ANALYSIS & RESEARCH
COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING

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Analysis & Research

What is the scale, trajectory and nature (characteristics) of those who meet the current definition of Violent Fixated Individuals (VFI) within Wales's Prevent and Police Force data?

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COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING
CYMRU WALES

CTP Wales Analysis & Research (A&R)

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Executive Summary

This assessment sets out the Welsh policing picture emerging from the national Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) 2025 report on **Violence Fixated Individuals (VFI)**. It provides a Wales-specific interpretation to support proportionate, evidence-led decision-making.

Between **1 April 2021 and 31 March 2025**[1], Wales has recorded a **sustained rise in potential VFI-related referrals**. CTP Wales analysis shows this increase is **not driven by higher levels of violent offending**[2], but by a growing number of **non-violent individuals presenting vulnerability, safeguarding concerns, and early indicators of potential escalation**. The current demand profile reflects earlier identification and improved awareness, rather than a step change in realised violent threat.

External events, including high-profile incidents such as Southport[3] (July 2024), have almost certainly increased vigilance, reporting, and referral activity[4]. This underscores the necessity for proportionate threat assessment and structured analytical judgement, as opposed to reactive escalation or misrepresenting risk[5].

Within this dataset, **CTP counterterrorism thresholds are not met**. Violent fixation and grievance are usually non-ideological, meaning these cases fall outside counterterrorism thresholds[6] by design, not because of a failure in identification or referral processes. Only a small minority of individuals progress to real-world violence and where violence has occurred, it is mainly interpersonal or domestic, directed at known victims.

Welsh data shows that most individuals in this cohort exhibit violent fixation without ideological drivers. While some present credible risks of serious violence, they do not meet counterterrorism thresholds. Risk is therefore appropriately managed outside CTP pathways, through safeguarding and public protection arrangements. Risk is currently being managed through **MARAC[7], MAPPA[8], Public Protection and Violence Units[9], mental health services (including CAMHS[10]), and social services**. However, the sustained upward trend of VFI and growing case complexity mean that continued pressure on system capacity is likely.

The future core policing challenge is therefore **preventing escalation**, rather than responding to an increased risk of terrorism. Welsh policing is well positioned to manage this risk through prevention-first, partnership-led approaches, aligned with statutory safeguarding duties and established public protection frameworks.

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[1] Based on Four Forces data supplied in response to the national request for information (RFI) and keywords to search and Prevent Case Management data: please refer VFI PCM and Force Data _CTP Quantitative Analysis_08082025 for further information.

[2] Engagement in real-world violence was confined to a minority of the CTP VFI definition met cohort (n=12/55).

[3] Such as following the Southport incident, in July 2024 17-year-old Axel RUDAKUBANA murdered three children as at dance class in Southport and was subsequently sentence to a minimum 5-years in prison. v AXEL RUDAKUBANA SENTENCING NOTE – https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/R-v-Axel-Rudakubana.pdf - RUDAKUBANA's "long standing preoccupation with violent killing and genocide" has resulted in discussions concerning the extent to which violence fixation acts as a key driver in an individual's pathway to violence.

[4] PCMT data CTP Wales

[5] Linear trend analysis shows a clear upward trend in overall referrals (slope = 0.0552), contrasted with a much slower rate of increase in the subset linked to real-world violent behaviour (slope = 0.0044).

[6] See CTP Threshold Matrix at Appendix D

[7] Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference: A locally held meeting where statutory and voluntary agency representatives share information about people at high risk of domestic abuse. Any agency can refer an adult or child they believe to be at high risk of harm. The aim of the meeting is to produce a co-ordinated action plan to increase an adult or child's safety, health and well-being. Agencies that attend vary, but are likely to include the police, probation, health and housing services.

[8] Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: A set of arrangements providing a common framework for public protection agencies to identify, assess and manage certain offenders in the community. Agencies involved as responsible bodies include the police, probation trusts, and healthcare, housing and prison services. Other agencies may become involved; for example, the Youth Justice Board will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

[9] Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP): A common term used by the police and other safeguarding agencies in relation to concerns for the welfare of a child or other vulnerable person. PVP information is recorded on police systems and shared with partner organisations.

[10] CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties

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The overarching assessment is therefore clear: in the absence of ideological intent or extremist engagement, VFI individuals in this cohort do not meet Counter Terrorism (CT) thresholds. This reflects designed governance boundaries, not failures of identification, referral, or assessment. While limitations in sample size, referral behaviour, and the inherently unpredictable nature of individual escalation mean absolute certainty is not possible, overall confidence in this assessment is high.

The CTP VFI definition is: "Fascination with extreme violence (where ideology is not the primary driver) and intent to inflict extreme violence". CTP HQ 2025

Report Purpose

This report assesses the **emerging Welsh policing picture** relating to individuals identified as exhibiting **Violent Fixation (VFI)** behaviours. The aim is to provide **evidence-led intelligence** from the supplied dataset to support:

- Strategic and operational decision-making
- Risk management and safeguarding priorities
- Resource allocation across Welsh Forces and partner agencies

The assessment focuses on the **scale, trend, threat profile, triggers, vulnerability factors, and system impact** of VFI, with reference to Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) thresholds and national comparisons.

Analytic Challenge and Mitigation

To strengthen rigour in the production of this report, the following potential weaknesses were considered:

- Sample size limitations → mitigated through cautious probabilistic language
- Referral bias and awareness effects → explicitly acknowledged
- Absence of longitudinal outcomes → avoided claims about intervention effectiveness
- CTP threshold scrutiny → clarified as a design boundary, not a gap

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Key Judgements

	KEY JUDGEMENTS	Analytical Confidence Rating (ANCR)
1	We assess with high confidence **that VFI referral volumes in Wales are growing at a small but meaningful pace**, as shown by a positive trendline slope (0.0044)[11]. This reflects sustained demand rather than short-term spikes[12]. It is almost certain that **the rise is driven by improved identification of individuals exhibiting violent fixation, rather than an increase in serious real-world violent offending**. Notably, Wales has not experienced the national three-fold increase in VFI referrals reported in 2024/25, and current data does not explain this difference.	HIGH
2	We judge it **likely that the primary threat profile is interpersonal violence**, with 22% (12 of 55) of individuals having committed a real-world violent offence. These incidents are predominantly targeted at known victims, rather than random or ideologically driven targets.	MODERATE
3	We assess it **highly likely that domestic and familial environments represent a significant risk context**, with repeated indicators of domestic abuse and assaults against mothers, highlighting the household as a key setting for escalation.	MODERATE
4	We judge it **unlikely that terrorism is the dominant driver of risk**, as only one individual within the cohort is linked to a recognised terrorist ideology.	HIGH
5	We assess it **highly likely that relationship breakdown acts as a critical trigger for escalation**, frequently interacting with poor mental health, neurodiversity, and suicidal ideation to elevate risk.	MODERATE
6	We assess it **highly likely that the majority of individuals demonstrate violent fixation in the absence of ideological motivation**, meaning they do not meet Counter Terrorism Policing thresholds, despite presenting credible risks of serious interpersonal violence.	HIGH
7	We judge it **likely that current multi-agency risk management arrangements (including public protection and safeguarding frameworks) are appropriate and proportionate** but are becoming increasingly pressured by sustained referral volumes and cumulative case complexity.	MODERATE
8	**Intent to commit extreme violence or terrorist attacks cannot be reliably inferred from the available datasets supporting this analysis**, reinforcing the need for ongoing dynamic assessment on a case-by-case basis.	FACT
9	We assess it likely that **individuals of VFI concern are first identified by police between the ages of 11 and 15, broadly consistent with national findings (12–16)**. However, overall risk persists across a wider age range of 15 to 25 years, indicating the need for sustained risk management beyond adolescence. In Wales, the median age is 17.	HIGH

[11] The overall number of individuals in our dataset is increasing at a steady rate (0.0552). The growth in the overall dataset is likely attributable to the sustained period of referrals following the attacks in Southport in 2024. Whilst the subset of VFI definition meeting individuals is also increasing, but much more slowly (0.0044).

[12] Episodic = Containing or consisting of a series of separate parts or events, all occurring at irregular intervals

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Overview of Data and Trend Analysis

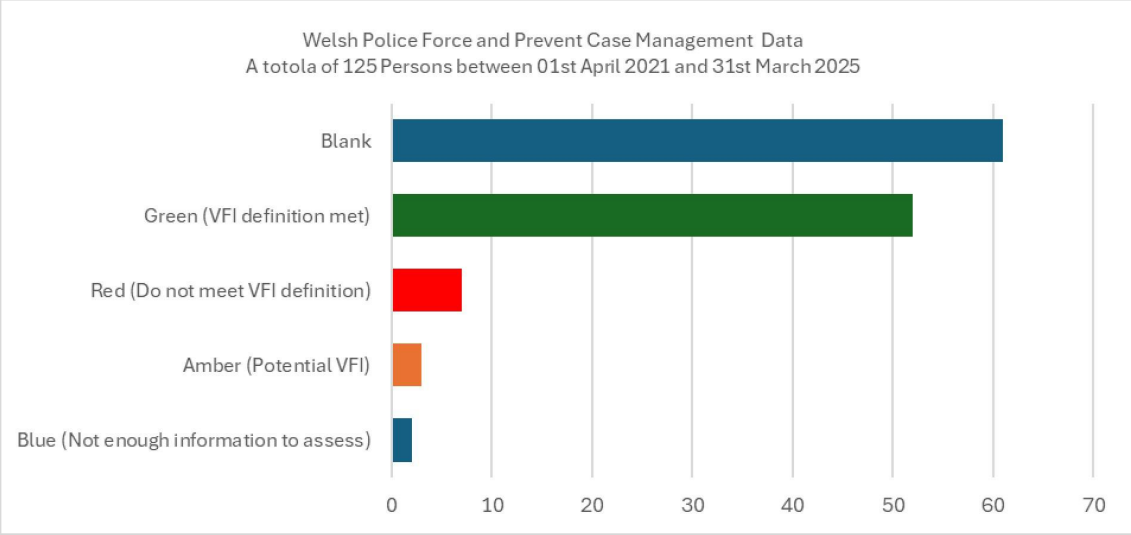
When looking for individuals meeting the current CTP definition of VFI ("individuals who have a fascination with extreme violence and intent to inflict extreme violence, where ideology is not the primary driver") within data from Welsh Police Forces as well as Prevent Case Management (PCM) information, 125 unique individuals were presented for national assessment covering a four-year period (from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2025).

In Wales of the 125 persons identified by Welsh police forces and PCM data.

1. 55 individuals were classified by CTP Headquarters (CTP HQ) analysis team as meeting (or potentially meeting) the national CTP definition of a VFI. Of these, 52 (41.6%) met the VFI definition (GREEN Status) and 3 (2.4%) were identified as potentially meeting the VFI definition resulting in AMBER status. The remainder were classed as not meeting the VFI definition as following: BLUE (Not enough to assess – 1.6%) or RED (Do not meet VFI definition – 5.6%).

   Nearly half of all data within the dataset is recorded as BLANK (48.8%) meaning that no assessment has been made available by CTP HQ for further analysis by CTP Wales (CTPW). Those recorded with no CTP HQ final assessment grading are from the Prevent Case Management (PCM) dataset and we do not know why these have not been classified by CTP HQ. The full methodology for assessing the CTP VFI definition has not been made available to CTP Wales (CTPW) to enable us to provide any further corroboration or credibility to the figures, and this finding must be viewed as indicative only, and not independently tested fact.

BLUE	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Not enough information to assess	do not meet the current VFI Definition	may meet the current VFI Definition	do meet the current VFI Definition

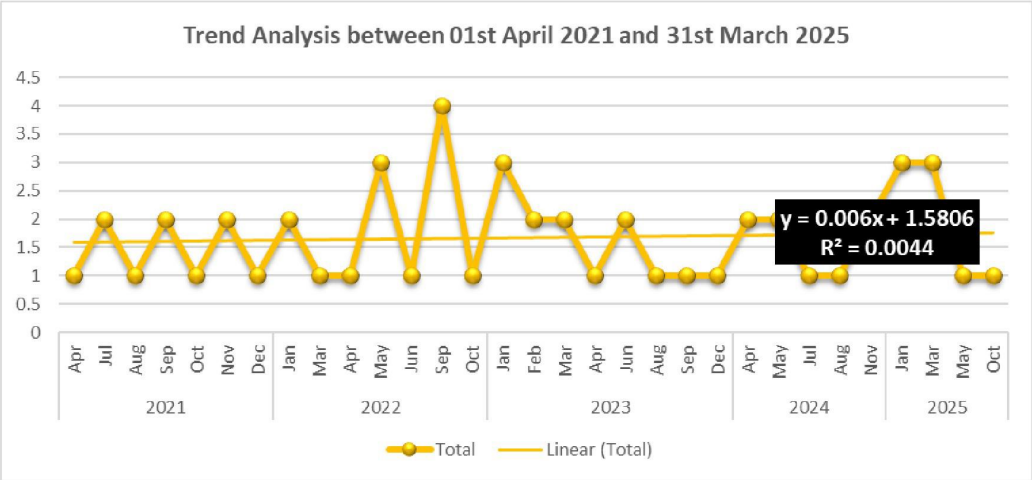


Graph 1: A breakdown of the 125 Welsh individuals and their Final CTP HQ classification against the CTP VFI definition.

2. Analysis of the 55 individuals meeting the CTP VFI definition reveals a small but meaningful upward movement in volume over the 4-year timescale. While this is not a sharp escalation, it does reflect a steady increase in behaviours of concern being identified and reported indicating sustained demand,

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rather than solely focusing on episodic spikes[13]. Wales's gradual rise does not compare with the reported **three-fold national increase in VFI referrals in 2024/25**, reasons for which remain unclear[14].



Graph 2: Timeline of 55 CTP VFI-meeting individuals in Wales with Trend (01st April 2021 – 31st March 2025)

Peaks in referral activity correlate with **societal stressors and high-profile incidents**, including Southport (July 2024), likely increasing **professional vigilance and reporting behaviour.**

The increase is assessed as **partially attributable to awareness and referral activity**, not a proportional rise in underlying violent intent.

CTP VFI Definition Met Characteristics

The overall cohort represents **low-volume but high-impact risk**, primarily within **domestic and relational settings**, rather than random or ideological VFI attacks.

- 44% (55/125) of records meet and/or potentially meet the CTP VFI definition. 12 of these (22%) have committed a real-world violent offence; and only 2 of were referred to CT-PREVENT. The remainder exhibit non-ideological fixation (NIEV).
- Gender: 6 individuals (11%) are female.
- Only 1 individual shows a recognised terrorist ideology. This individual was recorded as a CT-Prevent subject.

Location of Address Recorded for those that meet the CTP VFI Definition

Where address location is appropriately recorded[15], **North Wales Police Force Area appear to hold the highest percentage of individuals that meet the current CTP VFI definition with three quarters of individuals present in this Force area[16].** This statistic far exceeds the potential VFI risk presence in any of the other three remaining Welsh Force

[13] The overall number of individuals in our dataset is increasing at a steady rate (0.0552). The growth in the overall dataset is likely attributable to the sustained period of referrals following the attacks in Southport in 2024. Whilst the subset of NIEV individuals is also increasing, but much more slowly (0.0044).

[14] This Welsh data trend indicates a significant contrast with the National judgement that 'the number of VFI's has almost trebled in 2024/25 compared with the last three previous financial years. Source: T1D* VFI PCM and Force' Welsh Force Data, PCM Data and National CTP HQ T1D* Analysis

[15] Not all data contained with the source dataset is mappable, 3 GREEN records hold either no address details or an address that is outside of Wales.

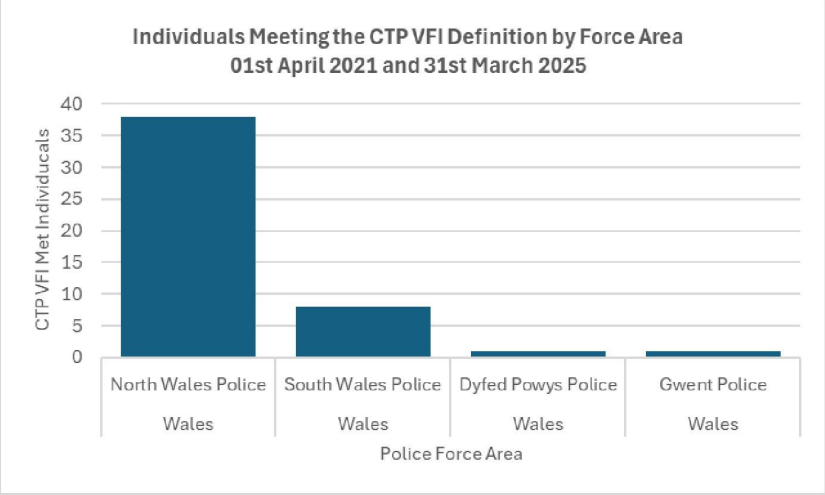
[16] 75% (n=39/52) Individuals from the returned dataset assessed by CTP HQ

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areas. This variation may reflect differences in approach to the original Request for Information (RFI) rather than an accurate reflection of the threat.

The full methodology for assessing the CTP VFI definition has not been made available to CTP Wales to enable us to provide any further corroboration or credibility to the figures, and this finding must be viewed as indicative only, and not independently tested fact.



Graph 3: VFI's mapped by Police Force Area

Force Area	No. of Individuals	% of Total Wales Data	VFI Definition Met (Address Included)	% of VFI's in Wales Data	Conversion Rate
Dyfed Powys Police	19	15.2%	2	3.85%	11%
Gwent Police	19	15.2%	2	3.85%	11%
North Wales Police	57	45.6%	39	**75%**	**68%**
South Wales Police	30	24%	9	17.31%	30%
Total	**125**	-	**52**	-	-

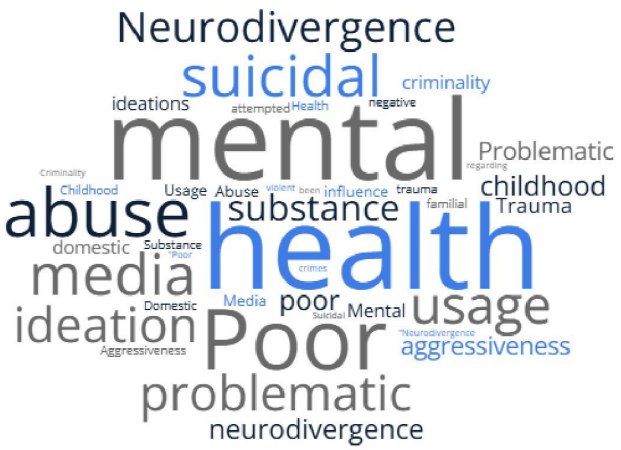
Table 1: Breakdown of Individuals Supplied by Welsh Forces and Resulting CTP VFI Definition Met[17]

Individual Divergence Assessment – Risk factors

A significant proportion of the cohort presents with poor mental health, limited family or social support, and indicators of neurodiversity. These factors, while not causal, appear to act as risk multipliers, increasing vulnerability to harmful narratives and exploitative online communities. Importantly, **these characteristics highlight safeguarding needs rather than inherent criminal intent**.

[17] The data supplied contained 125 individuals, of which three cases assessed as VFI's were not Welsh based so have been removed from the final count of Welsh VFI's – hence the total 52 as opposed to 55

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Word Cloud Image: Top 50 Most Frequently Appearing Assessment Words: examples of CTP VFI meeting Individual Risk Factors

The VFI cohort demonstrates consistent exposure to propaganda, extreme material, including gore, and violent content such as mass shootings and beheadings, primarily in online spaces. This exposure appears to play a normalising role, desensitising individuals to violence and reinforcing grievance-based or identity-driven narratives. While this does not directly translate into violent action, it increases the risk of escalation, particularly when combined with mental health stressors and social isolation.

A noted potential trigger event is identified as the "breakdown of relationships"[18]. Also, significantly, mental poor health, suicidal ideation and oversexualised behaviours are present, demonstrating the breadth of human factors (HF).

Previous violent criminality is present in 21% (n = 12, 55) of individuals having committed real-world violent offences ranging from domestic abuse, drug related violence, assault and knife threats.

The fact remains that despite shared indicators: Risk is clearly person-specific, not cohort-determined.

- Cases diverge significantly in behaviour, intent, capability, and resilience.
- Protective factors vary considerably.
- Outcomes range from disengagement to escalation.

The threat profile is therefore best understood as one of potential escalation, not immediate violent offending.

Offending and Victimology Profile

This profile supports the assessment that the threat is low-volume but high-impact, concentrated in private settings where escalation may occur rapidly.

- Primary threat: Interpersonal violence
- Victims: Most are known to the perpetrator, reinforcing the domestic and relational nature of risk.
- Notable behaviours: Assaults against mothers, domestic abuse incidents, oversexualised behaviour.

[18] 16 Cases noted as potential triggers within the CTP HQ dataset

Triggers and Vulnerability Factors

The data indicates a **strong overlap between vulnerability and risk**, with some individuals presenting **simultaneous risk to others and to themselves**.

While poor mental health and neurodiversity attract focus in VFI discussions, relationship breakdown is potentially a critical and underexplored trigger. Therefore, this threat profile is best understood as one of potential escalation, not immediate violent offending. What it does not evidence is any direct progression to ideological risk that would cross the counterterrorism thresholds.

- Primary trigger: Relationship breakdown
- Interacting factors: Poor mental health, neurodiversity, suicidal ideation
- Effect: Convergence increases emotional dysregulation, grievance fixation, impulsivity, and simultaneous risk to self and other

A proportion of individuals within this cohort demonstrate **violent fixation, grievance, or obsessional thinking**, often focused on individuals or perceived personal injustices. However, these fixations are **not ideologically framed** and are not linked to extremist narratives, networks, or causes. There is no evidence of misanthropic[19] or nihilistic[20] belief systems that we can confidently identify in the dataset.

Risk Management[21] and System Impact of those that meet CTP VFI Definition

1. **Current management:** 73% (39/55) are actively managed via multi-agency arrangements which are **resource-intensive**, requiring sustained multi-agency coordination.

    - MARAC, MAPPA, Public Protection/Violence Units
    - HMPPS, Youth Justice, Schools
    - Social Services, Mental Health Services

2. **Operational pressure**: the small but meaningful upward movement in the number of CTP VFI definition meeting individuals and case complexity generate demand on:

    - Case management capacity
    - Timely information sharing
    - Early intervention and safeguarding services

We acknowledge that even more modest increases in referrals are assessed as likely to generate **disproportionate pressure** on:

- Case management capacity
- Information-sharing timeliness
- Early-intervention and safeguarding services

[19] Misanthrope/Misanthropic = a person who dislikes people in general

[20] Nihilistic = a rejection of all established authority and institutions

[21] Where data is recorded, 73% (n = 39/55)

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Future Trajectory

If current conditions persist, we assess it **likely** that:

1. Referral volumes are likely to continue gradual growth, therefore maintaining operational pressure.
2. The risk profile will likely remain predominantly domestic, relational, and vulnerability driven.
3. Personal vulnerabilities[22] remain the **primary operational challenge** especially where under 18's are involved in the potential for escalation towards violent acts.
4. Sudden surges in VFI are unlikely without significant external triggers.

[22] Mental Poor Health, Social Isolation, Neurodivergent traits, Undiagnosed poor mental health, relationship breakdown and online exposure, absence of social support

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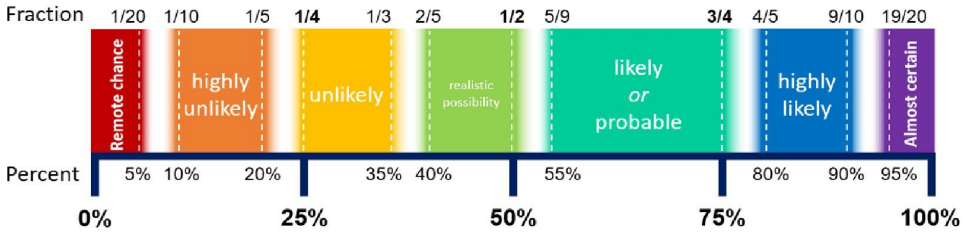
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Gwent Police	Principal Analyst, Michelle Draper Safeguarding Lead: Supt Michelle Chaplain michelle.chaplin@gwent.police.uk Prevent Lead: Chief Supt Jason White jason.white@gwent.police.uk
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Appendix B: Probability Yardstick

All assessments within this product utilise the PHIA Probability Yardstick.



Appendix C: Confidence Statements

Intelligence assessments support decision making in environments where information tends to be incomplete, conflicting, or unreliable and therefore subject to different interpretations. Analysis seeks to resolve uncertainty but cannot fully eliminate it. Therefore, we will always communicate what doubt remains in our key analytical judgements upon completion of our analysis. This is to highlight the potential impact on the assessment and therefore on resulting decisions.

We use two frameworks to describe different but related aspects of uncertainty in this intelligence assessment:

1. Probability Yardstick
   We use this standard set of language in probabilistic judgements to describe our assessed likelihood that a statement is true or that an event will occur, is occurring or has occurred; and

2. Analytical Confidence Ratings (AnCRs) and statements
   We use these ratings, which are based on a standard evaluation criterion, to make clear the strengths and limitations of the key judgements made. Particularly in the context of forward-looking judgements, analytical confidence also explains the susceptibility of the judgements to change.

Confidence ratings and statements can be used by the readers of an assessment to evaluate how much weight they should put on assessments when making decisions. They flag up key gaps in our knowledge, note factors beyond our control and identify where we can strengthen assessments to better inform future decision making.

Analyst Confidence Ratings (AnCRs):

HIGH	Uncertainties remaining should have negligible or no effect on the key judgement(s)
MODERATE	Uncertainties remain that could expose the key judgement(s) to change
LOW	Critical uncertainties remain that could invalidate the key judgement(s)

Analyst Confidence Statements (AnCRs)

	Analytical Confidence Statements supporting Key Judgements	Analytical Confidence Rating (ANCR)
1	Confidence Statement: This judgement is held with high confidence as assessments conducted under the Violent Fixation (NIEV) model consistently identify fixation, grievance, and fascination with violence without corresponding evidence of intent, capability, or imminence in most cases. Linear trend analysis further supports this, showing a substantially higher growth rate in overall referrals than in confirmed violent cases. External events (e.g. Southport) are likely acting as catalysts for increased fixation, reporting, and referral, rather than representing a substantive change in underlying violent threat. Supported by temporal increases in referrals following high-profile violent incidents, which is consistent with known amplification effects on fixation and fascination under the Violent Fixation model. Direct causation cannot be conclusively proven, but the pattern is analytically credible	HIGH
2	Confidence Statement: This judgement is supported with moderate confidence due to the limited presence of real-world violent offences, low levels of preparatory or enabling behaviour, and the predominance of psychological, social, and behavioural indicators associated with fixation rather than attack planning within the model. Most individuals assessed under the Violent Fixation model almost certainly remain in a pre-criminal, pre-violent stage.	MODERATE
3	Confidence Statement: This judgement is supported with moderate confidence and is underpinned by the Welsh Force data set. Limitations in the data however means that there is some uncertainty and only improvement in data collection, extraction and accuracy will elevate this to a higher confidence level.	MODERATE
4	Only a small minority of individuals assessed are likely to progress from violent fixation to real-world violent behaviour. Confidence Statement: This judgement is assessed with medium to high confidence, reflecting the minor number of confirmed TACT violent offences and the absence of consistent indicators	HIGH

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	of pathway progression (e.g. target identification, rehearsal, or capability acquisition) across the cohort. Confidence is moderated by the recognised non-linear nature of escalation within violent fixation pathways.	
5	Confidence Statement: This judgement is supported with moderate confidence and is supported by the Welsh Force data set. Limitations in the data however means that there is some uncertainty and only improvement in data collection, extraction and accuracy will elevate this to a higher confidence level.	MODERATE
6	Confidence Statement: This judgement is made with high confidence as the Violent Fixation model explicitly recognises that fixation and fascination with violence are necessary but insufficient conditions for violent escalation. Case reviews show significant divergence in trajectories despite similar fixation indicators. Shared characteristics across the cohort almost certainly represent common vulnerability and fixation indicators, but do not predict progression to violence at an individual level.	HIGH
7	Confidence Statement: This judgement is made with moderate confidence based on logic. However, if current conditions persist, we assess it **likely** that: • Referral volumes will continue to rise **gradually, impacting resources across all agencies.** • Vulnerability-driven escalation will remain central, and this will likely pose the most problematic risk to identify and manage from a law enforcement perspective. Gaining clarity on who ultimately manages this VFI cohort and what actions are required of law enforcement would elevate this confidence rating to high.	MODERATE
8	Confidence Statement: This judgement is factual - assessing 'intent to commit extreme violence' is impossible from all data sets supporting this analysis.	FACT
9	Confidence Statement: This judgement is assessed with medium to high confidence as it is solely based on the quantitative data supplied by Welsh Police Forces and subjected to assessment by both T1D* and CTPHQ. We make no further representation of this data which is for this product only.	HIGH

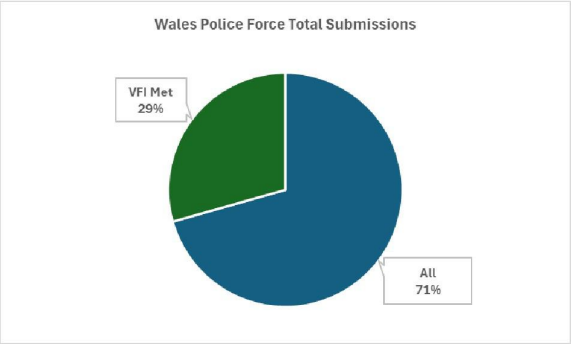
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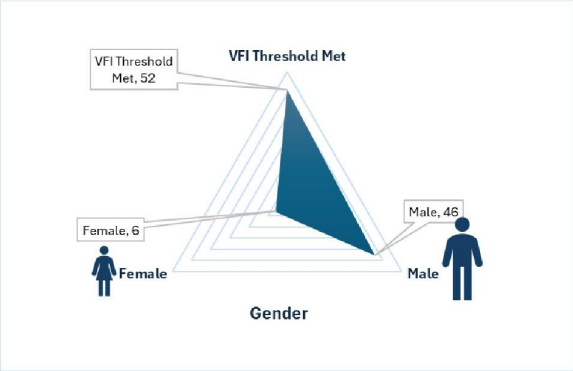
Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) Terminology and Thresholds Matrix

T2D

Appendix E: Infographic of Welsh Police Force Data



71% of the Welsh data (n=70 of 125) did not meet the national CTP VFI definition and were assessed as RED or BLUE.



Of those that met the GREEN[23] national CTP VFI definition (n = 52 identified as resident in Wales), 6 were female/46 male.



Of those who meet CTP Wales terrorism thresholds (n=1, male).

[23] Assessment criteria: BLUE = Not enough information to assess, RED = do not meet the current VFI definition, AMBER = may meet the current CFI definition and **GREEN = do meet the current VFI definition**

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