

# The Evaluation of the Implementation of Stable and Acute 2007 in Scotland

*Working towards a Safer Scotland*



**RMA**

Risk Management Authority



# Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

The evaluation of the implementation of Stable and Acute 2007 (SA07) in Scotland has generated a significant degree of positive feedback from practitioners involved in the introduction of this risk instrument to practice in Scotland. In particular, the method of joint delivery of training highlighted benefits from participants in developing shared understandings of roles and responsibilities.

This report highlights a number of potential learning points in relation to implementation of national initiatives and quality assurance approaches in risk practice and a number of specific SA07 recommendations. Recommendations from the study were submitted to the Framework for Risk Assessment, Management and Evaluation (FRAME) Working Group and the phase of quality assurance previously agreed in August 2010 is ongoing. The recommendations for improvement span five areas. They are:

- **Implementation**
- **Purposeful use of SA07**
- **Training**
- **Quality Assurance**
- **Evaluation/Research**

These recommendations reflect what can be learnt through the process of implementation. In particular, support for training as part of a continued professional development approach to risk practice and the introduction of agreed quality assurance measures at practitioner, agency and multi-agency levels.

This report contains recommendations on the use and application of Stable and Acute 2007 within specific roles and contexts, to promote the purposeful use of the instrument by agencies as part of the risk assessment process.

The report concludes with the recommendation for the development of normative research data at national level to inform the evidence base upon which the responsible use of this instrument in Scotland should be applied. This is consistent with the FRAME practice standard of Quality Assurance which provides: "commitment will to wider scale evaluation of ... associated initiatives. Such evaluation will be used to inform national improvement and contribute to the evidence base."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Framework for Risk Assessment, Management and Evaluation: FRAME (2011). Standard 5- Quality Assurance, p80

# Introduction

In Scotland, as in other jurisdictions many current policies and initiatives are based on an assumption that community supervision can reduce the risk posed by sexual offenders. However, to do so, this involves identifying and addressing the factors that contribute to offending (Hanson et al., 2007). Sexual and indeed violent offenders are rarely the concern of one agency alone, and in Scotland the management of sex offenders is a positive example of multi-agency working.<sup>2</sup> Within the field of multi-agency public protection each agency and professional group has a different and valuable role in the collaborative management of the offender. Therefore, an important task is to ensure that there is a shared understanding of risk and its assessment upon which agencies can base their single and collective decision making and contribute to effective and collaborative practice.

## Background

One element of risk assessment is the identification of risk factors and this can be supported by the use of a range of risk tools. The Scottish Government has been working with the Scottish Police Forces, Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and Criminal Justice Social Work (CJSW) to develop a consistent approach to the risk assessment and management of sexual offenders<sup>3</sup>, in response to the Cosgrove<sup>4</sup> report of 2001. The Expert Panel on Sex Offending made recommendations including the need for a shared approach to risk assessment that incorporated appropriate tools.

Taking forward these recommendations the agencies agreed on a two-stage assessment process: a broad risk classification derived from the application of a static actuarial instrument; and an assessment of dynamic factors. Following the introduction of Risk Matrix 2000 in 2002, representatives of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW) and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) raised the issue of developing a dynamic risk assessment tool to support Risk Matrix 2000, which could enhance the accuracy and consistency of the assessment of sexual offenders' risk factors. As a result, the multi-agency Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management Steering Group<sup>5</sup> agreed in August of 2006 that Stable and Acute 2000 would be the second stage tool for the assessment of sex offenders in Scotland. This opened the way for both the development of the tool and the implementation programme for the key criminal justice agencies. In June 2007, representatives from CJSW, Police and SPS were selected and trained as multi-agency trainers in the application of SA07 and the instrument was 'rolled out' nationally between August and November 2007.

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<sup>2</sup> Social Work Inspection Agency. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons & Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland. (2009). Multi-agency Inspection: Assessing and managing offenders who present a high risk of serious harm. Edinburgh: Social Work Inspection agency.

<sup>3</sup> Circular No JD/15/2006 - Updated March 2007 - Implementation of the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in Scotland

<sup>4</sup> Cosgrove (2001) Reducing the Risk – Improving the response to sex offending: Report of the Expert Panel on Sex Offending

<sup>5</sup> Including representation from ADSW, ACPOS, SPS, Social Work Inspection Agency, Risk Management Authority and Scottish Government

In terms of the subsequent implementation timescales, it was decided that Criminal Justice Social Workers and the Police would assess *all* registered sex offenders using SA07 by end of October 2008.<sup>6</sup> Similar arrangements were put in place in relation to the Scottish Prison Service.

Subsequently, the Scottish Government's Effective Practice Unit<sup>7</sup> sought feedback from police, criminal justice social work and prison colleagues on their experience of the roll-out. Colleagues from the police expressed the following concerns:

***"The principles of offender management make it clear that resources should be concentrated on the offenders presenting the highest risk. The application of SA07 to all registered sex offenders spread resources thinly and compromised this important principle."***

Therefore, initial feedback highlighted some issues in the application of the instrument. Subsequently, a multi-agency thematic inspection on high risk offenders<sup>8</sup> also underlined a number of issues which suggest a lack of clarity as to the relative roles of Risk Matrix 2000 and SA07 in the risk assessment process. Consequently, since 2009, the agencies have been working together to develop a shared framework for risk practice that sets standards and provides guidelines for consistent and defensible assessment and management.

The current paper reports on an examination of the early implementation of the Stable and Acute tool with reference to other associated developments.

### **A brief summary of relevant literature**

Historically, the factors incorporated into sex offender risk instruments have been mainly static in nature. A range of static risk assessment tools are available for use with sexual offenders with Risk Matrix 2000<sup>9</sup> being the most commonly used in the UK. Risk Matrix 2000 draws on factual and historical information on an individual offender and provides a statistical estimate of risk of reconviction for a group with similar characteristics. It can be purposeful as one component of a comprehensive risk assessment process<sup>10</sup>, or as a brief guide in routine supervision decisions<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, it can provide practitioners with a relatively objective scan of risk that can be scored relatively quickly. However, it does have inherent limitations. The debate about the applicability of group data to an individual has

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6 Scottish Government (2009). Implementation of Stable and Acute, 2007. JD Circular No: JD/13/2007. Scottish Government Publications.

7 Scottish Government (2009). Implementation of Stable and Acute, 2007. JD Circular No: JD/13/2007. Scottish Government Publications

<sup>8</sup> Social Work Inspection Agency. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons & Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland. (2009). Multi-agency Inspection: Assessing and managing offenders who present a high risk of serious harm. Edinburgh: Social Work Inspection agency.

<sup>9</sup> Hanson, R. K., & Thornton, D. (2000). Improving risk assessments for sex offenders: A comparison of three actuarial scales. *Law and Human Behaviour*, 24, 119-136.

<sup>10</sup> Grubin D (2008). Validation of Risk Matrix 2000 for use in Scotland.

<sup>11</sup> Craig, L A Thornton, D & Beech A & Browne, K. D (2007) The relationship of statistical and psychological risk markers to sexual reconviction. *Criminal Justice and Behaviour*, 34, 314-329.

been debated over decades<sup>12</sup> and the static nature of the instrument limits its utility in understanding and responding to an individual in their current context.

As none of the items within Risk Matrix 2000 are intended to measure psychologically meaningful constructs, using SA07 can guide appropriate and individualised interventions when required.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, to understand risk in the current context and measure change, assessors require knowledge of dynamic (changeable) risk factors. Two types of dynamic factors have been cited in the literature as distinguished by their durability or propensity for change; these are referred to as 'Acute dynamic factors' and 'Stable Dynamic Factors'. Acute dynamic risk factors (e.g., intoxication, disengagement from supervision) are highly transient conditions which can change over a period of weeks, days or even hours. These factors are characterised as environmental and intrapersonal stresses, conditions, or events that have been shown by previous research to be related to imminent sexual re-offending. Stable dynamic risk factors (e.g., substance misuse, negative peer influences or antisocial attitudes) are personal skill deficits or behaviours that correlate with sexual recidivism but may be addressed through treatment and supervision.

Hanson et al. (2007) note that many decisions made by community supervision officers are based on dynamic risk factors (e.g., amenability to supervision), although research on dynamic factors is much less developed than that of their static counterparts. The 'Dynamic Supervision Project', which led to the development of the SA07, aimed to advance risk assessment for sexual offenders by identifying relevant stable and acute dynamic risk factors for sexual offenders on community supervision. These were subsequently incorporated into two-stage risk assessment instruments and tested in a five-year longitudinal study<sup>14</sup> with support from the Canadian Correctional Services.

The Dynamic Supervision Project involved a rigorous exploration of risk assessment methodology for sexual offenders. The risk factors selected for the study were drawn from previous research<sup>15</sup> and empirically validated risk assessment tools which incorporated dynamic risk factors (e.g., The Sex Offender Need Assessment Rating (SONAR), Hanson & Harris, 2001).<sup>16</sup>

After identifying what were understood to be the most prevalent dynamic risk factors for sexual recidivism, a measure of stable risk factors (Stable-2000) and a measure of acute risk factors (Acute-2000) were developed. After evaluation and revision a revised form of the instrument was released and is now referred to as Stable 2007 and Acute 2007 (SA07).

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12 Cooke, D. J & Michie, C (2007). Limitations of Diagnostic Precision and Predictive Utility in the Individual Case: A Challenge for Forensic Practice. *Law and Human Behaviour*, 34 (4), 259-274

13 Hanson, R. K & Morton-Bourgon, K. E (2009) The Accuracy of Recidivism Risk Assessments for sexual Offenders: A Meta Analysis of 118 Prediction Studies. *Psychological Assessment*, 21(1), 1-21.

14 Hanson et al. (2007) Assessing the risk of sexual offenders on community supervision: The Dynamic Supervision Project.

15 Hanson, R. K., & Harris, A. J. R. (2000). Where should we intervene? Dynamic predictors of sex offense recidivism. *Justice and Behavior*, 27, 6-35.

16 Hanson, R. K., & Harris, A. J. R. (2001). A structured approach to evaluating change among sexual offenders. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 13, 105-122.

The Dynamic Supervision Project's evaluation study <sup>17</sup> reported that the scales could be used consistently by community supervision officers as shown by findings of acceptable inter-rater reliability. While the original Stable and Acute 2000 instrument had shown adequate levels of predictive validity, the revised 2007 risk categories were strongly associated with re-offending particularly when applied by officers with a conscientious approach to using the scoring guidance.

The international interest in these measures has been such that a number of jurisdictions, including Scotland, adopted them before the publication of the evaluation study. Recent research<sup>18</sup> now provides further validation evidence. Eher et al. with a sample of 263 adult male prison released sexual offenders (2010; 2011) present support for the utility of the Stable 2007 in risk prediction of sexual offenders and its inter-rater reliability. Followed up for an average of 6.4 years Stable 2007 scores were not only found to predict sexual offence but also general and violent offence.

However, McNaughton et al. (2010) evaluated a pilot study of SA07 conducted in England and Wales. Their sample consisted of 50 individuals who took part in interviews across 10 case study areas and 14 officers who took part in an inter-rater reliability exercise. Their research focused on the application of the tool and while it showed promise a number of implementation issues were identified, in particular in this pilot study the inter-rater reliability was found to be poor. It was recognised by the authors that a number of developments would be needed to improve implementation if the tool was to be adopted more widely. For example, sound selection, training and ongoing support of staff; inter-rater reliability exercises and further robust research activity were cited as factors that would be essential to successful implementation.

In summary, the literature highlights that early research findings indicate adequate predictive accuracy and inter-rater reliability in a small number of Canadian and European demonstration and research studies. However, a UK pilot study of the instruments' application highlights questions about implementation practice that are particularly pertinent to this preliminary Scottish study.

### **The Importance of Implementation**

Learning from a number of initiatives in the UK, USA and Canada, there is a growing awareness of the gap between the success of measures and approaches when they are tested in 'ideal' conditions, and that which is achieved in practice. Several studies point to problems and failings in implementation whereby adoption of practices or programmes that, in design, conform to the principles of risk, needs and responsivity but as they are not implemented with integrity are less successful (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004 & Andrews, 2006). It is crucial that practitioners have a clear understanding of the instrument and its administration. Andrews et al. (2006) highlight that while a meta analysis can inform us statistically about the variance in validity estimates, the training, experience and clinical supervision of users may also be important moderators of predictive criterion validity.

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<sup>17</sup> Hanson, R.K., Harris, A.J.R., Scott, T., & Helmus, L. (2007). Assessing the risk of sexual offenders on community supervision: The Dynamic Supervision Project. User Report No. 2007-05. Ottawa: Public Safety Canada.

<sup>18</sup> McNaughton et al. (2010) and Eher et al. (2011)

The adoption of well developed and tested methods appears straightforward and logical but the reality is that the degree of application, rigour and commitment that is required for successful implementation is often defied by the reality of resource constrained and politically high profile environments where early solutions are sought. (Gendreau, Goggin and Smith, 2000). Commitment to the implementation, their professional background and value base are all influential factors (Haas, and De Tardo-Bora, 2009).

Bonta and colleagues (2001) relate the principles of implementation integrity to the introduction of new risk assessment procedures, advocating considered selection of the instrument, planning, management commitment, staff training and engagement and quality assurance practices at an organisational level. Studies highlight the positive effect on practice that occurs when such matters are attended to (Lowenkamp, Latessa and Smith, 2006) as others demonstrate the deficit when they are not, in particular the importance of adequate and timely training (Austin, Coleman, Peyton and Johnson, 2003). Each of the above studies highlight that the provision of training alone is essential but insufficient. Training events need to be evaluated to ascertain participant satisfaction and value and to establish whether the desired learning outcomes were achieved in terms of skills and knowledge acquisition. Thereafter, the transfer of that learning to practice and its retention over time need evaluation, as does the impact of the learning on the desired client/policy outcomes.

Parry and Berdie (2004) suggest that such evaluation provides a "chain of evidence". They identify that as the learning moves further from the initial training environment there are more factors that may impede the transfer to practice, and influence the achievement of its objectives.

Andrews (2006) highlights the influence that the 'visibility' of evaluation has on better outcomes. Evaluation, quality assurance and continuous improvement are closely linked. Evaluation that is ingrained at the start of an initiative has the capacity not only to demonstrate the relative degrees of success and failure at a later stage but to positively influence the outcomes by flagging quality issues at an early stage to encourage improvement. Andrews advises further to precede implementations with a pilot, to iron out the "bugs" at the outset and to engage, actively seek and respect the views of those involved.

# Aims and objectives

The aim of the study from October 2009 to February 2011 was to examine the implementation of the SA07 in a number of Scottish areas. The original objectives of the study were to:

- Evaluate the contribution of SA07 to risk assessment and management of sexual offenders in Scotland from a practitioner and managers perspective.
- Examine scoring practice.
- Identify any difficulties or examples of good practice.
- Make recommendations for improvement in practice and quality assurance.
- Disseminate findings to agencies.

## Methodology

The study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods over three phases:

### **Phase 1 (October 2009 - December 2010)**

- Literature review (this was also repeated during subsequent phases of study)
- Interviews with practitioners/managers (n- 60)

### **Phase 2 (December 2009)**

- Examination of scoring practice (n- 146)

### **Phase 3 (August 2010 - February 2011)**

- Focus groups. (n-36)
- National trainers focus groups (n-3)

## **Phase 1**

Following the literature review, phase 1 of the study involved semi-structured interviews (Appendix 1) with a representative sample (60) of key individuals from three Criminal Justice Social Work local authority areas and police offender manager services in Fife, Strathclyde and Tayside and the Scottish Prison Service (SPS).

## **Phase 2**

The scoring practice exercise involved 146 multi agency public protection practitioners, including:

- Police Public Protection Unit (n-85)
- Criminal Justice Social Work Glasgow (n-12)
- Criminal Justice Social Work Tayside (n-19)
- Criminal Justice Social Work Fife (n-28) and
- HMP Barlinnie (n- 2).

They were given a fictitious case study which included sufficient detail to score both the Stable and Acute. The results were then entered into the statistical package SPSS to allow comparisons between the correct score (according to the author) and the practitioner score. Analysis allowed problematic items on the SA07 to be identified and it informed feedback for practitioners on issues arising through implementation.

The results from the scoring exercise were then examined. This was done in order to see how individual items for both the Stable and Acute component were scored. An investigation into the itemised scoring amongst the different professions was also carried out using a one way analysis of variance. Karl Hanson reviewed these initial findings and the application of the methodology and an interim report was provided to the stakeholder group responsible for the oversight of SA07 in August 2010. (Framework for Risk Assessment, Management and Evaluation Working Group<sup>19</sup>)

### **Phase 3**

During phase 3 of the study, the FRAME Working Group requested that the RMA undertake follow-on regional focus groups to gain further understanding of the reasoning for scoring, to address scoring errors and provide information on the accurate scoring of each item. The focus groups included practitioners who had originally carried out the scoring exercise from Tayside, Fife and Strathclyde. They ranged in size from four to seventeen practitioners (total n- 36). In addition, in two events the national trainers formed a focus group to gauge their responses to emerging findings from the research and to examine their experience of the implementation process of SA07 in Scotland. They recognised the problem areas that practitioners were reporting and provided a number of recommendations for quality control to support the consistent delivery of training.

In both August 2010 and February 2011, the Framework for Risk Assessment Management and Evaluation Working Group requested a range of follow up actions which extended the objectives of the initial study. This was in line with the FRAME policy objectives to:

- ***Inform policy decisions relating to risk assessment and management with learning from national and international research and practice and***
- ***Promote implementation integrity by incorporating agreed quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms.***

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<sup>19</sup> The Working Group membership comprised the Scottish Government, Risk Management Authority, Social Work Inspection Agency, Association of Chief Police Officers, Association of Directors of Social Work, Scottish Prison Service, Chief Officer's Group, NHS Scotland, Skills for Justice Scotland and CJA Training and Development

# Findings

## *Phase 1: Interviews with practitioners and managers*

The findings presented here are drawn directly from the analysis of the interview data provided by the interviewees. After analysing the transcripts six themes and several related sub-themes were identified, as presented below. They are presented alongside an example which serves to represent the theme and corresponding sub-themes.

Theme	Sub-theme	Example
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration</li> <li>• User confidence</li> <li>• Refresher training</li> </ul>	<p>"In terms of the training, I think it's been an invaluable contribution, receiving the training and understanding the SA07, it allows me to perform my role, definitely".</p> <p>"It's just that I think my training's not sufficient. I mean, I'd like to know why are we specifically asking questions, what should we be looking for".</p> <p>"Personally, I would like some kind of refresher cos I think my training was rushed."</p>
Impact on workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased workload</li> <li>• Questioning of annual stable assessments</li> </ul>	<p>"There's not enough time and resources to do what we're meant to do, never mind for SA07s".</p>
SA07 administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoring issues</li> <li>• Sex offender sub groups</li> </ul>	<p>"There are some people particularly public indecency, as long as they live and breathe there are victims out there. We can't keep scoring them a 1. it's like there have been no victims identified since the last visit".</p>
Joint agency working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint assessments</li> </ul>	<p>"I wouldn't like to think that we were doing it on our own. No. I think it has to be done - I think it has to be a shared responsibility..."</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li>   <li>• ViSOR</li> </ul>	<p>It's not something you can sit down and one person alone could decide that risk level. I think that would be highly risky".</p> <p>"There is a need to ensure training is delivered in a consistent manner. Since the initial training was carried out, confusion has existed in the requirements around 'joint assessment"</p> <p>"The concept of 'joint working' had different connotations across regions and organisations, ranging from the exchange of emails, comparing and reaching consensus on SA07 scoring outcomes to jointly assessing the offender. Agency representatives explained that this variation may be due to a lack of clear guidelines from the outset."</p>
Informing offender management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the role of SA07</li>   <li>• Validity of self-report information</li>   <li>• Benefits of SA07</li>   <li>• Monitoring change</li>   <li>• Contribution to MAPPA meetings</li> </ul>	<p>"I think there's still some confusion about how you can combine the two [RM2000 and SA07] but that's maybe just down to training more than anything else"</p> <p>"For the first year I think it's good after that then you don't know if you're writing up a true reflection or not because they know the answers to give you".</p> <p>"As with everything it depends how it's used if you actually take the time to break it down and look at the areas that are causing concern you can do stuff about it. We're just filling it in and not actually interpreting it and acting on it appropriately".</p>

Offender experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offender understanding</li> <li>• Supervisor/offender relationship</li> <li>• Offender self-management</li> </ul>	<p>“Part of good practice would be to bring the assessment out and let them understand. We’ll try and allow them, enable them to understand our processes and why we are doing this so that we can ensure that we give them the correct level of support”.</p>
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From the above table it can be seen that the themes generally correspond to how the training is delivered, the practicalities of using a new assessment tool and engagement with other agencies and the offender.

Generally, those who had the lengthier training felt the training was informative but some would have liked longer sessions. All practitioners recognise that their training needs to be kept up to date, that refresher training would be beneficial and that it should address the practical issues facing practitioners in the police, criminal justice social work and prison settings.

Understanding the rationale for the introduction of SA07 differed across agencies. There was also a feeling amongst the practitioners that there was a lack of clarity in relation to the SA07’s role in the overall risk assessment process. In particular, a number of practitioners queried how information drawn from their use of SA07 should be used in conjunction with other risk assessment tools. (e.g. RM2K.) Participants sought clarification of the purpose each instruments serves in informing meaningful risk assessment and communication.

**Recommendation – Purposeful use:**

Agencies clarify their purpose in using RM2K and SA07 as part of the risk assessment process

**Recommendation – Purposeful use:**

Briefing is provided for managers/supervisors/mentors on the purpose and role of RM2K/SA07

**Recommendation – Purposeful use:**

The justice circular for the Implementation of the second risk assessment tool for use with sex offenders, stable and Acute 2007 (Circular No: JD/13/2007) be revised to include clarification of section on “Integration of risk assessment tools - Risk Matrix 2000.”

It appears that attitudes towards the instrument are influenced from the outset by one’s understanding of the rationale for the introduction of the tool in the overall risk management process. However, an appreciation of the tools contribution was derived from those who have embedded it into their practice rather than view it as an overhaul of the risk assessment process.

**Recommendation - Implementation:**

Pre-course briefing is adapted to establish the context and scope of the SA07 training (including the rationale for the introduction of SA07, its role in the risk assessment process, and clarifying the learning outcomes for participants) and line managers prepare staff for attendance

A proportion of the practitioners noted problems when scoring SA07. In particular, victim access and substance abuse appeared to cause some confusion. For example, the former Acute scoring guide did perhaps create some confusion with regard to victim access. The assessor was expected to differentiate between 'little' opportunity, 'normal' situations and 'repeat' opportunity. If the distinguishing element is an offenders intentions some felt that this is a factor that they would find difficult to gauge. This feedback was replicated within Phase 3 of the study.

In addition, it emerged that some practitioners within the Police had initially felt uneasy in asking the offender about their sexual behaviours, although it was acknowledged that this changed as their confidence grew. Similarly both groups of staff questioned the reliability of self-report information derived from interviews.

Further training on interview techniques aimed at dealing with sensitive issues was requested by some. However, the findings generally support a requirement that those trained to use risk instruments have a grounding in assessment and interviewing practice, an understanding of the aetiology of sex offending and the relevance of risk factors. The brevity of the SA07 training suggest that it should be regarded as training in the application of a tool and not as a grounding in the risk assessment of sex offenders.

**Recommendation - Implementation**

Agencies establish their staff's learning needs in relation to the risk assessment of sex offenders. (This may include specific grounding in risk practice, understanding sexual offending, training on interview techniques, dealing with sensitive issues/'deniers' etc)

**Recommendation - Training:**

Feedback is provided to the authors of the tool in relation to the scoring guidance and ambiguities identified by participants and trainers.

**Recommendation - Training:**

A review of the revised SA07 scoring guidance is undertaken in relation to its application in the Scottish context.

Joint assessments between agencies were perceived as a positive development, contributing to both inter-agency cooperation and offender management. It was highlighted that both social work and the police value the contribution of each others profession as it offers a different perspective, adding to the quality of the assessment.

However, a number of respondents questioned the ambiguity of the wording in relation within the circular and messages provided during training on assessments/interviews being required to be undertaken by Police and Criminal Justice Social Work.

**Recommendation - Purposeful use:**

The justice circular for the Implementation of the second risk assessment tool for use with sex offenders, stable and Acute 2007 (Circular No: JD/13/2007) be revised to ensure that the guidance on "Joint Risk Assessment" ensures the degree of partnership working is commensurate to the risk and complexities of the case.

Supporting the feedback received in the EPU audit and the Multi-agency Inspection, participants in the study echoed concerns regarding the purposeful use of SA07 for Public Protection officers.

Many police officers commented that applying the 'stable' part of SA07 with MAPPA level 1 offenders not subject to social work supervision generated information about the individual offence-related needs of the offender but police are not in a position to arrange treatment programmes. Similarly, many police officers queried whether applying the 'stable' part of SA07 with MAPPA level 1 offenders not subject to social work supervision supported their role as police officers who were neither clinically trained or able to respond to some of the identified treatment targets. This feedback supported concern raised by practitioners during the 2009 multi agency inspection, that in these circumstances, using SA07 was time consuming and did not yield identifiable benefits for Police practice.

**Recommendation - Purposeful use:**

Review with the Police the appropriateness of Stable and Acute 2007 to the role of Public Protection officers

It was evident from the interviews that the contribution of the SA07 to MAPPA meetings was varied and dependent on a number of variables. On the whole, the practitioners suggested that SA07 contributed to MAPPA decisions by providing structured, detailed and collaborative assessment and supporting decisions with greater defensibility.

## Prison context

Whilst there was very limited involvement of prison staff in the scoring exercise (n=2), participants in the focus groups from the custodial setting cited the benefit in developing a common understanding of risk, for example:

***"I think the strongest thing about it is that different agencies are applying a consistent framework, they're using the same language, they know what they're talking about."***

However, some of the responses from a prison-based user perspective appeared to question the purposeful role of SA07 within the custodial setting. Whilst this resonates with aspects of the feedback from Police, this was different to that of community-based criminal justice social work. Prison based social workers sought guidance and training with regards to the purposeful use of SA07 within the custodial context. As the instrument was designed from a community based perspective this raised questions about its compatibility with a custodial setting. For example:

***"Conducting baseline assessments with offenders who have been incarcerated for extended periods is problematic. If a contributory factor to their offending was something like alcohol use and being inside they haven't had a drink for years then it is difficult to establish an accurate score".***

In addition, the relevance of scoring certain items in a prison context was questioned with the prison based social workers looking for guidance in order to maintain quality assurance in their practice. The following items appeared to cause problems: 'Intervene now', 'Hostility towards women' 'Capacity for relationship stability' and scoring different sex offender subgroups, in particular those with learning disabilities, or mental health problems. The annually repeated assessments, particularly for long-term prisoners appear to have a less well defined function.

Whilst it was acknowledged that SA07 can be a useful part of prison assessments, the regularity and timing of these assessments appears to be in need of further examination.

### **Recommendation - Training:**

Ensure that training gives clear guidance on the applicability of SA07 with sub-groups such as those with learning disabilities or mental health problems.

## Phase 2: Scoring exercise

Following close examination of the scoring it was agreed that different responses for certain items, other than what has been recommended by the tool's authors may be acceptable. This adjustment has been subsequently supported by Karl Hanson<sup>20</sup>. One example is highlighted in the 'emotional collapse' component of the Acute assessment. It became apparent that the general consensus was to score this item as *low*, rather than the author recommendation *moderate*. It was agreed by the national trainers in the instrument that this appeared to be a sound assessor judgement and therefore scoring of this item was altered to include both the perspectives of practitioners and that of the authors. In turn, this adjustment altered the final *General Recidivism Risk Total* from accepting a total score of '3' to accepting both '2' and '3'.

Another area of uncertainty related to the practitioners definition of an offender's access to their target victim group. This item was disputed by practitioners and attention drawn to a wider misinterpretation of the item 'victim access' - the example in this case study being whether or not the individual's visits to shopping centres could be construed as access to potential victims. This confusion is reflected in the answers of the respondents. It was decided with guidance from the national trainers that the correct answer would remain in accordance with the authors recommendation and therefore a score of '0' was accepted as correct.

### Analysis of scoring exercise

By analysing practitioners total score for the Stable component of the SA07 it was found that Criminal Justice Social Workers scored the case study fractionally higher than members of the Police Public Protection units, however there was not a significant difference between the two groups of practitioners. (Social Work: 10.78 and Police Public Protection Unit: 10.22) Therefore, the general feedback and scoring errors are applicable to both agencies.

### Scoring each item of SA07

There were four major sources of scoring disagreements for SA07:

- a. Uncertainty associated with making judgements concerning psychological characteristics that staff were unfamiliar with in their role.
- b. Ambiguity in the scoring guidance materials as to the characteristics that evaluators should assess.
- c. Confusion and errors concerning the interpretation of the guidance materials.
- d. Random error.

A degree of uncertainty in making psychological judgements is unavoidable but most notably expressed by the police was the view that psychological judgement may be beyond their competencies and out with their professional remit. For example feedback during phase one of the study cited;

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<sup>20</sup> Hanson, K Feb 2011, Personal Communication

*"I think it's too psychologically or maybe that's not the right word but it's based on psychology in my opinion and we're not trained psychologists and I think that may be the biggest problem with it."*

However, there is also evidence of an alternative view:

*"I think obviously we are getting better at questioning and understanding risk and stuff like that and the stable allows us to dig a bit deeper and it allows us to open it up and look at all areas. So yeah, so the standard has improved."*

**Recommendation - Implementation:**

Appropriate staff are selected on the basis of having pre-course knowledge in working with sex offenders and grounding in risk assessment/management practice

Where there is an element of judgement and the opportunity for random error there may always be an element of disagreement between scores. Consideration should be made to the separation between definite errors in applying the coding rules and disagreement of interpretation. In the study feedback was provided by some scorers in the subsequent focus groups which followed the scoring exercise. However this separation could be established by undertaking a subsequent scoring exercise nationally and targeting feedback specifically from all of those involved following the analysis of the quality of scoring practice.

Taking each item within the SA07, the percentage of practitioners correctly scoring each item is presented below. Alongside this, the percentage distribution for each score is also presented.

**Stable 2007**

Risk Factor	Percentage with correct score	Score 0	Score 1	Score 2
Significant social influences	99.3	26%	73%	0%
Capacity for relationship stability	89.7	7%	89%	4%
Emotional identification with children	100	100%	0%	0%
Hostility towards women	91.1	91%	8%	0%

Risk Factor	Percentage with correct score	Score 0	Score 1	Score 2
General social rejection	44.5	45%	53%	2%
Lack of concern for others	37.7	38%	53%	9%
Impulsivity	67.8	0%	32%	68%
Poor problem solving skills	11.6	12%	55%	33%
Negative emotionality	88.4	88%	10%	1%
Sex drive preoccupation	50	17%	50%	33%
Sex as coping	35.6	23%	41%	36%
Deviant sexual preference	63.7	3%	30%	64%
Deviant sexual interests in remission	79.4	79%	N/A	N/A
Co-operation with supervision	45.2	52%	45%	3%

\*Note that percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Of those identified problematic items it was important to examine further any patterns in their scoring and the FRAME Working Group membership requested further follow on focus groups to determine the rationale for scoring.

Furthermore, an issue raised by many of the practitioners in phase one was the feeling that when uncertainty within the scoring arises they are more likely to score upwards. For example:

*"I think if I was a bit uncertain - well, I'd obviously discuss it, obviously it's their risk you're talking about, but I'd put them - if it was between zero and 1, I'd probably put them at 1 I think."* and

*"So kinda maybe at the very beginning putting them - err on the side of caution - putting them in the higher one."*

This tendency to score upwards can be seen for the items lack of concern, poor problem solving and victim access highlighting not only uncertainty with the scoring guidance but perhaps a feeling of unease and caution embedded within practitioner thinking.

**Acute 2007**

With regard to the Acute, the scoring distribution is presented below. As above the percentage distribution for each score is also presented.

Risk Factor	Percentage with correct score	Score 0	Score 1	Score 2
Victim Access	17.1	17%	60%	22%
Hostility	96.5	97%	3%	0%
Sexual Preoccupation	56	38%	56%	6%
Rejection of supervision	80.6	81%	18%	1%
Emotional collapse	95.8	96%	3%	1%
Collapse of social supports	98.5	98%	1%	1%
Substance Abuse	76	76%	22%	1%

After examining the above tables (Stable and Acute) it can be seen that there appear to be items where the practitioners have not fully mastered the scoring guidance. Close attention should be directed to the items where the information provided within the case study appears to be sufficient enough to provide a score. From Stable these are: social rejection, lack of concern for others, sex as coping, deviant sexual interests and from the Acute: victim access.

**Recommendation - Quality Assurance:**

Guidance is provided through line managers regarding the importance of using the scoring guide during the assessment process.

There were other examples of low agreement but given the information the practitioners were given, in combination with not having the opportunity to explore responses (as they would in an actual interview) they were deemed as less concerning by the authors of the tool. These include from Stable: poor problem solving skills, sex drive/preoccupation and lack cooperation with supervision. From Acute: sexual preoccupation and substance abuse.

## Phase 3: Focus Groups

After the scoring exercise, regional feedback sessions were carried out with police public protection staff and criminal justice social workers, including service managers. It should be highlighted here that the individuals who took part in this feedback session were not representative of the initial sample who carried out the scoring exercise in phase two. Also, these feedback sessions were held in a group context rather than individually, the latter being how the practitioners originally did the scoring exercise. Their suggestions may relate to ambiguities in the original scoring guidance but it does not provide a clear indication of some of the reasoning behind the original scoring. Nevertheless, this provided an opportunity to examine scoring rationale in greater detail. For the items that were deemed to be problematic (social rejection, lack concern for others, sex as coping, sex drive preoccupation and victim access) the practitioners expressed the following issues:

SA07 Item	Practitioner feedback
<b>General Social Rejection</b>	<p>Most practitioners within the feedback session appeared to be split between a 0-1. A number of practitioners identified the need for quantification of the term 'Long' as in 'long-term friends' in the scoring guidance.</p> <p>A number of practitioners noted confusion between this item and significant social influences. Double scoring appeared to be an issue.</p> <p>Practitioners questioned the term 'acquaintances' which was used in the case study. Suggested that the term didn't imply the offender to have close friends and a further practitioner suggested that it "seemed like he had weak connections"</p>
<b>Poor problem solving skills</b>	<p>Multiple practitioners justified scoring this item due to the offender's impulsive history citing the job instability as a factor for poor problem solving. It was suggested that it should be explicitly stated in the scoring guide that this was a separate item to impulsivity.</p>
<b>Lack concern or others</b>	<p>It was suggested that the terms 'little' and 'occasional' are confusing and in need of clarification/quantification. Further it was suggested that there was very little perceived difference between a score of 0 and 1 for this item.</p> <p>Practitioners expressed a dissatisfaction with the external validity of the case study methodology, suggesting that in reality more questions would be necessary to ascertain the information necessary to score this item.</p>

<p><b>Sex as coping</b></p>	<p>This item provided much discussion. Generally it was suggested that the scoring guide is confusing. Practitioners suggested that the scoring guide needed to change as it referred to 'life stress' which inferred initial low mood state. It was also suggested that a revision/removal of the examples contained in the scoring guide is necessary as these "have become the benchmark" for scoring this item.</p> <p>Practitioners suggested that the scoring guide needed to change and the term "negative" should be removed.</p> <p>Practitioners suggested the poor performance on this item was due to training issues. Suggestions for appropriate staff selected on the basis of having pre-course knowledge in working with sex offenders were made.</p>
<p><b>Sex drive preoccupation</b></p>	<p>Practitioners suggested this item is "open to interpretation" and in need of clarification. Further, it was suggested the scoring guide should include the phrase "in contrast to romantic attachment".</p>
<p><b>Victim access</b></p>	<p>Feedback indicated that the police may have been given a directive to score this a 1. However, practitioners suggested that the scoring guidance may need to change it's criteria as with this interpretation a score of 1 would always be given when the offender was in the community.</p>

Examining the feedback there appears to be a distinction between items that have been scored incorrectly due to ambiguities in the scoring guide and items that based on judgement may allow multiple correct responses. Further practitioner comments corroborate this:

*"I still think there's a confusion about interpretation. I know I could do a full stable and acute assessment on a person and I've no doubt my colleague coming behind me could do the same assessment and will come up with a different set of answers. So I think it's very vague actually in the scoring. I mean, an intervene now is obvious but a zero, 1 or 2 - some of them, it's straightforward and other ones, it is a wee bit opinion based. There are grey areas."*

**Recommendation - Quality Assurance:**

The role of mentors is developed at a national level to support quality assurance approaches

As part of the study, feedback was provided to the author of SA07 on the issues arising from the scoring exercise. Hanson et al. (2011) have completed an updated comprehensive scoring manual for STABLE-2007 and the Acute guidance is also revised. From an initial review of these drafts, many of the queries raised by practitioners have been clarified within the guidance.

### Themes identified within Focus Groups

Following thematic analysis of the focus groups data, the following themes and sub-themes were identified. They are presented alongside an example which serves to represent the theme and corresponding sub-themes.

Theme	Sub theme	Example
<b>External and Ecological validity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoring accuracy</li> <li>• Inter-rater reliability</li> </ul>	"I don't know how valid these findings are in the real world. Case studies can be quite artificial".
<b>'Double Scoring' and poor scoring guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overly complicated scoring guidance</li> <li>• Subjective terms</li> </ul>	"There's been a couple of times where it's been, I'm not sure how to score this person, do we score for this, do we score for that, and it's basically been internal discussions. Saying, well, I'll maybe score them in that section but we'll not like double score them type thing".
<b>Defensible practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence</li> <li>• Feelings of unease</li> </ul>	"I'm not a psychologist. If I'm having to stand up in court I'm going to get ripped to shreds by a defence lawyer because we deal in fact...and this is not fact".
<b>Repercussions of risk.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing public protection and victim rights</li> </ul>	"We are very good at increasing someone's risk and intuitively I would score him higher". "If I'm going to be on the front page of the news of the world its not going to be for being too cautious".

From the above table it can be seen that the themes from the focus groups centred around the methodology of the scoring exercise, issues related to scoring and the wider implications of using SA07.

A number of practitioners questioned the methodology employed within the scoring exercise as it tested practitioners in isolation. Criticisms regarding the external validity of the research methodology included the inability for practitioners to use their interview skills or have wider access to information from file review.

These limitations are acknowledged within the scoring exercise and caution is advised in transferring any of the conclusions to wider practice. Further issues related to whether the tool is applicable to those who refuse to cooperate and to a number of typologies of offenders such as those with learning difficulties. While there are limitations, this mock exercise helps to determine the extent to which the practitioners understand the scoring guidelines.

Many participants referred to 'double scoring' as a reason for most of the problematic scoring. When asked to clarify the meaning of this term, practitioners advised that they were using scores to influence and evidence the scoring of further items on SA07. The practitioners requested clearer scoring guidance, but this also suggests a training issue. For example, making it clear that the rationale for scoring an item can be independent from other items in the SA07.

Defensible practice was a recurring issue across all focus groups. It seemed especially important to practitioners that their practice is defensible in a court setting. Many of the practitioners therefore felt that quality assurance mechanisms were necessary in order to evidence a defensible decision. A number of practitioners agreed that "**learning alongside testing**" was necessary to keep practitioner skill levels high and that research development updates would be beneficial.

**Recommendation – Quality Assurance:**

Local inter-rater reliability exercises should be conducted to ensure that different raters are consistent in their risk assessment of the same sexual offender. (This should include a range of case studies to reflect current profiles)

**Recommendation – Quality Assurance:**

Subsequently, current practice is tested nationally through the application of a further case study to establish quality of scoring practice.

**Recommendation – Quality Assurance:**

Peer/mentor/line manager feedback and support should be provided on these results

**Recommendation – Quality Assurance:**

The role of mentors is developed at a national level to support quality assurance approaches

During the feedback sessions attendees were asked to identify when they were trained and then how soon they used SA07 in practice. For Police officers the mean time taken before they used SA07 as part of their risk assessment was one month, for Criminal Justice Social work this was an average of six months. The following quote reflects potential problems with this:

***"If your not going to use it [SA07] within 3 months then why are you being trained? I doubt if I could retain training after 3 months."***

**Recommendation - Implementation:**

Agencies select staff who are able to utilise their learning within a short timescale of receiving training and with the ongoing and active capacity to use SA07 as part of their role in risk assessment

**Recommendation - Implementation:**

Appropriate staff are selected on the basis of having pre-course knowledge in working with sex offenders and grounding in risk assessment/management practice

In two events the national trainers were brought together to inform them of the findings and gauge their responses to emerging findings from the research. They recognised the problem areas that practitioners were reporting in relation to the scoring guidance and provided a number of recommendations for quality assurance including ongoing support for trainers and evaluation of the quality and consistency of training. For example:

*"For somebody to take charge of it, in overseeing it, and updating it on a regular basis would be immensely useful."*

This statement also highlights a difficulty encountered in this study in that implementation model did not incorporate learning evaluation approach in the national training programme. The 'chain of evidence' that is established by the systematic and routine evaluation of training initiatives is invaluable when retrospectively exploring failures in the transfer of learning to practice or the achievement of objectives.

**Recommendation - Training:**

Assessors and trainers to hold regular peer support sessions to disseminate research findings and developments in the use of SA07.

**Recommendation - Training:**

Refresher training for trainers to be provided and ongoing support of "Expert trainer" /central point of contact to be established to review quality and consistency of training.

**Recommendation - Training:**

Future training is routinely evaluated to track selection, attendance and completion rates, user satisfaction and knowledge/skill acquisition.

In summary, the follow up sessions provided a wealth of information that contributed to the study, and reinforced the importance of quality assurance within practice and training, measures to ascertain and improve the transfer and retention of learning, and staff selection.

## Further interim action

At the request of the FRAME Working Group members, a number of activities have commenced to facilitate further evaluation and future quality assurance pending consideration of the final recommendations.

Recognising the limitations of this study and its nature as a preliminary information gathering and trouble-shooting exercise, efforts have begun to facilitate more robust evaluation in the future. Participants in this study frequently identified 'defensibility' of practice as a concern and one aspect of defensible practice of an actuarial tool is that it is used in conjunction with relevant normative data. Valuable information is collected on the ViSOR system that would allow for the production of Scottish normative data and evaluation of the SA07 in practice. Data gathering has commenced in the three study areas - Tayside, Fife and Strathclyde. In addition, a research plan for the production of Scottish normative data is being developed by the RMA and the National Social Research Centre to be available for consideration by late 2012. This plan will be presented to the FRAME membership for consideration of its feasibility.

However the provenance of such normative data relies on the quality of the available data. Prior to further analysis it is recommended that further tests of scoring practice are undertaken to maintain high quality assessments.

As part of the initial follow-up to this study, the RMA provided two seminars in March and April 2012 to prepare selected individuals to act as mentors and progress quality assurance exercises in their local services. In addition to exploring the findings of the study to date, the 86 participants were provided with guidance on quality assuring practice and were provided with a further case study that they were asked to apply in their settings. 98% of them supported the development of Scottish normative data and in particular advocated research to establish the link between RM2K and SA07 to allow practice that corresponds with that in other jurisdictions where the findings of static 99 and SA07 are combined to provide an overall rating of case priority.

### **Recommendation - Evaluation:**

The design and delivery of a research plan to produce Scottish normative data are undertaken.

Following these seminars further feedback has been provided to Karl Hanson (one of the authors of SA07) on perceived ambiguity in the scoring guidance. Subsequent to this updated guidance has been produced by the authors, which addresses many of the concerns raised. These updates have been reviewed by national trainers and amendments made to the SA07 training course, with plans for wider dissemination to be confirmed and supported by a revised circular.

In addition a group of 15 individuals comprising SA07 trainers, Training and Development Officers and managers have been provided with an intensive online training curriculum designed by the authors of SA07 and provided by the Justice Institute of British Columbia.

This initiative aimed to explore the value of such a learning method and provide key individuals with refresher training.

In addition, as a result of the SA07 study and in support of implementing the FRAME policy, ACPOS and the RMA have initiated the development of a practice process for Police.

# Conclusion

The evaluation of the implementation of Stable and Acute 2007 was agreed subsequent to the initial introduction of this risk instrument in Scotland, which occurred without the benefit of a pilot study and from which no learning evaluation material is available. However, the willing participation of three study areas has allowed for preliminary exploration of that introduction and recommendations for action in terms of implementation, training, quality assurance and evaluation.

The presentation of the findings have been shaped by the concurrent evolution of the FRAME initiative, which provides agreed principles and standards to guide this and future projects. . The report is submitted to the FRAME Working Group with responsibility for the policy objectives of:

- Informing policy decisions relating to risk assessment and management with learning from national and international research and practice.
- Promoting implementation integrity by incorporating agreed quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms.
- Ensuring risk assessment is performed in a manner that evidences defensible decision making and the efficient use of resources.

The recommendations of this study are proposed in support of these policy objectives and the overall aim of FRAME to develop:

***A consistent shared framework that promotes defensible and ethical risk assessment and management practice that is proportionate to risk, legitimate to role, appropriate for the task in hand and is communicated meaningfully***

# Summary of recommendations

## Implementation:

1. Agencies select staff who are able to utilise their learning within a short timescale of receiving training and with the ongoing and active capacity to use SA07 as part of their role in risk assessment
2. Appropriate staff are selected on the basis of having pre-course knowledge in working with sex offenders and grounding in risk assessment/management practice
3. Pre-course briefing is adapted to establish the context and scope of the SA07 training (including the rationale for the introduction of SA07, its role in the risk assessment process, and clarifying the learning outcomes for participants) and line managers prepare staff for attendance
4. Agencies establish their staff's learning needs in relation to risk assessment and management training. (This may include specific grounding in risk practice, training on interview techniques, dealing with sensitive issues/'deniers' etc)

## Purposeful use:

5. Agencies clarify their purpose in using RM2K and SA07 as part of the risk assessment process
6. Briefing is provided for managers/supervisors/mentors on the purpose and role of RM2K/SA07
7. Review with the Police the appropriateness of Stable and Acute 2007 to the role of Public Protection officers
8. The justice circular for the Implementation of the second risk assessment tool for use with sex offenders, stable and Acute 2007 (Circular No: JD/13/2007) be revised to include clarification of section on "Integration of risk assessment tools - Risk Matrix 2000."
9. The justice circular for the Implementation of the second risk assessment tool for use with sex offenders, stable and Acute 2007 (Circular No: JD/13/2007) be revised to ensure that the guidance on "Joint Risk Assessment" ensures the degree of partnership working is commensurate to the risk and complexities of the case

## Training:

10. Feedback is provided to the authors of the tool in relation to the scoring guidance and ambiguities identified by participants and trainers
11. A review of the revised SA07 scoring guidance is undertaken in relation to its application in the Scottish context
12. Assessors and trainers to hold regular peer support sessions to disseminate research findings and developments in the use of SA07
13. Refresher training for trainers to be provided and ongoing support of "expert trainer" /central point of contact to be established to review quality and consistency of training
14. Future training is routinely evaluated to track selection, attendance and completion rates, user satisfaction and knowledge/skill acquisition

**Quality assurance:**

15. Local inter-rater reliability exercises should be conducted to ensure that different raters are consistent in their risk assessment of the same sexual offender. (This should include a range of case studies to reflect current profiles)
16. Subsequently, current practice is tested nationally through the application of a further case study to establish quality of scoring practice.
17. Peer/mentor/line manager feedback and support should be provided on these results
18. The role of mentors is developed at a national level to support quality assurance approaches
19. Guidance is provided through line managers regarding the importance of using the scoring guide during the assessment process

**Evaluation / research:**

20. The design and delivery of a research plan to produce Scottish normative data are undertaken

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## **APPENDIX 1: PHASE I – USER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE STABLE AND ACUTE 2007 EVALUATION**

The Scottish Government has requested that the Risk Management Authority undertake an evaluation of the implementation of the Stable & Acute 2007 (SA07) dynamic risk assessment tool for sexual offenders in the Scottish context. The Risk Management Authority will conduct the evaluation of the instrument in both the Scottish Prison Service and the community.

I would like to ask you about your experience with SA07. I would be very grateful for your participation in the project and will be providing a copy of the findings to each agency and participant in due course. This report will outline the findings from the study and make recommendations for improvements in practice and quality control. The interview will explore the following issues:

- Training
- Impact on workload
- SA07 administration
- Joint agency working
- Informing offender management
- Offender experience

**Importantly, this project is not designed to scrutinise your own practice or that of your agency, but rather to conduct an objective examination of the implementation of the SA07 in the Scottish context. The overall purpose of this project is to help identify any existing problems or outstanding issues surrounding the tool with a view to making recommendations for improvements in practice and quality control. Please feel free to talk openly about your experience with the instrument.**

The interview should not take longer than one hour and I would ideally like to tape record our discussion, if that is acceptable to you. If you are willing, can you provide us with a contact telephone number so that we can follow up any issues subsequent to transcribing the material from this interview. The information that you give us will be treated in the strictest confidence and no names will be provided in the report that we submit to the Scottish Government and the agencies involved with the tool.

## APPENDIX 2: PHASE II - SCORING EXERCISE

### The Complete "Run-Through" Exercise - Answer Key

"Michael"

Please score the STABLE and ACUTE for Michael. When you have completed the exercise, place your scored data with front cover in the "polly pocket" provided.

Please work slowly and carefully through the exercise and complete both the Stable and Acute. This should take about an hour, although you will have an hour and a quarter to complete the assessments. Be sure to use your coding guides for each of the tools.

At this point, you will have already completed Risk Matrix 2000. The static information below is provided for reference only.

#### **Case Information**

Michael is 59 years old; he has been in a number of short-term relationships, with members of the same and opposite sex, but never any longer than 12 – 18 months. He is currently living with a partner, Jeremy (57 years old) and they have been together for almost one year. As can be seen by his record, Michael has had many prior matters before the Court all of a similar nature (exposing himself to strangers). He has held many different kinds of jobs over the years ranging from computer technician to carpenter to apartment building superintendent. These positions have never been high paying nor long lasting and so Michael is not well off financially, always making just enough to settle his monthly bills. His criminal record is as follows:

Year		Disposition
1985	Indecent Exposure (X3)	24 months Probation
1989	Indecent Exposure	15 Days Jail and 12 months Probation
1993	Indecent Act (x2)	30 Days Jail and 12 Months Probation
1996	Indecent Act	Three Months Conditional Sentence
1999	Trespassing at Night	60 Days Jail
2001	Indecent Act (x3)	36 Months Probation
2006	Indecent Act (x5)	6 months jail and 30 months Probation

Additional Information:

- In the 1985 matters, Michael had just arrived from England and he exposed himself to a group of females in their late teens as they walked by him in the park on their way home from school.

- The 1989 matter was similar in nature but this time he exposed himself to a young woman in her late teens in a department store.
- In neither of these incidents was he able to say that he had ever seen the victims nor interacted with them prior to the offences in question.
- In 1993 and 1996, he continued with the same behaviour and he exposed himself to shoppers in a mall on a number of occasions. Shopping centre security was previously notified of the 1993 incidents and the information was still on file, as a result he was arrested for the new 1996 matters as well. The information from the police indicated that all of the victims in these matters were females.
- In 1999, he was found stumbling through a backyard claiming he went to the wrong house to seek a friend; a 21-year-old female was home alone at the time and awoke as he was knocking on the window where she was sleeping.
- In 2001 and 2006, he was again convicted of a rash of incidents that were of a similar nature.

Please read the information below and complete the STABLE 2007 assessment.

### **Case Information: STABLE**

From your interview with Michael you have determined the following facts and impressions.

When asked about people in his life Michael identifies:

- 1) Jeremy (aged 57 years), his current live in partner. Michael tells you that they have known each other for many years and they used to attend the same AA group. He added that Jeremy is certainly aware of some of Michael's issues with alcohol but he only knows certain parts of his legal history and is not presently aware of the current matters for which he is on Probation.
- 2) Colleen, who is his therapist and whom he has been seeing for many years. She does not charge him a fee for these sessions as he has been helping her with her clinical studies. Michael tells you that she is aware of all of the good and bad in his life and that he sees her regularly for help.
- 3) Martha, his mother. He says that she lives in Hamilton and he sees her on her birthday as well as a few days at Christmas. They generally speak on Sundays discussing current events and family members. He added that he is a grown man and has never told his mother of any of his legal troubles.

Michael said that he has had many short-term relationships in his life and that he has generally left these relationships whenever there was too much conflict. He said that he would like to be in a committed relationship and indicated that his time with Jeremy has been positive and he expects that it may amount to a lasting relationship.

Michael has learned over the years that his timing of offending can be tied in large part to a change in the seasons. He has determined that in the spring he tends to have more thoughts of offending and begins to plan for appropriate situations. He describes it as a celebration and said that his mood improves as he plans and fantasizes about his past and future offending behaviour. As a result of his counselling sessions with Colleen, he claims to be in touch with his inner feelings during his offending and he describes his reaction as a mixture of anger, excitement and regain of control. He does not think that he hurts anyone

with his behaviour and claims that if he ever sensed someone was distressed he would cease, adding that he is never close enough to anyone (as in proximity of victim) or there long enough to get a good sense of their reaction.

He said that he has enjoyed a healthy and fulfilling sexual life but that recent (past three to six months) health issues such as high blood pressure have impaired his ability to sustain an erection. He noted however, that his offending behaviour does not seem to have the same effect and he finds that more gratifying. He is thankful that Jeremy's sex drive is equal to his in terms of high frequency, as he believes that sex is critical in a relationship. He is clear when he indicates that he prefers sexual activity with adults who are equal in age to himself.

Over the numerous terms of probation that he has served there have been no breaches and he has generally complied with his terms. However, he has offended while serving a term of probation and clearly has not been adequately deterred by the imposition of community or institutional sanctions, although he does his best to "work with you". In terms of finances, he is just responsible enough to pay his bills on a regular basis. He has always been able to maintain employment but many contacts you have spoken to have said that he is rarely living up to his potential. Representatives from the various agencies have described him as being somewhat impulsive in areas of his life such as leaving employment, stretching credit limits and being nomadic in accommodation choices.

You now have enough information to score the STABLE assessment. As a general rule, you would have completed this assessment by the end of the third or fourth meeting.

**You are now having your fourth or fifth meeting with Michael and you are assessing ACUTE factors.**

#### Case Information: ACUTE - Your fourth or fifth meeting

As always, Michael was on time and co-operative. He accounted for his whereabouts and does not seem to be creating opportunities to engage in any offending behaviour. You note that it is now March and will watch for previous patterns to develop. When Michael is not working he generally hangs out at the shopping centre drinking coffee with adult acquaintances discussing sports and current events. He seemed quiet during the last couple of meetings but he claimed that there is nothing/no-one bothering him. Michael denies any excessive drinking and you have no reason to distrust him. Jeremy said in a recent call that all was positive at home between the two of them. Michael denied that he was any more sexually pre-occupied than usual although again you note the time of year with spring approaching, he is aware of this from his last relapse prevention plan which is discussed routinely at your meetings.

Please complete the ACUTE Sheet.



**Risk Management Authority**

St James House  
25 St James Street  
Paisley  
PA3 2HQ

tel        0141 567 3112  
fax        0141 567 3111  
email      info@rmascotland.gsi.gov.uk

[www.rmascotland.gov.uk](http://www.rmascotland.gov.uk)