techUK VAWG and RASSO working group

The group is member-led and brings together techUK members, police, policymakers, academics, and technical specialists to problem solve, voice their ideas, experiences and expertise about technology's role in tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO). This group provides a collaborative platform that connects industry with partners across the Home Office, the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection (NCVPP), Police Digital Service (PDS), College of Policing, and forces.

The VAWG and RASSO working groups were first established in January 2023. The VAWG group launched following a kick-off events, including DCC Maggie Blyth and CC Sarah Crew announcing policing's digital strategic intent and the need for a platform for Policing and partners to engage with tech suppliers. The RASSO group was established to align and feed into the RASSO Tech Partnership Board. In November 2023, a strategic decision was taken to merge the two working groups, recognising the shared challenges across VAWG and RASSO in areas such as prevention, detection, and the prosecution of offenders.

During the 2023-2025 tenure, the group has been actively involved in the conversations and supported with the second iteration of the Strategic Threat Risk Assessment (STRA), the VAWG delivery framework, and initiatives like the Digital Evidence Project (PDS) focusing on extraction, analysis, triage, investigation, redaction, and prosecution. The working group has also collaborated closely with the Vulnerability Knowledge Practice Programme (VKPP) to feedback on their findings and potential future VAWG threats in the digital space.

Further information on the VAWG and RASSO working group is available on the VAWG and RASSO Hub, a central repository bringing together testimonials, case studies, and other relevant insights.

The new tenure of the working group, started in November 2025, has identified three main priorities to work towards during their tenure.

1. Victim support and safeguarding (tech for good)

The sub-groups aims will include mapping and evaluation, promoting tools, and influencing key stakeholders. All whilst ensuring the work maintains the voice of the survivor throughout.

a. **Map and evaluate the 'Tech for Good' landscape for VAWG**
   - Identify evaluated/evidence-based technologies currently used to prevent and respond to VAWG
   - Highlight gaps, risks, unmet needs and promising innovations
   - Produce a shared evidence base in collaboration with the NPCC, CoP, PDS etc.

   ★ *Key deliverable: **"State of Tech for Good & VAWG" Landscape Report:** Mapping current tools; identifying gaps, risks and opportunities; Reviewing evidence of what works.*

b. **Promote examples of 'tech for good' that meet the strategic priorities of the national VAWG framework, including:**
- Tools that prevent perpetration and support behaviour change
- Tech that supports victims to seek help safely
- Digital inclusion for minoritised and Deaf survivors
- Technologies enabling evidence preservation and reporting

★ *Key deliverable: **A model 'VAWG and Tech for Good' partnership framework:** Helping tech companies collaborate safely with charities, police/public bodies and support services.*

c. **Influence policy and funding decisions to:**
- Shape government understanding of 'tech for good'
- Identify investment needs
- Help industry meet VAWG Strategy and Action Plan expectations

★ *Key deliverable: **Policy recommendations to government:** Including standards for safety tech, investment needs, inclusion and accessibility commitments, ethical guidelines for AI used in prevention or detection.*

In addition to the above, I would also like for the group to review and explore a potential product development idea in the child protection space as an additional example of the sub-group's collaboration.

2. <u>Prevention, early intervention and identification of perpetrator</u>

The sub-group aims to highlight initiatives, research and technologies for success in prevention and education, as well as recognising the challenges of measuring prevention impact in this space. The group will work on a three-phased approach:

Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping
Build a clear, evidence-led view of the prevention landscape.

- Identify key stakeholders, contributors and initiatives across sectors
- Map emerging research, technologies and practice aligned to prevention, education and early intervention
- Surface gaps, risks and areas of promise

Phase 2: Analysis and Proposition
Turn Phase 1 insight into coherent, high-value proposals.

- Synthesise findings into clear narratives and learning themes
- Develop proposed outputs (thought leadership, case studies, events)
- Test and refine proposals with the broader working group

Phase 3: Engagement and Delivery
Delivery based on agreed Phase 2 proposals

- Deliver outputs (thought leadership, case studies, debates, events)
- Create platforms for cross-sector dialogue and shared learning
- Promote adoption, shared learning and further collaboration

3. <u>Cross sector collaboration and integration (police, courts, MoJ, victim services)</u>

The sub-group aims to identify tangible outcomes through identifying the key challenges that intra-agency collaboration presents across the VAWG/ RASSO space. For example, the challenges across data sharing, lack of capacity and funding and then couple this with examples of best practice that exist both within the Policing domain and outside.

We will speak to key stakeholders across key agencies from Policing to MoJ, including third sector representatives to validate our thoughts on the challenges that exist and their priorities and then map this to our outputs to agree the most useful outcomes from them as frontline experts. The sub-group will aim to:

- Identify key challenges and best practice around intra-agency collaboration and sharing
- Look to validate our findings with agency front-line experts
- Key gap analysis across this space and mapped to outcomes for this group

Objectives of the VAWG and RASSO working group

- Bring together law enforcement, academia, the third sector, and industry to create a platform for discussing the challenges of protecting women and girls.
- Focus on the growing role of technology in preventing and addressing violence against women and girls, including digital solutions that enhance safety, support law enforcement, and improve access to resources like online reporting tools.
- Use the working group as a platform to provide feedback to the NCVPP.

techUK is dedicated to connecting industry, academia, and the public and third sector to advance the Government's Safer Streets initiative and tackle VAWG. Real change demands a united, 'whole of society' approach. We invite all stakeholders to join us to share your expertise, collaborate, and help create safer communities through technology and collective action.