techUK Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Working Group
Terms of Reference v1 2022 - 2024

Background

In September 2021, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report that concluded that while policing had made improvements in response to VAWG over the last decade, these were insufficient. The report also highlighted the significant inconsistencies in the service that forces provide to women and girls across England and Wales. The inspectorate's recommendations included a fundamental shift in the prioritisation of VAWG, aimed at bringing greater consistency and universally higher standards, as well as the inclusion of VAWG within the Strategic Policing Requirement.

The creation of the role of national VAWG Coordinator (DCC Maggie Blyth) was one part of a national policing response and in October 2021 the first national VAWG Task Force was stood up with the aim to coordinate and support the standardisation of policing's response to VAWG. Over the past 12 months the taskforce has been working closely with forces and partners on putting in place meaningful measures to restore public confidence, relentlessly pursue perpetrators and create safer spaces. This work is well underway and leading to tangible improvements that have been [highlighted in the recent HMICFRS stocktake](#) on progress tackling VAWG.

As this work has progressed the importance of digital, data and technology to the perpetration, investigation and prevention of VAWG has become increasingly clear. A VAWG digital strategic intent has been developed, linked to VAWG framework:

1. Create a single online reporting route for violence against women and girls, which enables victims to report and to access the support they need, when they need it.

2. Adopt, adapt and create products that develop a digitally competent, confident and capable workforce in order to relentlessly pursue perpetrators and protect victims.

3. Make offender-hostile online environments, working with tech providers to design out VAWG in online spaces and for the tech industry to support upstander behaviour.

These three objectives will be taken forward over coming months and are underpinned by building a dynamic intelligence picture of threats and opportunities, to help prevent

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violence against women and girls by pursuing perpetrators, and delivering better

criminal justice outcomes for victims.

Purpose
1. The techUK VAWG Working Group will provide strategic direction for all techUK activities related to the Justice & Emergency Services (JES) Programme and 'Tech for Good - VAWG' programme priority.

2. The working group members will support the Programme in achieving strategic priority no.7 – Tech for Good.

Responsibilities
3. Members of the working group will be expected to engage in debate and discussion. Members should be ready and willing to openly discuss issues with stakeholders and other members in every working group meeting.

4. Key Responsibilities include:
   ➢ Working group members will have sufficient authority to direct, coordinate, advise and provide recommendations for work pertaining to improving the response to VAWG through technology. This may include but is not limited to:
      o Drive the art of the possible, encourage innovation and explore opportunities for technology, existing and future, to fulfil the user requirement of the VAWG operating model.
      o Ensure alignment to Home Office and NPCC strategic vision and, NPCC VAWG Digital Strategic Intent.
      o Act as an effective forum, taking appropriate strategic level decisions when necessary, feeding into NPCC VAWG taskforce. techUK to also ensure output from the group, where relevant, is fed into the RASSO CJS Tech Board.
      o To be the voice for industry, drive horizon scanning conversations and seek out new opportunities for technology collaboration, development, and implementation across VAWG priorities.

5. Additional responsibilities include

   ➢ <u>Monthly thought leadership piece:</u>
   ➢ To raise the profile of the working group, a monthly thought leadership will be written by members of the group under the name of the working group. It will be drafted and reviewed ahead of the meeting but released on the date of the
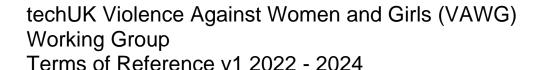
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meeting. The working group will be required to provide monthly topic suggestions.

Membership

6. techUK Membership Groups aim to reflect the range of companies, both in terms of sectors and size that are interested in each work programme. One member will be appointed as Chair to help coordinate its output with techUK Secretariat.

7. The Board will comprise approximately 18 members, plus Secretariat drawn from techUK's Justice & Emergency Services Programme. Members of the working group must be employed by a body that is a member of techUK and should ideally be of manager status or above. If appropriate and agreed by members of the group, stakeholders can be invited to attend meetings on a regular basis.

8. At least 6 of the 18 members are designated from an SME[1].

9. Membership, including the Chair, will run for two-year periods on an individual basis. Members will be nominated via an open call to relevant techUK groups, followed by a member vote if necessary. Only one individual per techUK member company may be on the working group

10. If an individual working group representative leaves their company to join another techUK member then they may remain on the working group (as long as this doesn't result in a techUK member company having two representatives). If they join a company which is not a techUK member they may remain on the working group for 1 month, after which they will be required to leave unless the company is in the process of applying for techUK membership.

11. Representatives may be re-elected onto the working group, and there is no cap on how many times they can be re-elected.

12. The working group will operate a 'Strike' attendance policy. If a member is not present (even with apologies sent) at three or more compulsory meetings during a calendar year that representative will be ejected from the working group. The Chair and Secretariat will have discretion in making a final decision.

13. The working group shall have the power to create sub-groups and working groups to address strategic issues which require a more detailed input. These sub-groups will be led by the working group members and comprised – where required – of

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[1] An SME is defined as a member who both employs fewer than 250 employees, does not exceed an annual turnover of 50 million euros and/or an annual balance sheet in excess of 43 million euros.

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other invited individuals from the techUK membership. The chair of these sub-groups shall report back to the working group when requested.

Meetings

14. The working group will meet at least 5 times a year, with further meetings to be scheduled as required/agreed by the membership.

15. Meetings will be minuted by the Secretariat unless a private session is requested and agreed to by the Chair

Decision-making process

16. When developing a position, the Secretariat will only develop an outline once at least five members of the working group have indicated a willingness to participate.

17. Policy positions require a lower level of consensus although techUK is at its strongest when it speaks with one voice. There will be times when consensus cannot be reached given the different viewpoints present in the working group. In the first instance, the Secretariat will seek to set out the differences within the working group. It will not, however, seek to quantify these differences. If the Board is particularly divided – or if there is significant opposition to developing a position, the secretariat in conjunction with the Chair will make a decision on whether a public position would play a role in ensuring techUK remains a relevant, influential and credible voice.

Secretariat

18. The techUK Secretariat will manage and resource the work of the working group

19. The Secretariat comprises of: techUK.