

Police officers’ perspectives on the secondary victimisation of rape and serious sexual assault victims

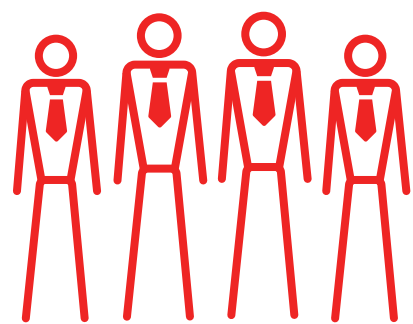
STAFFING AND RESOURCING ISSUES MUST BE ADDRESSED IN ORDER TO MITIGATE SECONDARY VICTIMISATION, INCLUDING:



OFFICERS SHOULD BE MINDFUL OF THE IMPACT OF EVIDENCE GATHERING ON VICTIMS, AND MITIGATE REVICTIMIZATION WHEREVER POSSIBLE, INCLUDING



SPECIALIST RASSO TRAINING FOR OFFICERS IS CRITICAL IN REDUCING SECONDARY VICTIMISATION; THIS TRAINING SHOULD INCLUDE



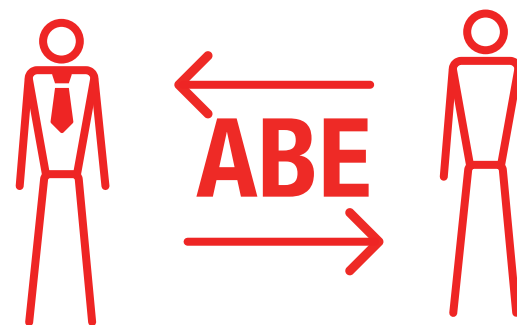
Having adequate numbers of investigators on RASSO teams



Employing accredited detectives on RASSO teams



Ensuring effective interagency and multi-disciplinary work to support victims and investigations (e.g. between SARCs and police)



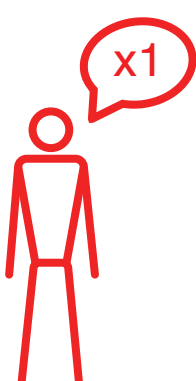
How to conduct ABE interviews with victims



Understanding how trauma impacts victims



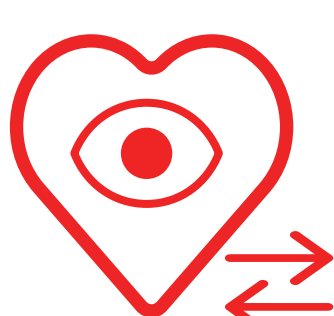
Capping officers’ and supervisors’ caseloads to manageable numbers



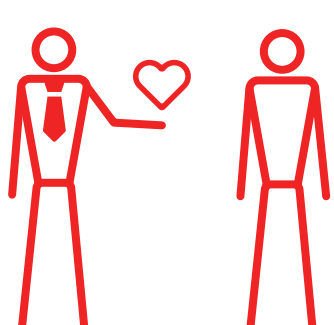
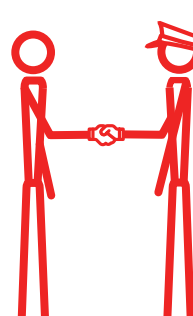
Developing protocols to limit the number of times the victim has to repeat her account



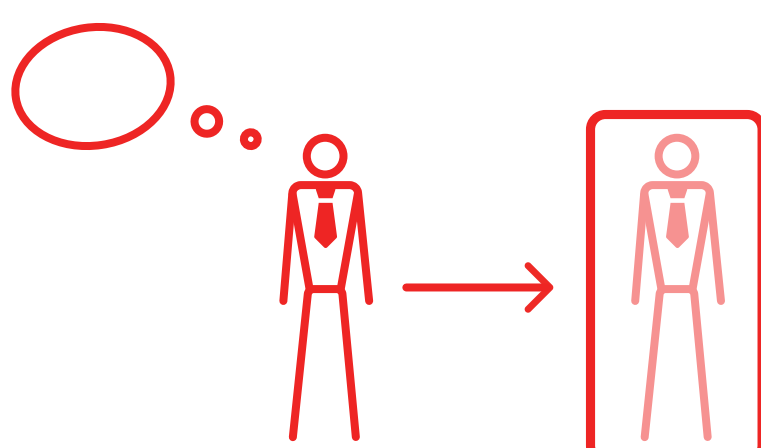
Dispelling stereotypes, rape myths, and misconceptions



Protecting, supporting and enhancing officers’ wellbeing, acknowledging that RASSO work is highly demanding, stressful, and may lead to burnout



Ensuring ‘unavoidable’ distressing evidence gathering – e.g. FMEs, ABEs – is carried out sensitively, with victims’ needs balanced against investigative needs



Encouraging officers to reflect on their beliefs, behaviours, and language



Anna Gekoski, Miranda A. H. Horvath, and Kari Davies



THE VICTIM SHOULD BE FULLY INFORMED OF THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS, INCLUDING



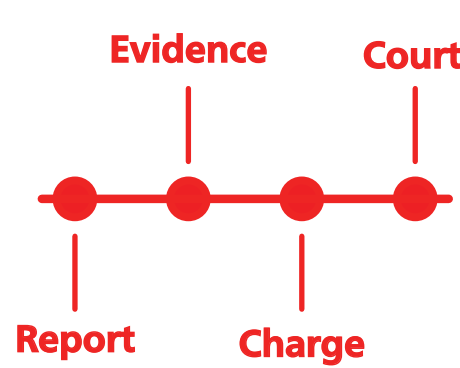
OFFICERS SHOULD FOLLOW NEW GUIDELINES FOR DIGITAL AND THIRD PARTY MATERIAL (TPM)



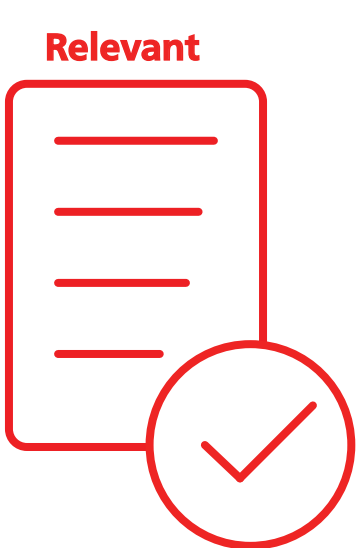
OFFICERS AND INSTITUTIONS SHOULD TAKE A VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACH TO RASSO INVESTIGATIONS, INCLUDING



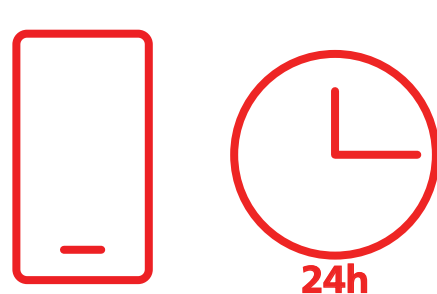
What types of evidence will need to be collected and why



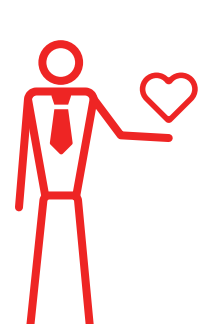
Likely timelines for investigation and prosecution



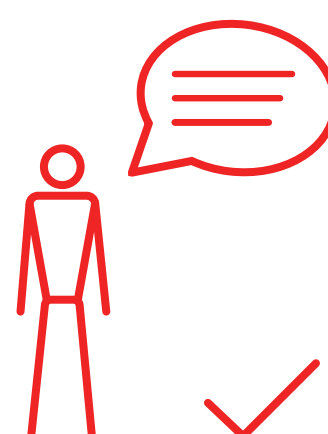
Only directly relevant TPM should be requested



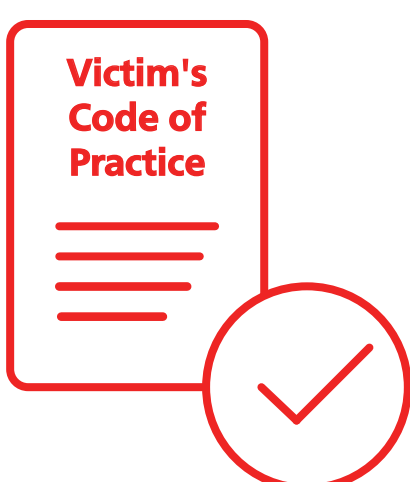
Victims’ mobile phones should not be kept for more than 24 hours



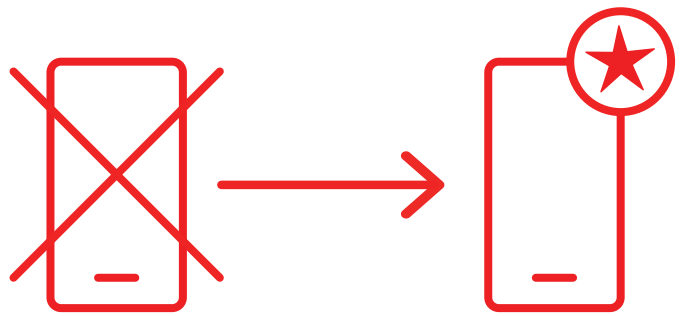
Demonstrating empathy, kindness, and fairness



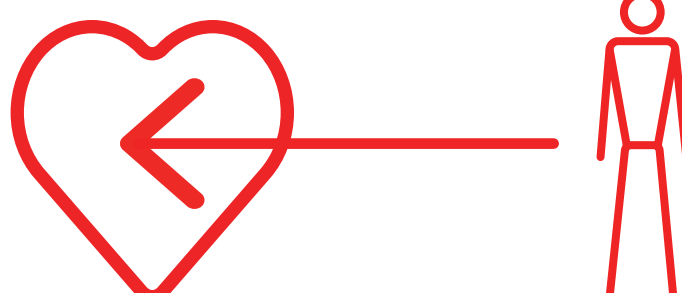
Starting from a point of belief, not scepticism, doubt, or blame



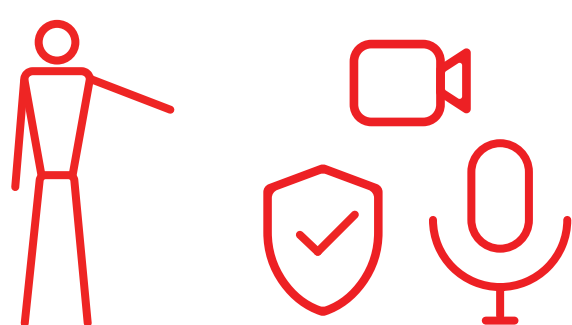
What victims’ rights are under the Victim’s Code of Practice



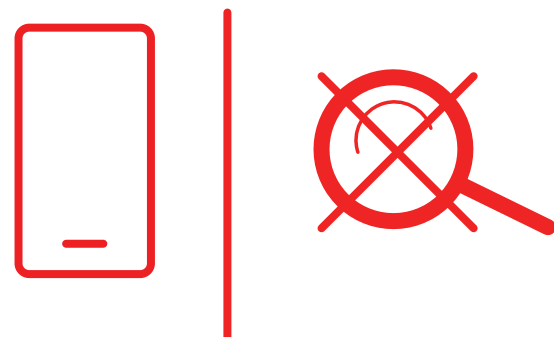
If victims’ mobiles need to be kept for longer, a replacement phone is provided



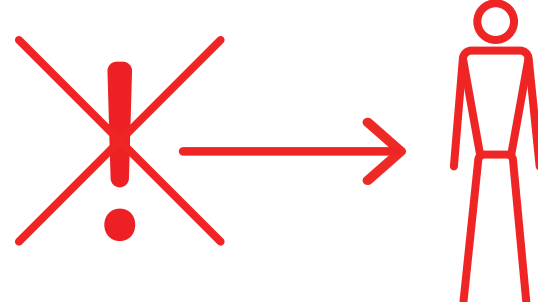
Putting the victim at the centre, or heart, of the investigation



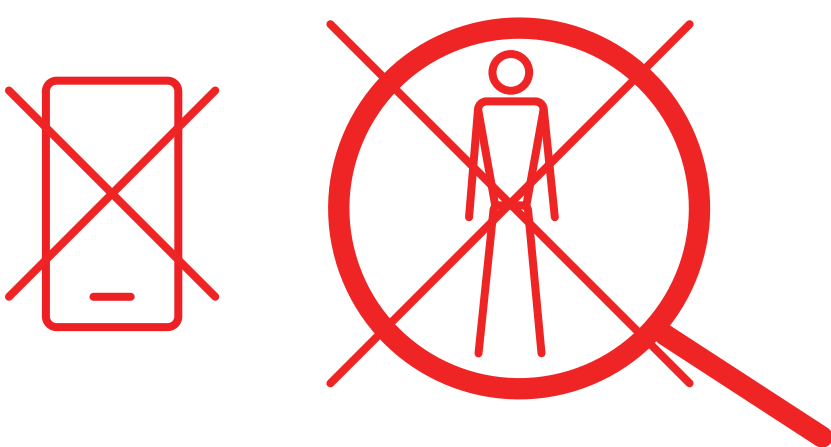
What special measures are available to them if prosecution goes ahead



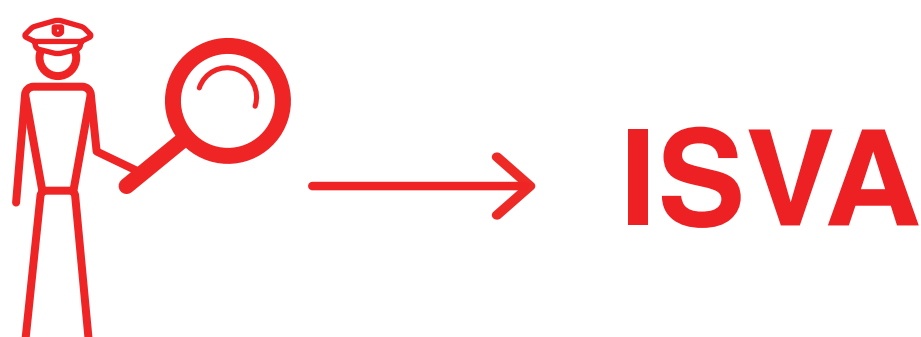
Investigators must not look beyond what has been agreed to by the victim



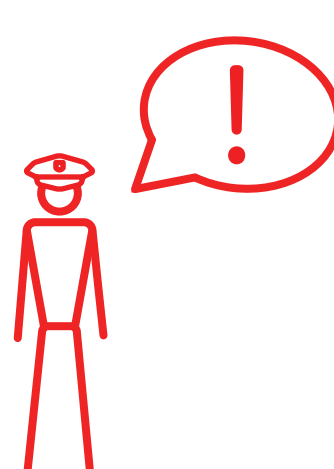
Avoiding seeking to discredit, blame, or otherwise undermine, the victim



Officers should not conduct ‘digital strip searches’ or ‘fishing expeditions’



The role of the police as investigators rather than as support figures, while signposting to other support (e.g. ISVAs)



It should be explained clearly to victims what digital and TPM is being looked at, and why, and their consent obtained



Focusing on the actions and behaviour of the suspect before, during and after the offence, rather than the victim