Witness Name: Professor Samantha Lundrigan
Exhibits: SL/01-SL/03
Dates: 27th July 2026

THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR SAMANTHA LUNDRIGAN

I, PROFESSOR SAMANTHA LUNDRIGAN, will say as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am Professor Samantha Lundrigan, Professor of Investigative Psychology and Public Protection and Director at the International Policing and Public Protection Research Institute (IPPPRI), Anglia Ruskin University. I hold a PhD in Investigative Psychology and, prior to my current post, have held research posts at the University of Cambridge, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and the University of Liverpool.

   In my current role I lead IPPPRI's research programme on policing and public protection, with a particular focus on the management of sexual and violent offending, extremism and counterterrorism, risk, safeguarding, and online harms to children.

2. This witness statement is made to assist the Southport Inquiry (the "inquiry") with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 7th July, 2026.

BACKGROUND

3. I was lead researcher and co-author on the National MAPPA Research Programme, a 26-month study (2020 - 2023) commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and funded by the Dawes Trust examining the effectiveness of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in England and Wales. This response draws principally on this research, specifically:
   a. The National MAPPA Research: Serious Case Review Report (Mann, Lundrigan & Kerss, April 2023) - thematic analysis of 19 MAPPA Serious Case Reviews from five sample areas, 2012-2021. SL/01 - **PSL000001**.
   b. The National MAPPA Research: Process Effectiveness Report (Mann & Lundrigan, April 2023) - 18 focus groups with 105 practitioners, analysis of 40 declined Category 3 referrals, and analysis of 48 panel meeting minutes/Risk Management Plans (RMPs).SL/02 - **PSL000002**.
   c. The National MAPPA Research: Proven Reoffending Report (Lundrigan, Mann & Specht, April 2023) - analysis of proven reoffending patterns for 39,500 MAPPA managed individuals with a MAPPA adoption date between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014. SL/03 - **PSL000003**.

4. The National MAPPA Research examined the general population of MAPPA-managed individuals (Category 1 sexual offenders, Category 2 violent offenders, and Category 3 'otherwise dangerous' offenders). It was not designed as a study of violence fixated individuals (VFIs) as a distinct cohort. Where the Inquiry's questions concern VFIs specifically, my response says so plainly rather than extending findings by inference. Where questions concern the general architecture, practice and effectiveness of MAPPA, I use this direct evidence accordingly.
5. The MAPPA guidance referenced throughout the underlying research is the November 2021 guidance in force at the time of fieldwork. All reports pre-date the April 2022 introduction of the fourth (terrorism) MAPPA category, though practitioner discussion of TACT case-handling is included in the Process Effectiveness Report.

RESPONSE

Identification of VFIs

6. To my knowledge, the term "violence-fixated individuals" (VFI) is more established within policy, security, safeguarding and public protection discussions than it is in academia. There's no existing body of academic literature that uses that exact label. But there is a substantial and directly relevant literature built around adjacent constructs. The underlying phenomenon has been studied for more than two decades under names like fixation, grievance-fuelled violence, and non-ideological lone-actor violence, with a reasonably mature evidence base on indicators and pathway behaviours, mainly from the forensic psychiatry and threat-assessment fields. MAPPA and its constituent agencies do not currently recognise VFIs as a distinct group. MAPPA eligibility is triggered by conviction: Category 1 (registered sex offenders), Category 2 (offenders sentenced to 12 months or more for a violent offence), Category 3 (Other dangerous offenders) and Category 4 (terrorism-connected offenders). A person who is fixated on violence but has not yet offended falls outside these criteria.
7. While in the National MAPPA Research we did not use, define, or examine the term 'violence fixated individuals' (VFIs), the MAPPA research can speak to, with appropriate caution, the general capacity of MAPPA's assessment architecture to accommodate individuals whose risk indicators fall outside the frameworks the system was built around:

- The Process Effectiveness Report's analysis of 40 declined Category 3 referrals [SL/02] found that in 60% of cases (24 of 40) the research team considered the individual should have met Category 3 criteria based on the 2021 guidance, and that referrals were most often declined on the basis that the case "did not meet the threshold for Level 2 management" or that "it was not clear what value MAPPA management would bring." This indicated that MAPPA's category and level thresholds could struggle to accommodate risk presentations that did not map neatly onto its existing offence-based criteria, which may be instructive by analogy for VFIs, whose risk indicators (fixation, grievance, ideology-agnostic violence interest) likewise sit outside conventional offence-based risk tools. PSL000001

PSL000002

- The Process Effectiveness and Serious Case Review [SL/01] reports found that risk assessment tools in routine MAPPA use (e.g., OASys, ARMS) are geared to sexual and violent reoffending risk as conventionally defined, and that practitioners across agencies (notably Prison Service and mental health) reported difficulty applying MAPPA's existing frameworks to presentations that fell outside their design (Process Effectiveness Report, Theme 1).

Information sharing

8. In the national MAPPA research, information sharing was identified as a central and persistent practice gap. The Serious Case Review Report found information sharing PSL000001 [SL/01] and disclosure to be one of the most frequently occurring gaps in practice across the 19 SCRs analysed, spanning omissions between MAPPA panels and GPs, failures to disclose relevant risk to the families of MAPPA-managed individuals, and gaps involving Probation, substance misuse services, Children's Social Care, the Prison Service, Youth Offending Services (YOS), disability teams and health agencies.

9. The Process Effectiveness Report found that practitioners frequently lacked PSL000002 confidence [SL/02] about what could legally be shared, with whom, and for what purpose, and that this uncertainty could lead to defensive, overly cautious practice, described as 'sitting on' relevant information out of data protection concerns. Parole Board practitioners reported that MAPPA-held information often did not reach hearings, with adverse consequences for risk-informed decision-making.

10. Jonathan Hall QC's Independent Review of MAPPA (2020), examining terrorism and terrorism-risk offenders, made comparable findings regarding confidentiality barriers to information sharing, a parallel that may be directly relevant to the Inquiry's VFI focus, given the structural (rather than offence-specific) nature of the barrier identified.

11. On a legal basis, the MAPPA guidance updated in May 2022, together with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, was reported by practitioners in the research to represent an attempt to clarify these matters by extending information-sharing cover to "all agencies which may contribute to the assessment and management of the risk presented by MAPPA offenders." Whether this has resolved the confidence gap identified in the research would need to be tested with practitioners operating under the current guidance; our fieldwork pre-dates it.

Multi-agency arrangements

12. The MAPPA research did not examine MAPPA's management of VFIs as a category, so I cannot speak directly to whether current arrangements are effective in managing VFI risk specifically, including for those under 18 or under 25. I can, however, offer directly relevant evidence on MAPPA's general effectiveness in managing individuals as well as through points of heightened risk and across agency boundaries, which the Inquiry may wish to weigh in considering whether the same structural features would serve VFI management well.

13. In the National MAPPA Research, an analysis of proven re-offending for 39,501 MAPPA-managed individuals [SL/03] found that overall, MAPPA was associated with PSL000003 meaningfully lower reoffending than the general offending population, a 12.3% one-year proven reoffending rate for the whole MAPPA sample versus 30.0-31.3% nationally, rising to 28.1% at five years.

14. It may be useful to look more closely at Category 3, "other dangerous individuals" (1,357 of 39,501 individuals, or 3.44%) in particular. Category 3 is the discretionary category that covers people who don't meet the sentence-length thresholds for Category 1 or 2, but whose offending indicates a risk of serious harm and who the responsible authority judges need active multi-agency management. Because it's criteria-based on risk, it's structurally the most flexible of the four categories and, in principle, the one that could absorb people whose primary concern is fixation-driven risk rather than offence type. In the research I found that Category 3 individuals had:

- The highest proven reoffending rate of any category at every time point: 41.9% at 1 year, 60.1% at 3 years, 66.2% at 5 years, more than three times the Category 1 and 2 rates (which sat around 10-12% at one year and 25-27% at five years).
- The fastest time to first reoffence, 0.36 years on average at the one-year mark, versus 0.48 (Cat 1) and 0.53 (Cat 2), meaning Category 3 individuals who reoffend do so soonest.
- The highest reoffending frequency, an average of 4.19 further offences within the first year, rising to 10.26 by year five, well above Categories 1 and 2.
- The highest hazard ratio in the Cox proportional hazards model ($e\beta = 1.79$), 1.2 times higher than Category 1 and considerably higher than Category 2 (0.64), statistically the group most likely to reoffend, controlling for other factors.

15. These findings likely reflect who ends up in Category 3 rather than necessarily a failure of the arrangements themselves.

16. The MAPPA research also identified two 'cliff edge' transition points as the clearest structural weak points in MAPPA's multi-agency coordination: (i) transfer of management from Youth Offending Services to Probation Service supervision at age 18, and (ii) transfer of a managed individual between MAPPA areas. The Process Effectiveness Report found practitioners considered the YOS-to-Probation transition **PSL000002** [SL/02] to involve an abrupt withdrawal of wrap-around support at precisely the point (age 18, close to the peak age of offending identified in the Proven Reoffending Report) where risk is often highest. The SCR Report found the same transition point **PSL000001** implicated [SL/01] in occurrences of serious further harm, and the Process Effectiveness Report further found that MAPPA-area transfers had, in the sample studied, resulted in individuals arriving in a new area with no advance multi-agency planning, in at least one case preceding a fatal serious further offence.

17. On coordination of management plans generally the SCR Report found that 73% of individuals reviewed were led by the Probation Service, 21% by Police, and 5% by YOS, indicating lead-agency allocation was functioning as intended in the large majority of cases, but also found recurrent gaps in the effective coordination of Risk Management Plans (RMPs) across agencies, including failure to update RMPs, actions agreed at panel not being progressed, and (per the Process Effectiveness Report's document analysis) updated risk information failing to reach the RMP in 31% of the 48 cases sampled.

18. In relation to good practice in risk management, practitioners in the Process Effectiveness Report frequently used a 'jigsaw' analogy where individual agencies hold pieces of information which are incomplete until shared and assembled through MAPPA. Panel meetings were widely regarded as the essential forum for reconciling differing agency risk assessments into a common position. This was seen as a genuine strength; MAPPA was described by one practitioner as capable of "saving lives" and functioning to secure engagement from agencies who would not otherwise cooperate on a single-agency basis.

19. However, the research also found that MAPPA's effective functioning could be overly dependent on well-established personal relationships between practitioners built up over years, rather than on the formal structure itself. Where such relationships existed, information flowed relatively efficiently; where they did not (new practitioners, high staff turnover), information sharing and challenge at panel meetings could both suffer. This is arguably the central finding bearing on the Inquiry's question about whether MAPPA is 'genuinely intelligence-led' as opposed to an information-sharing forum contingent on goodwill: the evidence suggests MAPPA operates effectively as an information-sharing and negotiation forum, but its capacity to function as a genuinely intelligence-led system is not structurally guaranteed.

20. In the research, MAPPA practitioners highlighted several features that could negatively impact its efficacy in risk management. These included, a 'culture of blame' following high-profile SCRs, which practitioners felt was driving risk-averse, defensive decision-making at the expense of professional judgement and undermining the learning function of SCRs themselves; under-resourcing of MAPPA administration, cited by practitioners as producing delays, missed invitations to meetings, and inconsistency; and gaps in panel meeting minutes and RMPs: the Process Effectiveness Report's document analysis found that updated risk information failed to reach the RMP in 31% of sampled cases, agreed actions were not documented as completed in 27% of cases, and contingency plans lacked detail on risk-escalating factors in 35% of cases.

21. The MAPPA research identified meaningful variation in practice across MAPPA areas. Category 3 referral practice varied substantially: three of five sample areas had rejected a substantial proportion of referrals the research team judged should have been accepted (concentrated in domestic abuse and sexually-motivated cases), while two areas with different local policies had seen 50% increases in the number of individuals managed under Category 3. The quality and completeness of SCRs also varied considerably between areas, reflecting the absence of prescriptive national guidance on SCR conduct. Both reports recommended national-level standardisation (training, thresholding guidance, and quality assurance) as a corrective.

22. Under-resourcing was a recurring and material theme across the research. Strategic Management Board (SMB) chairs reported an absence of a clear resourcing formula, preventing them from making the case for greater agency investment; several practitioners described MAPPA's functioning as reliant on individual goodwill rather than a properly resourced model. Specific manifestations identified included: under-resourced MAPPA administration; a shortage of Probation staff capacity affecting supervision appointments; insufficient time at panel meetings for full case discussion; oversubscription of accredited interventions and rehabilitation programmes, limiting their consideration in risk management planning; and a national shortage of suitable accommodation, which the research found was itself driving unnecessary escalation of cases to Level 2/3 and, in some instances, out-of-area relocation away from prosocial support networks, itself a risk-increasing factor.

23. The following goes beyond the direct evidence of the research and reflects my professional opinion, extrapolating from the general MAPPA findings set out above, consistent with the evidential caution set out at paragraph 4 above. In my opinion, MAPPA in its current form is not the most appropriate multi-agency structure to manage VFIs. Instead, a bespoke structure that takes MAPPA's core architecture (a statutory responsible authority, defined review levels, a duty-to-cooperate list of agencies, and a formal case-review mechanism), but detaches eligibility from conviction and attaches it instead to a concern threshold. This would let it: draw on MASH-style multi-source referral as the intake mechanism; assign a case owner unconnected to school enrolment or care-episode status; and build in a standing review cadence from first referral rather than from conviction.

24. On the feasibility of senior staff within MAPPA holding both the experience/skills and the time to coordinate multi-agency management, the research found a specific and recurring tension at Level 3, where the seniority required for attendance did not reliably correspond to detailed case knowledge, with senior representatives at times unable to speak meaningfully to operational realities and consequently being tasked with unachievable actions. This is directly relevant evidence that formal seniority and practical case-management capacity are not the same thing, and that a duty-holder model would need to resolve this tension explicitly rather than assume seniority confers the necessary operational understanding.

25. In relation to the development of a single, shared multi-agency risk assessment tool, the MAPPA research offers a partial precedent rather than a direct answer. The Four Pillars RMP model (Supervision; Monitoring and Control; Interventions and Treatment; Victim Safety Planning), developed following the 2011 joint inspection, has since been adopted as a single standardised template across all 42 MAPPA areas, evidence that a shared framework can achieve national uptake. However, the Process Effectiveness Report's analysis of 48 completed RMPs under this shared template found recurring failures in practice: the standardised form did not, in itself, prevent risk-relevant information from failing to reach the document, actions being left unrecorded, or contingency planning being left blank. This suggests that a shared tool is a necessary but not sufficient step, without parallel investment in quality assurance, training, and manageable document design (the Joint Thematic Inspection separately found the equivalent MAPPA B template 'cumbersome,' with current information difficult to distinguish from historic entries), a shared tool risks standardising the gaps in practice rather than resolving them.
26. A culture of ownership was a significant theme in the MAPPA research. Practitioners described a widespread tendency to escalate cases to Level 2 partly as a means of sharing or deflecting individual accountability ("if I refer it to Level 2 then if anything goes wrong, it's not my fault, it's on the agencies"), attributed to a broader 'culture of blame' following high-profile SCRs. The SCR Report separately identified a recurring lack of 'professional curiosity', an unwillingness to probe further or follow up on risk indicators, as a distinct and frequently cited practice gap, with no examples of good practice on this theme identified across the 19 SCRs sampled.
27. My view is that the development of a shared tool is defensible, but only as one component of a wider structure. Drawing on the MAPPA research, the importance of ensuring consistent training and application across very differently resourced sectors, and resolving ownership and accountability would be critical to its success.

Lessons from other statutory review frameworks PSL000001

28. The SCR Report explicitly benchmarked its findings [SL/01] against equivalent reviews in other statutory frameworks, Domestic Homicide Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, and Adult Safeguarding Reviews, and found the practice gaps identified in MAPPA SCRs were largely consistent with those found across these other review types, rather than distinctive to MAPPA: recording and documentation issues, risk assessment shortfalls, and information-sharing gaps recur across all four frameworks. This suggests that many of the gaps identified were structural features of multi-agency statutory review generally, rather than MAPPA-specific failures, meaning solutions developed for Domestic Homicide Reviews or Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (for example, more prescriptive statutory guidance on review conduct, which MAPPA's SCR guidance lacked by comparison) may be directly transferable.

Other relevant matters

29. In the interest of a candid account, I would highlight three matters bearing on how the Inquiry weighs this evidence:
30. Sample size and currency: the underlying qualitative fieldwork (five MAPPA areas; 105 practitioners; 19 SCRs; 40 declined referrals; 48 RMPs) is not small for multi-agency research, but nor is it necessarily representative of all 42 MAPPA areas, findings should be treated as indicative rather than definitive. Fieldwork for the Process Effectiveness Report was also conducted [SL/02] between April and October 2021 during pandemic disruption to the criminal justice system, and both reports PSL000002

were published against the November 2021 MAPPA guidance, which has since been updated in ways that may have addressed some of the gaps identified.

31. The Ministry of Justice have subsequently implemented several of the recommendations made in the National MAPPA Research, which may have addressed some of the issues raised by the research.
32. The VFI evidence gap: as set out at the outset, I cannot offer direct evidence on VFI identification, definition, or MAPPA's specific capacity to manage this cohort.

Statement of Truth

33. 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 in its truth.

Signed: **Signature**

Dated: 27th July 2026

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Exhibit No.	Inquiry reference No.	Document description
1	PSL000001	The National MAPPA Research: Serious Case Review Report (Mann, Lundrigan & Kerss, April 2023)
2	PSL000002	The National MAPPA Research: Process Effectiveness Report (Mann & Lundrigan, April 2023)
3	PSL000003	The National MAPPA Research: Proven Reoffending Report (Lundrigan, Mann & Specht, April 2023)