

Witness Name:

Exhibits: -/10

Dated: 25 August 2025

**THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY**

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**FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF**

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I, Officer A will say as follows:

### **Introductory matters**

1. My name is Officer A I am currently a temporary Detective Sergeant in the Lancashire Fixed Intelligence Management Unit (**'FIMU'**), which is part of Counter Terrorism Policing North West (**'CTPNW'**).
2. I make this statement in response to a Rule 9 request received from the Southport Public Inquiry (**'the Inquiry'**) dated 29 July 2025. This is the first statement I have provided to the Inquiry. I also provided input to inform the preparation of the corporate witness statement made on behalf of the CTPNW by DCS Sarah Kenwright (**'the CTPNW corporate statement'**), dated 8 August 2025.
3. This statement addresses the matters raised in the Rule 9 request pertaining to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, insofar as they relate to my involvement in AR's case, my reflections on those events, and any improvements that have been made or, in my opinion, could be made to working practices and procedures in this area.

### *Personal condolences*

4. First, I just want to say how appalled I am that this attack occurred, and can only imagine the pain the victims, their families, and anyone else affected by the events of that day have suffered and continue to suffer because of AR's actions. I cannot properly put into words how shocking this incident was and want to extend every condolence to those who have been directly impacted.

### *Preliminary matters*

5. I should say at the outset that over my career, and in my roles within CTPNW, I have dealt with a very broad-ranging, high volume caseload. For that reason, I cannot recall with clarity the specific detail of each individual matter I worked on, particularly where they occurred a number of years ago. When the attack happened in 2024, I recognised AR's name and knew that there must have been some form of CTP contact with him. However, I have no clear memory of my role in AR's case. With that in mind, with a view to assisting the Inquiry as best I can, I reviewed the relevant documents from the relevant time to

refresh my memory. Having done that, I do remember elements of this case and my involvement. Where I rely on those documents rather than my own direct memory, I try to make that as clear as possible.

6. I am now aware that AR was referred to CTPNW Prevent on three separate occasions throughout the period December 2019 – April 2021. My involvement in AR's case was limited to his second referral, which was received by the Lancashire FIMU on 1 February 2021. I was not directly involved in the decision-making for the first referral; however, I did consider it as part of my assessment for the second referral. I had no involvement in the third referral. In this statement, where I refer to the 'relevant time', I am referring to the period of my involvement in this case, in February 2021.
7. I am told that a chronology of the key decisions that were made in AR's second Prevent referral is set out within Section 5 of the CTPNW corporate statement, and so I do not repeat it in full here.
8. I have limited my use of technical policing language and abbreviations where possible and have tried to explain those where appropriate.

*My background, qualifications and experience*

9. I joined Lancashire Constabulary in 2004 as a Police Constable, and have over 20 years' service in policing.
10. From 2004 until 2008, I worked in various uniformed response roles. In 2008, I joined the Targeting Team as a Police Constable, based in Preston. The Targeting Team is an investigative branch of policing work which is considered a plainclothes (i.e. no uniform) role, targeting drug-related activity and volume crime offenders. Proactive policing involves investigating and gathering intelligence for crimes that are suspected or anticipated, to hopefully prevent the commission of those crimes. I stayed in this role until 2010.
11. In 2010, I joined the Reactive Criminal Investigation Department ('CID'), which responds to crimes which have already occurred and are reported to the police. I was placed on the team investigating violent crime however my caseload would also include the initial

investigation response to all serious crime in the south division. In 2012, I left the Reactive CID and returned to the Targeting Team, where I stayed until 2013.

12. In 2013, I joined the Public Protection Unit ('**PPU**'), working within the Domestic Violence and Abuse team. I stayed within PPU until 2015, during which time I also worked for the Child Exploitation team.
13. In 2015, I joined the Lancashire FIMU as a Detective Constable and intelligence assessor, seconded from Lancashire Constabulary to CTPNW. This was the role I held at the relevant time. In 2021, I moved across to the Operation Intelligence Management Unit ('**OIMU**') within Lancashire Constabulary. The OIMU is responsible for managing threat and risk on behalf of the Counter Terrorism Senior Investigating Officer ('**CTSIO**') for specific Counter Terrorism Policing ('**CTP**') investigations.
14. Since January 2025, I have been temporarily promoted to Detective Sergeant ('**DS**') within Lancashire FIMU. I will return to the OIMU in September 2025.

#### *Training*

15. This section sets out the training, relevant to my role as a FIMU assessor, which I had completed by the relevant time. I exhibit a copy of my full Police Training Record at E/01 – CTPNW000043. To assist the Inquiry, I have provided a summary of my training relevant to CT below.
  - a. **Introduction to CT:** I completed this course on 30 June 2015. It provided a general overview of the CT function. It covered the background to terrorism in the UK, what CT policing is and learning about the various organisations and Partners who I would be working alongside.
  - b. **National Common Intelligence Application ('NCIA') Core & NCIA Assessor:** I completed both courses during 2015. These courses focused on how to navigate the secure intelligence database which holds all CTP intelligence and investigations. Last year, I completed the NCIA Assessor Upskill course which built on this training.
  - c. **Covert Open Source Internet Intelligence ('COSII')**: I completed this course in April 2018 and it covered how to conduct open source research (e.g. searching social media platforms such as Twitter or Facebook).

- d. **NSIM Intel Assessor:** I completed this course on 7 October 2019. This was a 4-day course covering the assessment of intelligence, rather than the processes and systems side.
- e. **COSII Presentation:** I completed this training in May 2022. The course was addressed at CT staff using open source checks as part of their assessment processes. It walked through how to use the system for open source checking.

16. In terms of specific Prevent training, this would have been included as part of the NSIM training outlined above. I set this out in more detail at paragraph 31 below.

*Fixed Intelligence Management Unit : general*

17. CTPNW is a regional unit, and Intelligence Management teams are positioned in three main hubs, based at Lancashire Constabulary Headquarters (Hutton), Merseyside Police Operations Centre and Greater Manchester Police Headquarters. Each FIMU hub has a corresponding Prevent hub. The Lancashire hub, where I worked at the relevant time, covered cases arising in the Lancashire and Cumbria areas, with some more general regional work across the North-West. At the relevant time, my recollection is that the Lancashire Prevent team were located off-site. They are now co-located in the same building as the Lancashire FIMU.

18. At the relevant time, the FIMU team, broadly speaking, comprised a group of FIMU assessors (of which I was one), who were a mixture of Police Constables, Detective Constables, and police civilian staff, reporting to two DS, Sajid Mahmood and Tom Evans, who shared management of the team. They were supervised by a Detective Inspector who acted as Intelligence Manager, though I can't remember who the Intelligence Manager was at the time.

19. At the relevant time, I had no management responsibilities. There are now about 12 intelligence assessors working in the FIMU, but I am unsure how many were in the team at the relevant time.

20. The FIMU sits primarily within the Pursue strand of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terror strategy. For context, Prevent is aimed at preventing people from becoming involved

in terrorism or supporting terrorism, and Pursue is designed to disrupt and investigate potential terror attacks and those involved in supporting terrorism or extremism. FIMU are ordinarily the first recipients of any kind of intelligence directed to CTP, to manage threat and risk to national security on behalf of the Chief Constable. FIMU is therefore responsible for the day-to-day conduct of intelligence assessment. As such, dealing with potential referrals to Prevent is only one part of the work FIMU deals with.

*FIMU: My role*

21. My role as an intelligence assessor within FIMU can be described in two parts:
- a. receiving new intelligence and assessing it for relevance and threat/harm/risk to national security and either signposting the risk as necessary, or managing the risk within the CTP network; and
  - b. managing intelligence identified as either explicitly or potentially carrying a CT risk and managing the investigations arising from that threat and risk assessment. One means of dealing with cases assessed by FIMU is to refer to Prevent, if considered appropriate given their remit.

*FIMU Assessment overview*

22. Before setting out my involvement in AR's case, it may be helpful for me to provide a high-level overview of the FIMU Assessment process and how I remember it interacting with the Prevent team's work at the time.
23. Information and intelligence were received from a wide range of sources, including local policing teams, schools, hospitals, immigration officials, members of the public and other partners. The FIMU I worked in was, and remains, the first port of call for the assessment any CT-related information across the Lancashire and Cumbria area. Prevent referrals comprise just one part of the overall work of the unit.
24. As the Inquiry will be aware, the Prevent duty was introduced in 2015, with the aim of stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The Prevent duty places obligations on authorities such as social services, schools, prisons, police officers etc to have '*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*' when carrying out their functions. As a result, Prevent referrals came from a range of different

sources, and took various different forms. The FIMU team's remit is very different to the Prevent team's responsibilities, but their work is connected.

25. Generally, Prevent referrals would be received by FIMU into a central inbox, on a prescribed 'concern' form. The FIMU officers would pick matters up from the inbox. There was no strict allocation process, but team members would self-allocate cases in accordance with their capacity, and the relevant officer picking up a case would mark the referral with an allocated colour to show it was being actioned.
26. The FIMU assessor would then assess that intelligence in line with the 'Receive, Assess, Decide & Outcome' ('**RADO**') principles, the Intelligence Handling Model ('**IHM**') and the National Standards of Intelligence Management ('**NSIM**'). This assessment could lead to one of 7 RADO outcomes, depending on whether the information in question was deemed CT Relevant, or if further investigation or consideration was required to establish next steps. In terms of inter-team discussion, the nature of the assessment to be made in each case is nuanced and is not a binary analysis. Sometimes assessors would discuss within the team if cases were complex or ambiguous, to test views. To my recollection, that would not have been the case here, but it was something the team did from time to time in the day-to-day work.
27. One option, following that assessment, is to refer a case to Prevent. Once a referral has been sent to the Prevent team for further action, if new potentially CTP relevant information arises in the course of the Prevent team's assessment of the referral, that new intelligence should be re-submitted to the FIMU for reassessment for relevance to the FIMU team's remit. New information will be assessed through the same assessment process outlined above. It is important to note that the thresholds used by Prevent and the FIMU when assessing the relevant risks attaching to information received are different, and therefore any new information which has been resubmitted to the FIMU from Prevent for consideration may or may not change the originally assigned RADO outcome. It will depend entirely on the substance of the information in question.

#### *Contact with Prevent*

28. As a FIMU assessor, any contact I would ordinarily have with the Lancashire Prevent team was relatively limited and would primarily take the form of my emailing a referral to Prevent

colleagues for their consideration, noting the case has been assessed as suitable for Prevent.

29. On occasion, a Prevent colleague might have phoned me to discuss a referral if there is a particular aspect of a given case they wanted to understand more about, for example if Prevent thought there may be criminal offences in play that had not been considered by the FIMU, but there was no back and forth about the FIMU assessment itself. There was no formal process requiring discussion between the teams once the referral is handed over to Prevent from the FIMU.

*Relevant policies*

30. The main policy governing the responsibilities of the FIMU was, and remains, the NSIM. At the relevant time, version 4 of the NSIM guidance (dated January 2021) was in place. The purpose of the NSIM was to ensure best practice and to provide a consistent national standard for the management of information and intelligence within CTP. I have exhibited the relevant sections of the NSIM which set out the IMU configuration and assessment model [redacted]/02 – CTPHQ000048; [redacted]/03 – CTPNW000270].

*NSIM Annex B*

31. As mentioned above, the NSIM is a key policy relevant to my role as a FIMU assessor. In terms of whether I received any specific training in respect of Annex B of NSIM (which discusses the role of Prevent [redacted]/04 – CTPHQ000043), I can confirm that given it is an annex to the NSIM, it would have been covered as part of the NSIM training outlined above. I am familiar with Annex B for that reason. I have no recollection of receiving any formal training specific to Annex B. My understanding of this guidance is that it sets out the FIMU's role when receiving and sharing information in relation to Prevent referrals, and I do consider that the contents of Annex B broadly reflect how things work in practice.

*Dynamic Investigation Framework (DIF)*

32. I am aware that DIFs feature in the work of the Prevent team and the assessments they carry out. In terms of my own knowledge of the DIF [redacted]/05 – CTPHQ000040], I was aware of its existence, but this was not a tool that was utilised by the FIMU or something that the

FIMU had any training in. As I recall, the DIF was a Prevent assessment tool, and was not something that a FIMU assessor would populate or use when conducting their assessment. Having now seen a template DIF form, I can see there is some overlap between some of the issues FIMU may have considered and what is covered in the DIF, however the FIMU have their own assessment mechanisms and were not involved in the completion of the DIF.

## **Section 2: Factual narrative of involvement**

33. While, as mentioned above, I do not have direct memory of my involvement in this case, I have refreshed my memory by reading through the relevant paperwork.

34. Having done that, I can see that on 1 February 2021, I picked up and carried out an assessment of a Prevent 'concern form' relating to AR [REDACTED]/06 – [CTPNW000126], which had been submitted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead ('DSL') at Acorns School, Ormskirk earlier that same day. This was the second Prevent referral received in respect of AR. I had no role to play in respect of either the first or the third referrals, however, I did consider the first referral, to ensure the background was taken into account in making my assessment.

35. I understand that a chronology of the key decisions that were made for AR's second Prevent referral is set out within Section 5 of the CTPNW's corporate statement. I do not repeat that level of detail here, but I have set out below a factual narrative of my involvement in AR's second referral. I then go on, at Section 3, to deal with a number of specific questions asked by the Inquiry.

### *First contact with AR's case*

36. On 1 February 2021 at 15.52, Jan Lewis, the DSL at Acorns School in Ormskirk, where AR had been going to school, sent a completed Prevent 'referral form' [REDACTED]/06 – [CTPNW000126] by email to the 'Concern' mailbox, which came through to the FIMU team at Lancashire Police.

37. I can see that the referral form focused on two screenshots taken from what is indicated by the referrer to be AR's Instagram account. The screenshots were taken from a single article praising Colonel Gaddafi. The screenshots had come to the attention of AR's former

school – the Range High School in Formby - via a pupil who had seen AR's post. The Range then passed them on to the Acorns School. It appeared that AR was still in contact with pupils at the Range High School, and he had shared these screenshots with them through his social media account. The referral included commentary to the effect that there appeared to be 'nothing strikingly dangerous' in the content of the screenshots, but that it might raise some potential radicalisation concerns. Mrs Lewis had raised these concerns with the Prevent Manager, Pam Smith, who had advised her to send in a completed referral form.

### *My FIMU Assessment*

38. On receipt of the referral form, I can see from the papers that I carried out a FIMU assessment of the case, which I then shared with the Lancashire Prevent team on 1 February 2021 at 16.42. It is not remarkable that the assessment took me less than one hour to complete. The only CT trace on AR was the first Prevent referral, and there was very little information contained in the second referral to consider. I must have had capacity at the time, and just worked through all components of the process to completion. A copy of my assessment together with the e-mail sending it through to the Prevent team has already been exhibited as [redacted]/07 – CTPNW000140

39. Once my assessment had been sent to the Prevent team, there was nothing more for me or the FIMU team to do, unless new intelligence emerged and was brought to our attention. I have no recollection of having any contact with either the CTCO, PC (now DS) Thompson or the CTCO supervisors about AR's case, nor of discussing the substance of this case with my own supervisors. I have not seen anything on the paperwork to suggest that there had been such contact. It would have been unusual for me to have had contact directly with a CTCO supervisor.

### *Searches performed to assist my assessment*

40. The first step of my assessment was to determine CTP relevance and to consider any previous information available relating to AR with regard to both CT and mainstream crime. The test for this is set out in the NSIM. This is a subjective assessment, and the professional experience of the assessor plays a role. Relevancy can change over time, with new and emerging threats, and changes to legislation. It would be difficult to prepare

an exhaustive list of potential threats, and a FIMU assessor needs to maintain awareness of global context, community tensions and other factors which inform the nature of the current threat.

41. I now have no recollection of the searches that I undertook to inform my assessment. The underlying papers relating to my assessment make clear which systems I did and did not check. It is clear from my assessment that I did take account of the first Prevent referral, noting that the outcome of that referral (for which the intelligence was far more concerning) was that AR did not have any CT/DE ideology or vulnerability to radicalisation. [REDACTED] /07 – [REDACTED] CTPNW000328 ]].
42. It is also clear that I took steps to identify any social media accounts in AR's name. I cannot recall what level of access we had to Instagram or other newer platforms at that time; it was less common in casework than Facebook or Twitter. My assessment records that I did not find any Instagram account (which the school had specifically referred to) or any other social media accounts in AR's name. Given the nature of social media security settings, as set by the account holder, it is not unusual for accounts or posts made by those accounts to not be visible to law enforcement. Even if a post is made 'in the open' as opposed to 1:1, it may not be viewable to law enforcement. If I had found any account, or any other posts of concern, this would have been reflected in my assessment. I note that the FIMU were not required to always conduct open-source searches – it depended entirely on the intelligence we were assessing, and whether this indicated concerning online activity. There is consideration of the lawfulness and proportionality of online activity by the police.
43. The school had provided screenshots of what they were concerned about. Again, from reading my assessment, I had taken steps to find the source of AR's social media post. My research indicated that they were screenshots from a publicly available website [newsshopper.co.uk] from November 2011. There was no evidence that AR was the author of the article.
44. The NSIM sets out minimum recommended searches on both secure and non-secure systems to be completed. I have considered my actions regarding this referral and consider that I adhered to the NSIM in the handling of the case.

45. My assessment form shows that I completed checks against the following databases: NCIA; Connect; the Police National Computer ('PNC'); the Police National Database ('PND'); the PCM Tracker and Open Source [redacted]07 - [redacted]CTPNW000328]. The 'x' marked on the assessment form indicates that the search was conducted. I did not have access to CT Holmes at the time. This is the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System, which is used by police forces to manage serious and complex criminal investigations. Given the nature of the material on that system, I do not think it would have been relevant or would have changed my assessment.
46. There is no detail of any 'positive traces' recorded on my assessment form. I would only have included things that I needed to flag to the Prevent team, or that Prevent had not already seen. I take from this that the only positive traces were of material already available to Prevent, i.e. the first Prevent referral. I did not need to flag this to the Prevent team on my assessment form.

*My FIMU assessment rationale*

47. I concluded that the information contained in the second referral was not CTP Relevant. I recorded the following rationale:

*"As such I do not believe this new intelligence is worthy of a new Prevent referral as I do not assess it would meet the thresholds for adoption at Channel and the content does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology but rather an opposing opinion on Gaddafi's Libyan regime, questioning the US and EU motivation for removing him."* [redacted]07 - [redacted]CTPNW000328]2]

48. I cannot recall having had any discussions with the FIMU supervisors at the time of making my assessment. It would not have been usual to do so. Now, it is routine for FIMU assessments to go through a supervisor.
49. The first referral was clearly an important factor but would not have decided my assessment – it was for me to consider the second referral on its own merits. Consideration of the first referral would give context of what led to the second referral being made and an understanding of potential level of risk and threat. This would help me make a fuller

assessment of the second referral. I would not have re-assessed the substance of the first referral.

50. In the second referral, the school were focused on two screenshots, which were effectively one single post by AR [redacted]06 - [redacted]4-5]. The information contained with the second referral, in my assessment, represented little risk or threat, even with the added context of the first referral. I did not think that the second referral represented an escalation of risk from the first referral. The screenshots were presented as an isolated post, not as a representative sample of a wider course of postings. I found the source material and was satisfied that AR had 'cut and pasted' someone else's article. Nothing in the content shared was supportive of violence, and on its face represented no more than critical engagement, challenging conventional political norms.

51. I assessed this referral as a RADO 6 outcome – not CT/DE relevant but could still be considered by the Prevent team. I did make the Prevent team aware. Even if a case is assessed to be not relevant to CTP, it may still be relevant to Prevent objectives given their remit around early intervention and diversion. This aligns with NSIM Annex B which makes clear that a RADO 6 outcome does not preclude a referral to Prevent – it makes specific reference to such assessments and notes that these cases can still be referred to Prevent. In AR's case, the second referral, taken by itself, is borderline whether it would even be relevant to Prevent. The first referral adds more to the picture, and therefore appropriate for the Prevent team to consider.

52. Specifically on ideology, the Prevent referral form that was completed by the school includes a summary of the types of CT/DE extremism that the team had been asked by the Home Office to populate. This list is not comprehensive, but it makes no mention of mixed ideology, or fascination with violence or mass-casualty attacks. The 'ideology' box on the first page of the form was left unchecked by the school. That said, even if 'mixed ideology' had been mentioned, my assessment would have been the same, and I would still have passed the referral to the Prevent team.

#### **Section 4: Particular issues relevant to my involvement**

53. This section considers particular themes and issues arising from my involvement in AR's first referral, expanding on what is set out above.

*AR's social media activity*

54. I have set out above at paragraphs 42 and 43, to the best of my recollection, the steps that I took regarding AR's social media, and the source of the article that was the subject of AR's post. It has been suggested to me that there may have been ambiguity over the platform on which the post was made i.e. that the school incorrectly noted that the post was through Instagram, and that it had actually been over Snapchat. I was not previously aware of this. In any event, the post in question as I understand it, was sent by AR directly to a fellow pupil, who captured a screen shot and shared with teaching staff. I have set out what I can above about the nature of social media searches that would have been carried out, and do not consider that this, or the outcome, was impacted by any ambiguity about the platform on which it was posted. Of note, and depending on the account user's settings, posts on Snapchat generally disappear a short time after they have been viewed.

*Role of FIMU and Prevent in assessing a Prevent referral*

55. It is important to note that there is a significant distinction between the work of the Prevent team and FIMU. The nature of the assessments differ significantly – the key part of the engagement between the two teams is information sharing as appropriate. Neither team would seek to interfere with or involve themselves with the assessments made by the other. When there are references to 'deconfliction' in the underlying documents, this is a reference to a general assessment of threat and risk.

56. I am asked whether I understood the distinction between the FIMU and Prevent teams. I knew it was not the role of the FIMU officer to make Prevent assessments, or to tell Prevent what they should or shouldn't do with a case. I don't have a sufficient understanding of the Prevent thresholds and role to make such an assessment.

57. I should also make clear that the FIMU team have no access to make entries on the Prevent Case Management Tracker ('**PCMT**') and have no knowledge of or training in how those entries are to be made and what they should entail. Most significantly, FIMU are not involved in the Prevent team's assessment of the case and are not consulted and do not have involvement in the Prevent team's decision as to whether to refer a case to Channel. FIMU's assessment, insofar as relevant here, is whether a case should go to Prevent.

58. I note that concerns have been raised about the way in which my assessment of this referral was worded, and whether it could be read as seeking to direct the Prevent team towards a particular outcome to pre-empt their assessment. I understand the concerns raised and I accept that my assessment could have been worded differently, but I do not consider that assessors should be restricted in setting out their views. My assessment is a record of my thought process and rationale and was based on my experience and the national picture of Prevent referrals at the time. Providing a detailed rationale means I can look at it now and remember what I was thinking at the time. It was intended to underpin the RADO assessment and reflect on the first referral and the context it gives to the second referral. My assessment was not intended as a guide or instruction to the Prevent team. As an assessor, it is important that I can record my rationale, within reason, without fear that it will influence others in carrying out their roles. I am confident that the Prevent team would have understood that.

#### *My assessment*

59. It is important to note that FIMU would not usually become involved in dialogue with those who make Prevent referrals. If the information included with the referral was not clear, then I may have gone back to Acorns School for additional context. However, I considered that, for the purposes of my assessment, the context was clear. There was also no suggestion that AR had been using school IT for social media. If it was felt that more information was needed from the school, or from speaking to the pupil at the Range School who had reported the concerns, this would properly have been a role for the Prevent team and the CTCO. It would have been wholly inappropriate for FIMU to attend the school to speak to the pupil who had reported the concerns given the impact it would likely have on that child, and the nature of our role. FIMU were not involved in Prevent information gathering, but my understanding is that Prevent would also not have conducted such a visit in these circumstances. If the information included in the referral was not clear, I may have asked for additional context from the school, but this would not have included a direct approach to the child on my part.

60. I am aware that, following AR's arrest for assaults in 2019, his devices were seized. I have considered whether I should have, in the course of my assessment, sought to access any findings from those devices. I do not think it would have been proportionate to do so. This

was part of the criminal process. If something had been found during that investigation that was relevant to CT, it would have been shared at that time. I would not have sought to reopen what had been done at the time of the first referral. The fact that nothing had been shared is not necessarily unusual. It may be that nothing relevant had been discovered.

61. It was not for the FIMU officer to balance their assessment against other components of the 'Prevent Gateway Assessment'. As set out above, FIMU and the Prevent team had very different remits, and considered different factors in their respective assessments.

#### *The Joint Letter*

62. Regarding fascination with extreme violence or school/public mass-casualty attacks as an ideology, at the relevant time, the question of mixed ideology was not something that was actively considered by the FIMU. The policy on mixed ideology was not directed to FIMU, and I would not have considered it as part of my assessment. I had not seen the Joint Letter of 25 June 2019 from the Director of Prevent at the Home Office and the National Coordinator for Prevent at CTP ('the Joint Letter') [redacted]/08 - [redacted] CTPHQ000134 until I reviewed it when preparing this statement.

63. That said, in my view this would not have changed my overall assessment, particularly given that my assessment was solely whether the case was suitable for Prevent, which is a separate assessment from suitability for referral to Channel. I am confident that I would still have referred the case to the Prevent team. There was nothing in the information included in the second referral to indicate such an ideology. I was aware of the first Prevent referral and had considered the detail of it, but I was not re-assessing the first referral. The question of fascination with mass-casualty attack simply did not feature on the facts of the second referral.

#### *Case closure*

64. As set out above, FIMU officers do not have access to the PCMT, and do not make entries on it. PC Thompson's comment on 15 February 2021, changing the status of the case to 'pending closure' reflected her assessment as CTCO, not mine. Her comment does include an accurate paraphrasing of the FIMU assessment, but the rest of the comment

regarding the school and re-referral is not relevant to FIMU [Office A]/09 - [CTPNW000124]. To emphasise, the Prevent team does not revert to FIMU to seek approval or agreement for their decision-making. They only do so if they become aware of new intelligence.

65. PC Thompson used the phrase 'non-CT/DE' [Office A]/09 - [CTPNW000124]. I do not know how the Prevent team used that phrase or whether it had a particularly meaning in that context. My use of that phrase refers to a subjective assessment based on several factors – threats to national security, and definitions of terrorism play a part. This also involves consideration of new and emerging threats, some of which are in legislation and some of which are not.

#### **Section 5: Involvement with other agencies**

66. Apart from receiving the initial referral form from Acorns School, I had no engagement with any external agencies as part of my role in this case.

#### **Section 6: Reflection on events**

67. The role of FIMU in cases like this is to refer on to Prevent if appropriate to do so. That is what I did. If AR's second referral was received today, it would still be referred to Prevent, irrespective of any changes that have since been made to Prevent policy, or any questions about whether it would then be referred to Channel. In that sense, from a FIMU perspective, the outcome would be the same. There was nothing in the intelligence that I assessed to suggest that AR was planning to conduct a mass casualty attack or any other attack or was taking preparatory steps to do so. In addition, there was nothing to indicate a support of violence in furtherance of an ideology or grievance. Essentially, there was no new threat to UK national security since the first referral.
68. I cannot comment on whether this referral should have been passed on to Channel. This would have been a decision for Prevent, and the application of the criteria to refer cases to Channel does not involve the FIMU. I would not be comfortable speculating about what might have happened if the case had been referred to Channel.

#### *Reflections on training and guidance*

69. I do think that, on reflection, training for FIMU officers on Prevent processes and thresholds could have been better. In 2021, I cannot recall having received any specific training on Prevent, although that has happened since. Whilst FIMU and Prevent have quite different remits, there are clear touching points in our roles, including FIMU being the first point of contact for people submitting Prevent referral forms. In my view, there may sometimes have been a failure to fully recognise this overlap. It is essential that FIMU officers are made aware of changes to Prevent policy and receive training in those changes. This is relevant not just to Prevent referrals, but also when the FIMU receives intelligence from a different source, and there is a need for the FIMU officer to actively consider the option of referral to Prevent.

70. There have been several changes since AR's attack in 2024, and it can be hard at times to keep up. There needs to be a focus on the substance and quality of the training given, as much as the speed of delivery. In my view, the training should be given by a practitioner in a classroom setting and include an interactive discursive element, to allow questions to be asked around the nuances and the borderline examples. This would also allow the training to evolve to cover topical issues. Developments around social media is a good example of this. Otherwise, there is a risk that training becomes standard, and out of date, and does not give the substantive learning, or the continuous development that is needed.

#### *Reflections on the subsequent reviews*

71. I have been asked whether I have personal reflections to make on the issues identified in the recent reviews of AR's Prevent referrals. To help with this, I have been shown the relevant recommendations made by the Prevent Learning Review ('PLR'), the Dignate Review, and Lord Anderson's Review.

72. I would support the use of a standardised information sharing product for national use by all FIMUs when sharing with Prevent. [REDACTED] 10 – [CTPHQ000055] 36]. This would help reduce regional divergence and promote consistent record keeping.

73. I also support the idea of refreshing Annex B of the NSIM. [REDACTED] 10 – [CTPHQ000055] -37]. This appears an ideal opportunity to do so. I am not sure if it makes any difference whether it remains in an Annex or is incorporated into the main body of the policy. I can understand the point made around making clear that FIMU should refrain from suggesting Prevent

outcomes. However, there does need to be latitude for FIMU officers to record their thought process, not least for the purposes of accountability after the fact. This has proven important in the current case, of which I have no direct memory. I would be concerned if the role of FIMU was simply to record the outcome – with any subjective assessment at all being at risk of interpreted as influencing someone else’s view. I would not want to completely discourage dialogue between FIMU and Prevent on individual cases – often this can be very useful.

74. There may be some advantage in using the term ‘Prevent relevant’ rather than ‘CTP relevant’ in Prevent assessments. ‘CTP relevant’ is an IMU term. The IMU and Prevent consider different things in their assessments, and anything that makes that clear, and avoids confusion, is welcome. Beyond that, I am not able to comment on what the Prevent team’s internal risk assessment should be, as this would not involve the FIMU.

75. I do think it would be helpful for ‘Prevent referral’ to be its own RADO outcome. As it currently stands, Prevent is not expressly mentioned in the RADO outcomes. Several of the RADO outcomes lead to Prevent, and having a specific Prevent outcome would, in my mind, avoid any agonising over which outcome a specific Prevent referral falls under.

## **Section 7: Improvements**

76. I am aware of the updated policies regarding repeat referrals and fascination with mass casualty attacks, with policies have been shared with the FIMU. The FIMU assessment form has also changed significantly, although the changes were made well before 2024, and so were not in response to AR’s attack.

77. Within the FIMU, all RADO 5 and RADO 6 assessments are now checked with a FIMU supervisor before the case is referred to the Prevent team. There is also a separate form to record open-source searches – known as the Prevent COSII research document. I also understand that the Prevent team must now conduct their own open-source checks on referrals. Since 2024, all CTPNW officers have had to complete national Prevent bitesize training. I completed this training in June 2025.

78. It is worth noting that any changes to Prevent policy or processes may have practical implications for FIMU processes. This can cause confusion, particularly if policy changes

are made at pace. In my view, it would be helpful if a FIMU representative could be involved in the decision-making around Prevent policy or processes, so that any such issues can be flagged.

79. In terms of whether the improvements made have been effective, this can be difficult to assess. There is a need to balance with the additional demands being made of the relevant teams, and a need to resource teams to manage those pressures. The changes appear positive, but there is a need to properly consider the resourcing implications to match. This includes the resourcing of FIMUs, as well as the Prevent teams. The wider context being a significant uplift in the number of Prevent referrals being made, as compared to pre-2024.

**Section 8: Other matters**

80. I have nothing further to draw to the Chairman's attention, beyond what is contained in this statement.

**Section 9: Further disclosure: documents and communications**

81. I have no additional documents, including WhatsApp or e-mail messages, or diary entries, to disclose.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed: **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: 25/08/2025