

# EXAMINING THE VICTIM'S RIGHT TO REVIEW (VRR) BY POLICE IN STALKING AND HARASSMENT CASES: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) FINDINGS & CASE STUDIES

Researchers received data from **27 police forces** on stalking and harassment-related Victim's Right to Review (VRR) requests — **17 forces** were unable to retrieve requested data within FOI time/cost limits.

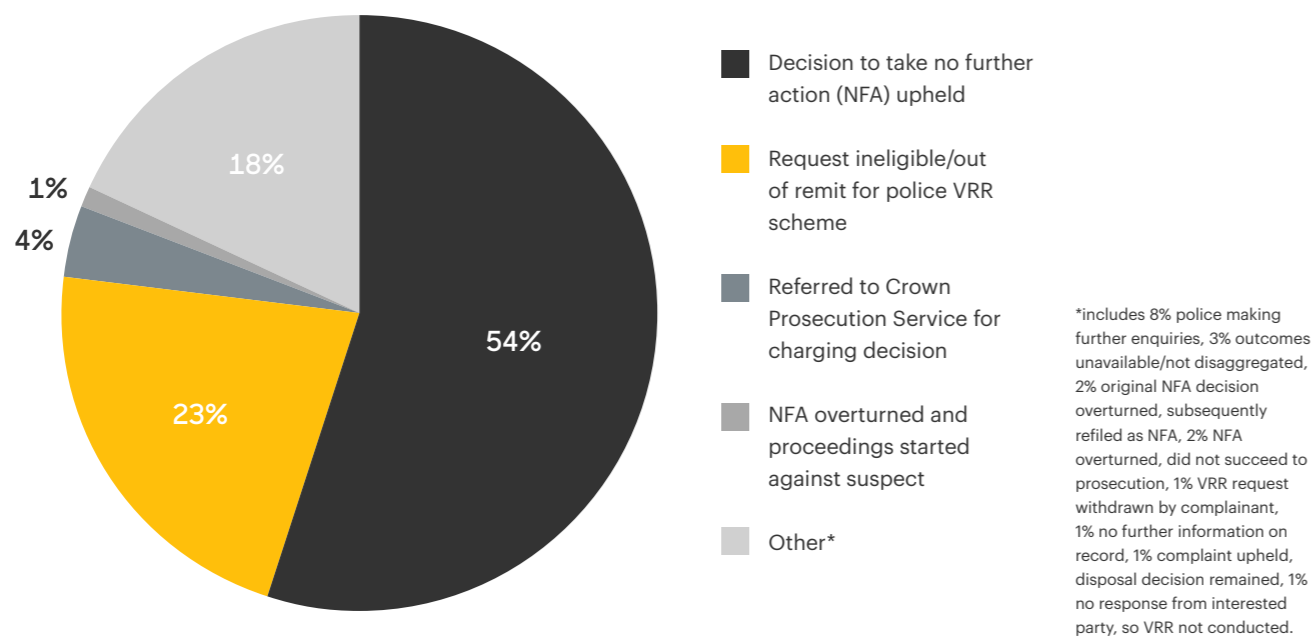
## 386

**STALKING AND HARASSMENT VRR REQUESTS**  
Received by all forces, 2015–2020

## 468%

**INCREASE IN STALKING AND HARASSMENT VRR REQUESTS**  
Between 2015–2020

### VRR OUTCOMES



## STALKING

We define stalking as a pattern of fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviour which is intrusive and causes serious alarm and distress and/or fear of violence to the victim.

## POLICE VRR

The Victim's Right to Review (VRR) came into effect on 5 June 2013, and the scheme was extended to police decisions on 1 April 2015. Under the VRR, crime victims can seek a review of "decisions not to charge, to discontinue or otherwise terminate all proceedings" by lodging a request with their local CPS office or with the relevant force in the case of the police VRR (CPS, 2020).

### IMPACTS FOR STALKING SURVIVORS

Case studies show unsuccessful VRR requests can have severe impacts for survivors:

"When the case was NFA'd in December 2019 I felt like I'd lost a battle. I didn't feel safe knowing that this was 'procedure'."

However, Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers (ISAC) can support survivors through the process:

"Knowing I had support and someone fighting the same battle with me meant so much for my self-worth during a bleak process."

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- MORE CONSISTENT POLICE RECORDING**
- ROBUST GUIDANCE & PROCEDURES TO ENSURE SURVIVORS ARE AWARE OF THEIR RIGHTS**
- ENSURE THAT STALKING SURVIVORS HAVE ACCESS TO AN INDEPENDENT STALKING ADVOCACY CASEWORKER**