

Witness Name: Officer A
Exhibits: OA2/01– OA2/09
Dated: 25 September 2025

THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF

OFFICER A

I, OFFICER A, will say as follows:

Introductory matters

1. My name is Officer A. I am a Detective Constable in the Lancashire Operational Intelligence Management Unit ('**OIMU**'), which is part of Counter Terrorism Policing North West ('**CTPNW**').
2. This is the second statement I have provided to the Southport Inquiry ('**the Inquiry**'). I submitted an initial statement on 25 August 2025 ('**my first statement**') and 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. I make this statement in response to a second Rule 9 request received from the Inquiry dated 19 September 2025 ('**the second Rule 9**'), which asked me to respond to some additional questions relating to my involvement in this case.
3. Through my participation in the Inquiry, I have been made aware that AR was subject to three separate referrals to Prevent between December 2019 and April 2021. My first statement dealt with my primary involvement in AR's case, as the officer within the Fixed Intelligence Management Unit ('**FIMU**') dealing with the assessment of AR's second referral. This statement addresses the matters raised in the second Rule 9, dealing specifically with my limited involvement in the first referral, which was dealt with between December 2019 and January 2020.

Recollection and my involvement in the first referral

4. I made clear in paragraph 5 of my first statement that I have, in the course of my career, dealt with a very broad-ranging caseload, and as such I do not have a clear memory of each individual matter I have worked on. As set out previously, I have no direct recollection of my role in AR's case, and while I recognised his name when the attack happened and knew there must have been some form of CTP contact with him, I do not have a clear memory of the specifics of my involvement. In order to prepare my first statement, I reviewed the relevant documents identified by the Inquiry from that time to refresh my memory.

5. In paragraph 6 of my first statement, I said that my involvement in AR's case was limited to his second referral, received by the Lancashire FIMU in February 2021, and in which I acted as the FIMU officer assessing the referral [OA2/01 - CTPNW000126]. I noted that 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 separately noted I had 'no role to play' in the first or third referral [OA2/02 - CTPNW000154] [OA2/03 - CTPNW000137].
6. It has since been brought to my attention that I had limited involvement in the first referral, in the form of a brief interaction with the referrer, which I will outline below. This was a minor administrative communication and took place prior to my FIMU colleague Officer B's substantive assessment of the referral, and so did not have an impact on the decision-making.
7. Until the relevant documents were put to me for consideration alongside the second Rule 9, I had no recollection of this communication. In the course of preparing this statement, I have again reviewed the additional papers provided to me from that time. As before, where I rely on those documents rather than my own direct memory, I try to make that as clear as possible.
8. In this statement, where I refer to the 'relevant time', I am referring to the period of my involvement in this case, in December 2019.

Preliminary matters

My background, qualifications and experience

9. I set out my background, qualifications and career experience to date in paragraphs 9 to 14 of my first statement, and do not repeat that information here, save to note that at the relevant time I was working in the Lancashire FIMU as a Detective Constable and intelligence assessor, seconded from Lancashire Constabulary to CTPNW. I set out the training I have undertaken relevant to this role at paragraphs 15 to 16 of my first statement and again do not repeat that here.

Information relating to internet searches

10. Before I go on to explain my involvement in the first referral, I should note that the second Rule 9 relates primarily to a document comprising approximately 530 pages of hyperlinks, said to comprise AR's internet search history, lifted from his school IT system ('**the internet search history**'). As I understand it, these were intended to support the submission of the first referral, made by Jan Lewis at Acorns School.
11. I have read the witness statements of Joanne Hodson (dated 2 September 2025 [OA2/04 - LCC001773]) and Janet Lewis of Acorns School (dated 5 September 2025 [OA2/05 - LCC001774]), copies of which were provided by the Inquiry. Their evidence indicates that when Ms Lewis first contacted FIMU about AR on 5 December 2019, she attached to an email a record of AR's internet search history [OA2/04 - LCC001773, para 133] [OA2/05 - LCC001774, para 29]. I know that the search history has been disclosed to the Inquiry by Lancashire County Council [OA2/06 - LCC001401], and that the Inquiry has taken steps to assess that [OA2/07 - ILT000022]. I have had sight of that document.
12. As far as I am aware, that document was not received by FIMU alongside the initial referral, and from what I have read in the contemporaneous papers, it does not seem that the internet search history was ever received by FIMU in the course of dealing with the first referral. For the avoidance of doubt, from what I have seen the attachments that were sent to FIMU via the 'Concern' email address to accompany the Prevent referral form did not contain the internet search history, or extracts from it. I will explain this in more detail below insofar as I can.

Fixed Intelligence Management Unit

General

13. In paragraphs 17 to 20 of my first statement, I set out the way in which CTPNW operates, and how the FIMU fits into that structure. I also set out in paragraph 21 of that statement in detail what my role as an intelligence assessor within FIMU entailed.
14. In paragraphs 22 to 29 of my first statement, I set out an overview of the FIMU assessment process and how I remember it interacting with the Prevent team's work at the time. I noted

that the FIMU in which I work was, and remains, the first port of call for the assessment of any CT-related information across the Lancashire and Cumbria area. I said that Prevent referrals came from a range of different sources, and took various different forms, but that generally, Prevent referrals would be received by FIMU into a central 'Concern' inbox, on a prescribed Prevent form. From there, FIMU officers would self-allocate cases in line with their capacity on a given day, and the relevant officer picking up a particular case would mark the referral with an allocated colour to show it was being actioned.

15. The FIMU assessor would then go on to make a substantive assessment of 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**'). For the purposes of a referral to Prevent, this broadly involves a consideration of whether there is any Pursue/CT related reason not to refer a case to Prevent. This was the process carried out by my colleague Officer B in this case, the result of which was the case being referred to Prevent.

FIMU Assessment: preliminary considerations

16. From time to time, when an individual or organisation sends in intelligence to the central 'Concern' inbox, intending to submit a Prevent referral, the basis of the referral is not entirely clear.
17. This can be for a number of reasons – they may have failed to complete the appropriate forms, or may have otherwise failed to make clear the CT/Prevent relevance, for example by sending in large amounts of information, from which the Prevent concerns cannot readily be identified. In such cases, before the case is allocated to a FIMU officer for assessment, the officer who first reads the purported referral will likely take the opportunity to go back to the referrer and ask them for more information - to clarify the reason for the referral, to complete the relevant form, or to otherwise explain the nature of the concerns they have, insofar as it is not clear from the information they have submitted.
18. This is not uncommon. The fact the inbox is labelled as a 'Concern' inbox more generally means that people do quite regularly send in more generically-worded concerns about people without providing any link to Prevent or CT, which means extra steps are required to clarify the nature of the referral. This is to ensure that the necessary relevant information

is gathered so that appropriate NSIM checks can be conducted by FIMU, but also to ensure it is as clear as possible at that early stage what the Prevent-related issues are. In the absence of a clearly articulated Prevent-related concern (which is best set out in the prescribed form), there is a risk that the reason for the referral is unclear or could be misunderstood. The Prevent form includes a range of information to be provided, including matters such as family make up, parents' details, and geographic location that can provide valuable context for FIMU officers assessing the case.

19. I can see from the relevant documentation [OA2/08 - LANC000175, p.19-20] that the first communication from Ms Lewis did not provide any context or explanation for what the specific concerns relating to AR were, and their connection to Prevent, nor did she complete the necessary Prevent form. It is important to note that in the absence of an immediate risk or threat flagged by a referrer, general practice is to require any partner agency referral to use the prescribed Prevent form. With that in mind, I responded to Ms Lewis' email asking her to resubmit her referral, which I discuss in more detail below.

20. For the avoidance of doubt, I did not carry out any substantive assessment of the first referral, nor was I involved in the decision making. In this case, when I responded to Ms Lewis, I updated the system to explain the action I had taken, so that information was visible to whichever FIMU officer picked the referral up to carry out the assessment (or to remind myself if it came back to me).

Summary of my involvement

21. As mentioned above, I do not have any direct memory of my involvement in this part of AR's case, and as such my account is wholly reliant on having considered the underlying documentation, which I have done in order to provide this statement.

22. I have considered the relevant email chains and documents relating to FIMU receiving the first referral from Acorns School, but note that some of the information is difficult to clearly understand in terms of the dates and times on the relevant emails, which do not appear to be entirely correct – for example, multiple emails appear to be timed at 6:32pm. My understanding is that these have been extracted from an old system and while the dates appear to be correct, the timings may not. I do not consider the timings of the emails will

make a material difference to my position. I have tried to set out as clearly as I can the substance of my involvement in the first referral.

5 December 2019

23. I can see that on 5 December 2019, I picked up an email in the 'Concern' inbox relating to AR, from Jan Lewis, the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Acorns School, Ormskirk, also dated 5 December 2019. This was the first communication with FIMU with regard to AR's first Prevent referral [OA2/08 - LANC000175, p.21].
24. This email had two large attachments. I have been informed that due to the passage of time and email retention policies by relevant organisations, it is not possible to access the attachments on the Lancashire Constabulary systems. I am told, however, that the Inquiry has sought disclosure of these the zip file from Lancashire County Council. The Inquiry has confirmed the email on 5 December 2019 included the following attachment:
 - a. A large extract from Acorns School's safeguarding records (CPOMS); and
 - b. Zip file called 'Re_Child_AR_Urgent_safeguarding.zip.txt'
25. The Inquiry has explained that the zip file contained the following documents:
 - a. Alder Hey CAMHS referral made by Range High School
 - b. Report from PC Alexander McNamee
 - c. Range High School safeguarding report form
 - d. Range High School EPEN 1 advising of AR's permanent exclusion.
26. It follows that the two attachments to this email from Ms Lewis did not contain a 530- page search or browsing history.
27. I responded that same day, asking Ms Lewis to resubmit the referral, and asking her to set out her concerns using the appropriate Prevent form, which I attached. In that email I asked her to *"make it clear exactly what concerns you have around the subject having an extremist ideology or being vulnerable to radicalisation"* [OA2/08 - LANC000175, p.21], because it was not clear from the information originally provided.

28. As set out above, FIMU officers would monitor the 'Concern' inbox and assign themselves referrals as they came in, flagging their cases in a specified colour to show they are being dealt with. Officers also as a matter of general practice will directly annotate the correspondence from the referrer with any notes, writing those directly onto the email chain, which will also record any actions taken and the rationale for those decisions. This provides an *aide memoire* but also a clear record should any other officer need to pick up someone else's caseload for any reason.

29. In this case, I can see from the underlying papers that I annotated the email from Ms Lewis, with a note to my colleagues as follows:

"Quite a confusing referral with no Concern form attached. Appears to be a large 'dump' of data from the school but not clear if there is any concern about his ideology or radicalisation. It appears that he has made threats to stab other people at the school including teachers and that Police have already been involved. I am not sure if this is simply a misguided referral but I have stressed in my email [copied below] to make the relevance of this referral clear. Hopefully this will be returned in a clearer state!" [OA2/08 - LANC000175, p. 17-18]

30. This was, to my knowledge, the end of my involvement in the first referral.

31. Once the referral form had been completed and submitted by Jan Lewis, which from the papers appears to have been done the next day, the referral was picked up by Officer B, who will have marked it with his allocated colour and begun his substantive assessment of the referral. I have not seen anything in the papers to indicate I had any further involvement in the first referral.

Particular issues relevant to my involvement

32. I have been asked to consider particular points of detail with regard to the submission of the first referral to FIMU, and deal with those points in turn below.

33. First, I do not have any independent recollection of receiving and considering the emails from Ms Lewis on 5 December 2019. I can see from the papers that the email was received on 5 December, with the two named attachments. I do not have any direct recollection of

what was contained in this 'dump' of information from the school. Having now had sight of subsequent email chains and the relevant documents, I know that those two attachments comprise a zip file containing a large volume of information relating to safeguarding, and records from the Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS). I note that this does not include the internet search history referred to at paragraph 10 above. The CPOMS record could accurately be described as a 'dump' – it is in effect a capture of a case management system [OA2/09 - LCC001346], and the zip file was a number of separate reports. I have no recollection of their substance, but at the time I see I commented that, from my initial review, there was nothing in the documents provided to clearly form the basis of a Prevent referral.

34. As a general statement, people seeking to make a referral to Prevent are required to complete a Prevent referral form, which is specifically designed to ensure the referrer considers the specific concerns in play and considers why they consider Prevent to be an appropriate avenue. The form guides the referrer to provide the necessary information to FIMU to enable a proper assessment to be made, including whether a referral should be made to Prevent. In practical terms, that is most likely to be a consideration of whether there is any CT/Pursue or national security reason why it would be inappropriate to refer.
35. I have regularly, in my role in FIMU, received emails from individuals or organisations which, in the body of the email, describe issues or set out broadly concerns, or, as in this case, attach large volumes of information from which Pursue or Prevent relevance is not obvious. In that situation, to try and ensure consistency in handling but also to ensure the appropriate information is signposted and provided to FIMU and the relevant concerns are properly taken into account, I would go back to the referrer and ask them to complete the referral form. The form includes all the things that are crucial to the assessment, and ultimately comprises the information that will be sent to Prevent in due course, if appropriate to do so.
36. For those reasons, it is best practice to ensure the form is completed properly. To be clear though, if someone sent an email containing a clear concern or imminent risk but without a form, I might not insist on their use of the form. This will be entirely case dependent, but if the email contains clear intelligence or, for example, a time critical element such as a planned attack, in that situation I would not delay the process of dealing with that risk and

threat. In this case, there was no such information to warrant overriding the forms – no unresolved or immediate threat from a national security perspective.

37. This case does indicate why the form can be important – for example, here, AR went to school in Merseyside and lived in Lancashire. The form would include that information and would flag that it might be necessary to share information with Merseyside. In this case, there was clearly a large volume of information in the attachments provided by Jan Lewis, and it was not clear what they were trying to tell us in terms of Prevent relevance. In that situation, in my view it was right to go back to the referrer to ask them to clarify the nature of the worry they had and its relevance to Prevent, and to encourage the referrer to follow the process and complete the forms. That is what I did in this case.

Internet search history

38. As referred to above, I understand that there has been some suggestion that the papers provided alongside the first referral included AR's internet search history taking from the school IT system. I have no recollection of this being sent, and from what I can see, as set out above, there is no record of that being received by the FIMU. I note from the documents I have read that Officer B, having picked up the substantive assessment, placed a note on the system dated 10 December indicating he had contacted Jan Lewis asking for sight of the internet search history, to which she says she will find out whether it is still available. Had it already been sent, I would expect Ms Lewis would have said as much in the course of that correspondence. This seems to confirm my understanding that at the time I considered the first email from Jan Lewis on 5 December, that document had not been received [OA2/08 - LANC000175, pg 66-67].

39. I also explained in paragraph 27 of my first statement that once a referral has been made to Prevent, if anything CT/Pursue/national security related emerges in the course of the Prevent team's assessment of the case, that intelligence will be passed back to FIMU. I discussed this in the context of AR's seized devices, among other things. With that in mind, had anything with CT relevance arisen after Officer B passed the referral to Prevent, I would expect that information to have been provided to FIMU. This includes, for example, if the internet search history had been passed to a police officer or a Prevent officer during or after the 17 December multi-agency meeting, and contained relevant information. There

does not seem to be any record of any such information coming into the FIMU team after that meeting.

40. It has been suggested that the attachments provided along with Ms Lewis's initial email were not analysed by FIMU or Prevent. I do not think that is necessarily a fair reflection of the position.
41. In terms of the two attachments that were received, it is clear from the papers that I had considered the substance of those documents such as to conclude that more information was required about the specific nature of the concerns Ms Lewis wanted to raise.
42. In addition, without speculating unduly on the considerations of others in the team, it appears from the underlying documents that Officer B also considered them to some extent. This is suggested in Officer B's entry on the FIMU system noting that '*as per [OFFICER A]'s comments the concern form has been filled out with very little detail asking us to refer to the large amount of data provided, a telephone call has been made to the school for the teacher to resubmit the concern form in relation to the concerns and any extreme ideology or vulnerabilities to radicalisation [as most] of the paperwork relates to [disruption] in class an unruly behaviour*' [OA2/08 - LANC000175, p. 41].
43. This indicates that Officer B had considered the nature of the information provided such as to conclude that it did not appear clearly to be Prevent relevant (i.e. relating more obviously to disruption at school).
44. Further, if the internet search history had been received alongside the other attachments when I opened them, I would have taken an initial review of that information in the same way I did with the other two attachments – the CPOMS record and the safeguarding zip files.

Analysis of the internet search history

45. I have considered whether I, or any of my colleagues, could have analysed browsing history of the type found in [OA2/06 - LCC001401] (noting that, as far as I'm aware, it was not received in this case). I have considered this from the perspective of whether, in theory, information of that description could, as a matter of capability, be analysed by the team.

46. In short, there is no specific software or specialist tool within FIMU that could in itself assimilate or perform any analysis of that kind of information, noting that the search history in this case appears to take the form of a large volume of raw data in the form of copied links which would, as I understand it, each lead to search engine results. Any analysis, therefore, would take the form of manual checking of the information. This document does not contain live hyperlinks, and in any event FIMU could not access live hyperlinks for security reasons. In terms of capability then, it would in theory be possible to analyse that information or probe it, but only through manual copying, pasting and checking the results.
47. Other options in such a situation may be to do a key word search through the document for potential CT-related terms, which I have done in the course of preparing this statement, to get a sense of the nature of the information that might be concerning. A further option might be to carry out a dip sample, but doing so in the context of a document with approximately nine thousand individual links may be of limited value.
48. In this context, I consider the most proportionate first step would be to carry out a key word search based on any available information provided by the school (i.e. searches relating to school shootings). In these circumstances, I would likely return to the referrer to ask them for more detail on their Prevent concerns specific to AR's internet use to ascertain what it was about the searches that had triggered their firewalls or had raised alarms. I would want to clarify any specific issues with his internet activity that would have prompted them to send in that long list of hyperlinks as the basis of a Prevent referral. This would assist me in compiling a list of further key words to enable some manual analysis or probing of the search history. Had information such as the internet search history document been part of that bundle of information provided, I expect that would have been included in my request for more contextual information from the referrer before deciding a proportionate way forward.
49. I do not consider that it would have been proportionate to carry out a manual search of approximately nine thousand entries, particularly given that the benefit of doing so would need to be balanced against the issues that may have caused in terms of potential undue delay to the substantive FIMU assessment of the referral. Carrying out a full manual review would not in my view have been a proportionate use of resource within the team, given the volume of cases received and the broad range of risks those referrals contain.

50. For those reasons, had I received the information in [OA2/06 - LCC001401] or something like it, I consider a key word search (which would have been context specific, and guided by the intelligence received), would have been my starting point, followed by returning to the referrer. I can only speculate as to what I may have done, based on my own experience, given the information was not in my possession. I do not, however, think it would have materially affected the general approach I took, given that clarification would have been required in any event to place the two attachments to the 5 December email in context.

51. As mentioned above, it is not uncommon for organisations to send referrals with large volumes of information without commentary or context, with a view to having Prevent analyse it. In cases like that, it would be routine practice to go back and ask for more detail on the specific concerns, or for additional context. Understandably, often in school settings or social care settings staff can be reluctant to commit to writing any suggestion of a child being linked to terrorism or radicalisation in any way. It was and is therefore common to have to engage further with the referrer prior to the case being allocated within FIMU and prior to the substantive assessment.

Further communication with Ms Lewis

52. I am aware that, in the course of this assessment being carried out, a telephone call was made to Ms Lewis. While I do not have a direct memory of this, I do not think it would have been me that had that conversation, because I was not involved in the substance of the assessment. My role in AR's first referral was dealing with preliminary administrative steps as outlined above. The records indicate it was likely to be my colleague Officer B, who dealt with the substantive assessment, but I have no direct knowledge of that.

53. Given I am as confident as I can be that it would not have been me who made that call, and the note of the call was not a FIMU record, I am not sure it would be helpful to speculate about what might have been meant by anything written in that note.

Reflections

54. My involvement in the first referral was limited to a brief administrative interaction with the referrer, and I followed routine procedures to ensure the appropriate information was gathered prior to the referral being made to Prevent. As such, I do not consider I could or should have done anything different with regard to the first referral. Referrals without context or without the appropriate forms continue to be an issue, and the standard response continues to be going back to the referrer and asking for more information, unless there is a very clear immediate risk arising from the information provided.

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: **Officer A**

Dated: 25/09/2025