/language  
  o adequacy of category as a risk label  
  o same with all categories of offenders (specifically probe for adequacy with Internet sexual offenders)
o changes they would suggest/things missing in ratings

• Identify most frequent and least frequent risk factors identified via the S & A 07

• Steps taken after assessment (what is done with the results)

**Partnerships**
Do they provide information regarding the assessment to

o police/probation
o treatment providers
o MAPPA
o others

Explore for each of the above in turn

o are these an existing partner
o formal / informal arrangement to share information
o how information transferred
o how is the information shared used
o adequacy of partnerships
o challenges and enablers to S&A partnerships

**Assessment continuity** (Prompt: already discussed tools they use)

• Extent S & A interfaces with other risk assessment tools
  o Risk Matrix 2000
    ▪ process
    ▪ outcomes
    ▪ suggestions
  o Static 99
  o SARN (Structured Assessment of Risk and Need)
  o OASys (prison and community versions)
    ▪ nature and extent of interface
  o treatment psychometrics

• S & A work with or instead of other assessments

• Explore changes that could improve interface / assessment process

**5. Resources**

*Aim: to explore the resource implications of using S & A 07 and lessons learned here to recommend for wider roll-out*

• Extent of caseload for S & A 07

• Dedicated time to conduct assessments
  o adequacy of ring-fenced time

• Extent to which resources required to assess offenders risk have increased / decreased (compared to other tools discussed/what went before)

Prompt on
6. Outcomes

Aim: to explore how effective and user-friendly the S & A is perceived to be and the nature and extent of outcomes.

CASE EXAMPLES – encourage participant to reflect on two cases where the S & A has and has not been helpful. Use this only to elaborate appropriate cases where there are suitable numbers and previous information regarding the cases they have used the S & A with is lacking.

- **Describe a typical example of a case that has worked well using the S & A 07**
  - type of offender
  - in what way worked well
  - partnership working
  - outcome

- **Describe a typical example of a case that has **NOT** worked well using the S & A 07**
  - type of offender
  - in what way not worked well
  - partnership working
  - outcome

**Staff outcomes**

- What outcomes does the S & A bring to them (specifically explore police / probation differences) – PROBE FOR
  - confidence in assessments
  - partnership working
  - engagement / collaborative relationship with offenders
    - legitimising asking difficult questions about behaviour
  - impact on treatment
  - contribution to frontline child protection
  - assisting positive change in offenders
  - personal impact of S & A work - how do they manage themselves

- **Reliability:**
  - extent others may rate same case at same risk level
  - probe for which categories reliability weakest with
  - improvements to this

**Offender outcomes**

Map full range of outcomes – PROBE FOR

- Engagement and collaboration
- Increased self-efficacy
- Awareness and ownership of risk
- Differences between different offenders and risk levels – PROBE FOR
  - Internet
    - adult / child
    - treated / un-treated
- Reduction in risk –motivational
- Impact on family / other social influences
Organisation outcomes

• Confidence in risk assessments
• Cost effective for community (policing effectively)
• Raised profile due to pilot
• Bearing on partnerships

• Overall effectiveness of the pilot
  o affective risk assessment
  o value added
  o S & A 07 compared to other risk assessment tools they have used -- use previously mentioned tools as a prompt.

7. Concluding thoughts

Aim: Wrapping up discussion and learning for future roll-out

Remind participant that a core aim of the research is to make recommendations for future roll-out. Thinking about implementation and training, delivery, partnerships and outcomes……

• What they would replicate from their experience for future roll out
• What they would recommend be done differently
• Interface/supersedes other tools
• Interface with treatment
• Final comments on the pilot – messages for the Department
• Value of this research to them/what they would like to see explored

Check if the participant has any questions or comments about the discussion

************

• Thank participants for their time & thoughts
• Check they have leaflet informing them of the research
• Reassure re confidentiality
• Discuss potential contact with offenders / family members
• Distribute contact details should they wish to add anything about their comments or in case they have questions about the research later
• Discuss, if they are raters, the next stage in the research or provision of files for us to anonymise for rating

Remember

• keep one copy of consent form
• complete interview cover sheet
• file these in locked cabinet
• remove any offender identifiers from audio file prior to uploading for transcription
Examining the implementation of the pilot of the Stable and Acute dynamic risk assessment tool

STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW

Introduction to the topic guide

We wish to encourage participants to discuss their views, perception and attitudes in an open way without excluding issues which may be of importance to the study. Therefore, unlike a survey questionnaire or semi-structured interview, the questioning will be responsive to the issues raised in the group discussion.

The following guide lists the key themes, sub-themes and questions to be explored within each group. It does not include many follow-up questions like `why', `when', `how', etc. as it is assumed that participants’ contributions will be fully explored throughout in order to understand how and why views are held.

The topics will be introduced and explored in turn within each pair. The amount of time spent on different issues will vary between groups in response to the discussion generated amongst participants.

As much as possible we wish to avoid collecting information on the full name, address or general location of an offender.. Please note this at the beginning and try to avoid this in the interview. Strategic stakeholders may not have front-line experience of implementing the tool. They have managed the front-line officers who do so and introduced the pilot to the area. It is in this context that their experiences are being explored.

Text in italics denotes instructions to researchers
Aims and objectives:
The Static and Acute Dynamic Risk Assessment Tool 2007 (hereafter S & A 07) is currently being piloted. This research aims to examine the implementation of the pilot and meet the following objectives

• Examine the implementation and delivery of the pilot of S & 07 in England and Wales

• Provide a summary of monitoring data being collected (and collect further information) on offenders subject to the pilot, and dynamic risk factors identified

• Provide a summary of any actions taken in regard to those risk factors

• Provide advice on how best to integrate S & 07 with existing assessment tools

• Inform a decision on future national roll-out, including recommendations regarding staff training, implementation and delivery processes and considerations for any future impact evaluation

8. Introduction

Aim: to introduce the research project and outline the focus group conduct

• Introduce self and NatCen.

• Introduce the study: commissioned by the Ministry of Justice to examine the implementation of the pilot and consider how it could best be rolled out in the future.

• Details about participation
  - voluntary nature of participation
  - digital audio recording of focus group
  - confidentiality, and who findings will be reported to
  - ask people to respect each other’s views and confidentiality
  - no right or wrong answers – need to gather opinions and experiences
  - length of group – 1.5 hours

• Basic ground rules
  - talking one at a time (recording)
  - confirm that we wish to avoid using full names or addresses of any offenders mentioned or locations that they live in
  - any questions participant has at this stage about the research?
  - ask participants to complete written consent forms, retain one and return one.
  - turn on recorder

9. Background

Aim: To set each participant’s experience of risk management and local area provision into context. It is important to explore the clinical ethos, history of assessment and treatment in the area.

Icebreaker
• Ask each of the pair in turn to introduce themselves, specify their professional position and previous experience of working with sex offenders
  o police/probation/mixed area
  o their specific role
  o previous post
  o motivation for working with SOs
• Ask for an overview of assessment and treatment of sex offenders in the area.
  o risk assessment tools previously used/used alongside S & A
  o treatment assessment / provision role

10. Implementation and training
Aim: to explore participants’ knowledge and opinion of how the S & A 07 was implemented in their area. To explore what training and support has been made available or taken up by the participants to assist them implement the S & A 07.

• Describe process of implementation in area – PROBE FOR
  o who introduced
  o previous knowledge of S & A
  o nature, extent and efficacy of information received (policy docs, letters, briefings – local or from the centre)
  o opt in or out of use
  o reason for opting in

• Nature and extent of S & A 07 training. PROBE FOR

Logistics
  o information sources and prep time
  o pre course material / reading
  o any training available not used

Delivery
  o timing
  o location
  o duration
  o trainer
  o content
  o materials

Outcomes
  o efficacy of training
  o what else should they know
  o was particularly useful
  o suggested improvements to training (probe on all the delivery points above)

• Describe nature and extent of ongoing support in place for them
  o supervision arrangements and adequacy (peer support or formal line management)
  o difficult cases (who can they ask for advice)
  o overall responsibility for decisions and implementation of the tool
  o adequacy of support
  o what would enhance it

Supervision process for their officers
• How are staff selected to deliver S & A 07
  o experience
  o those available / volunteer
• Describe the process of supervision
  o how often
  o where
  o length of sessions
  o structure of sessions / issues discussed
  o common challenges / issues raised
    ▪ offender style
    ▪ item clarification
    ▪ scoring guidance
    ▪ information needed not available
    ▪ time required to assess

• Same supervision process for all staff

• What are the key markers of staff competence with the tool

• Avenues of support for supervisors

• Improvements that could be made to the supervision process

Rating-reliability

• Nature of expectations here

• Reliability between officers – extent of rating similarly

• Process for managing differences between officers rating

11. Delivery process

Aim: to explore how the S & A is delivered in each area and the resource implications of this

Delivery

• Describe how the S & A is delivered in each area by front-line staff (to the best of their knowledge)

Referral

• Process of referral
  o timing (before actual assessment)
  o nature and extent of information received
  o adequacy of process
  o suggestions to improve

Delivery

• Describe delivery process (take us through a hypothetical case as they understand it)
  o location
  o timing (per session and number of sessions)
  o information sources
  o extent of collaboration with offenders
  o standardised process for all
  o usage of assessment data (i.e. what is done with it)

Partnerships

• Partners they work with:
  o police/probation
Overall

- Treatment providers
- MAPPA
- Others

- Adequacy of partnerships
- Value added
- Challenges and enablers to S&A partnerships

- Partners access to assessment data
- Value added of sharing information

Assessment continuity

- Extent S&A interfaces with other risk assessment tools
  - Risk Matrix 2000
    - Process
    - Outcomes
    - Suggestions
  - Static 99
  - SARN
  - OAsys (prison and community versions)
    - Nature and extent of interface
  - Treatment psychometrics

- Extent S&A should supersede other assessments

- Explore changes that could improve overall process of risk management in their area

12. Resources

Aim: to explore the resource implications of using S&A 07

- Extent of case load for S&A 07
- Dedicated time to supervise / conduct assessments
- Extent to which resources required to assess offenders risk have increased / decreased (compared to other tools discussed / what went before)
  
  PROMPT ON
  - Location and logistics of assessment
  - Time taken to complete assessment
  - Training required
  - User-friendliness

- Any limits / problems with resources

13. Outcomes

Aim: to explore how effective and user friendly the S&A is perceived to be and the nature and extent of outcomes...

- What outcomes does the S&A bring to their organisation (specifically explore police / probation differences) – PROBE FOR
  - Confidence in assessments

73
- partnership working
- engagement / collaborative relationship with offenders
- impact on treatment
- contribution to front-line child protection
- assisting positive change in offenders
- personal impact of S&A work - how do they manage themselves

Offender outcomes
- Map full range of outcomes – PROBE FOR
- Engagement and collaboration
- Increased self-efficacy
- Awareness and ownership of risk
- Differences between different offenders and risk levels – PROBE FOR
  - Internet
  - adult / child
  - treated / un-treated
- Reduction in risk – motivational
- Impact on family / other social influences

Organisation outcomes
- confidence in risk assessments
- cost effective for community (policing effectively)
- raised profile due to pilot
- bearing on partnerships - MAPPA
- overall effectiveness of the pilot
  - value added
  - S & A 07 compared to other risk assessment tools used

14. Concluding thoughts
Aim: Wrapping up discussion and learning for future
Remind participant that a core aim of the research is to make recommendations for future roll-out. Thinking about implementation and training, delivery, partnerships and outcomes.

- What would they replicate from their experience for future roll-out
- What would they recommend be done differently
- Final comments on the pilot – messages for the Department
- Value of this research to them/what they would like to see explored

Check if participants have any questions or comments about the discussion

************
- Thank participants for their time & thoughts.
- Check they all have leaflets informing them of the research
- Reassure re confidentiality
- Distribute our contact details should they wish to add anything about their comments or in case they have questions about the research later

Remember:
- keep one copy of consent form
- complete interview cover sheet
- file these in locked cabinet
- remove any offender identifiers from audio file prior to uploading for transcription
ANNEX 1
ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR MAPPA LEADS

In the event that the interviewee is also one of the named MAPPA leads please cover these additional questions within the interview.

A. MAPPA Leads
Aim: to elucidate the role of MAPPA leads in their respective area and how they see the S & A fits within the broad strategic framework of risk assessment

• Define role as a named MAPPA lead in their area
  o their roles and responsibility as MAPPA lead
  o overall role of MAPPA
  o Joint working of MAPPA leads in their area
  o current MAPPA SO priorities/risk assessment processes
  o sharing of information between agencies
  o use and storage of information

• S & A 07 role within MAPPA framework
  o add value
  o reduce/increase work load
  o reduce/increase confidence

• Impact of roll-out of A & A 07 within MAPPA priorities

• Key challenges facing public protection in their area
Ministry of Justice Research Series 4/10

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) piloted a new dynamic risk assessment tool for sexual offenders managed in the community – the Stable and Acute 2007. This tool was used by both police and probation staff managing eligible convicted sexual offenders. This evaluation examines how the Stable and Acute 2007 tool was implemented in the pilot areas, the benefits and limitations of the tool, and provides recommendations for any future use of dynamic risk assessment in England and Wales.