



# Inventory of Spousal Violence Risk Assessment Tools Used in Canada



# Inventory of Spousal Violence Risk Assessment Tools Used in Canada

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*The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice Canada or the Government of Canada.*

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## Acknowledgements

I would like to kindly acknowledge and thank each jurisdictional contact. Your time and effort was essential to the development of this reference report. I would also like to thank Nathalie Quann, Senior Researcher from the Research and Statistics Division for her insight and guidance throughout this project.

## 1. Introduction

In 2004, collaborative efforts between the Department of Justice Canada, the British Columbia Institute Against Family Violence (BCIFV) and P. Randall Kropp, Ph.D., Stephen D. Hart, Ph.D. and Henrik Belfrage, Ph.D. led to the development of the Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER). The motivation behind the development of B-SAFER was to provide criminal justice professionals with a concise and user-friendly tool that would facilitate risk assessment, support victims in their safety planning and reinforce the ultimate goal of reducing risk to victims of spousal violence.

After the development of the B-SAFER tool, Department of Justice Canada officials working in the area of family violence agreed that it would be useful to identify other spousal violence risk assessment tools currently being used by criminal justice personnel in Canada.

## 2. Objective

The original objective of this project was to identify which (if any) spousal violence risk assessment tools are currently being used by criminal justice personnel (e.g. police, corrections, probation officers) with the goal of preventing future risk and harm to victims of spousal violence in Canada.

## 3. Methodology

The Family Violence Initiative Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) List of Representatives was used as the initial point of contact following discussions at the FPT Family Violence meeting, held in August 2007. In some cases, additional or alternate contacts were made in order to provide a more thorough response. Each contact was asked which (if any) spousal violence risk assessment tools were being used by criminal justice personnel in their jurisdiction.

It was found that criminal justice personnel use a variety of tools and in some jurisdictions, work collaboratively with victim/social services. As such, the scope of this report was broadened to include risk assessment and case management tools, investigative checklists and protocols.

It is important to note that the tools, checklists and protocols outlined in this report are based on the current knowledge of the individuals contacted between January 2008 and September 2008 and is not exhaustive. It does, however, provide important and useful information that has not been gathered in this format and for this purpose. In Fall 2008, a draft copy of the report was distributed via email to the jurisdictional officials who provided information for this inventory in addition to the authors of the tools in order to provide an opportunity for comments and to verify the information contained in this report.

## 4. Findings

Based on discussions with jurisdictional contacts, it was found that while validated risk assessment tools are being used, piloted or reviewed in some provinces/territories, criminal justice personnel are also working with other mechanisms such as investigative checklists, case management tools and interagency protocols, created by their organizations in order to serve their particular needs.

It is noteworthy that while spousal violence risk assessment tools are often designed to assess either risk of recidivism or lethality, investigative checklists or case management tools do not have predictive value. However, in speaking with jurisdictional officials, these instruments serve an important purpose in facilitating efforts to:

1. develop an appropriate safety plan and response to threats for victims;
2. raise awareness among front-line police officers regarding the issues and risk factors surrounding spousal violence;
3. provide evidence for pre-trial and post-sentence decisions; and,
4. assist in developing risk/need plans for spousal violence offenders.

The chart that follows provides a summary of spousal violence risk assessment tools, investigative checklists, case management tools and protocols.<sup>1</sup> It is organized by the province or territory where they are in use. Descriptions of these tools are then presented in alphabetical order by the title of the tool.

### 4.1 Summary by Jurisdiction

Province or Territory	Spousal Violence Risk Assessment Tools/Investigative Checklists/Case Management Tools/Protocols
Newfoundland and Labrador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) (Correctional Services)</li> <li>o Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) (Adult Probation Services)</li> <li>o Violence in Relationship Investigative Checklist (RCMP)</li> <li>o Spousal/Partner Abuse, Assault Court Package Supplement (RCMP)</li> </ul>
Prince Edward Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Domestic Violence Police Investigation Checklist (municipal police departments and RCMP)</li> <li>o Level of Service Inventory–Revised (LSI-R) (Community and Correctional Services)</li> <li>o Woman Abuse Protocols (a partnership between police, Probation Services, Victim Services, Adult Custody, family court counsellors, Turning Point, Financial Assistance and Hospital Emergency)</li> <li>o Court Information Package (police, RCMP)</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> The terminology used throughout this report (e.g. risk assessment, threat assessment, danger assessment) reflects the terms provided by the jurisdictions.

*Inventory of Spousal Violence Risk Assessment Tools  
Used in Canada*

<b>Province or Territory</b>	<b>Spousal Violence Risk Assessment Tools/Investigative Checklists/Case Management Tools/Protocols</b>
Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Risk for Lethality Case Coordination Protocol Framework (police, Victim Services, Community Corrections staff, transition houses, men's intervention programs and child welfare)</li> <li>○ Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) (RCMP, municipal police departments, military police and Correctional Services)<sup>2</sup></li> <li>○ Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) (Correctional Services)<sup>3</sup></li> <li>○ Domestic Violence Inventory<sup>4</sup> (DVI) (Correctional Services )</li> <li>○ Danger Assessment (transition houses, Child Welfare Services and Victim Services)</li> </ul>
New Brunswick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER) (municipal police departments, RCMP)</li> <li>○ Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) (Correctional and Probation Services)</li> <li>○ Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) (Probation Services)</li> <li>○ Aid to Safety Assessment Planning (ASAP) (victims' advocates and Victim Services)</li> <li>○ Risk Management System (Child Protection Services)</li> <li>○ Domestic Violence Court Project (Prosecution Services, Probation Services, Victim Services, Courts, Legal Aid Services and police departments)</li> <li>○ Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) (Probation Services)</li> <li>○ Danger Assessment (Victim Services)</li> </ul>
Québec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Response Protocol for Quebec Police Services (police)</li> <li>○ Séjournelle project (project involves representatives from: Sûreté du Québec, the Bureau des substituts du Procureur général, Quebec correctional services, the Commission québécoise des libérations conditionnelles, a women's shelter and a resource centre for abusive men)</li> </ul>
Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) (police)</li> <li>○ Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) (police)</li> <li>○ Victim's Statement of Risk (police)</li> <li>○ Domestic Violence Supplementary Report Form (DVSRF) (police)</li> </ul>
Manitoba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Family Violence Risk Factor Checklist (Victim Services )</li> <li>○ Professional assessment by social workers</li> <li>○ Offender Risk Assessment Management System –Primary Risk Assessment (ORAMS-PRA) (Correctional Services)<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>
Saskatchewan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Saskatchewan Primary Risk Assessment (SPRA)(Probation Services)</li> <li>○ Offender Risk Assessment Management System –Primary Risk Assessment (ORAMS-PRA) (Correctional Services)</li> <li>○ Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) (provincial correctional centres, Probation Services, domestic violence caseworkers associated with domestic violence courts and police-based victim services programs)</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> In Nova Scotia, Correctional Services will use the ODARA for case management purposes when one has not been completed by police and/or for prioritizing candidates' selection for the in-house domestic violence education program –Respectful Relationships.

<sup>3</sup> LS/CMI is an optional risk assessment tool as of January 2009.

<sup>4</sup> The DVI is an optional risk assessment tool as of January 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Manitoba Correctional Services is currently in the process of moving to the LS/CMI in the coming year.



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<b>Province or Territory</b>	<b>Spousal Violence Risk Assessment Tools/Investigative Checklists/Case Management Tools/Protocols</b>
Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Alberta Relationship Threat Assessment Management Initiative (ARTAMI) (a resource for police, prosecutors, child intervention case workers, women's shelters, corrections personnel, and mental health experts in helping victims in high risk relationships and stalking situations)</li> <li>○ Family Violence Investigation Report (FVIR) (RCMP, municipal police and First Nations police services)</li> <li>○ Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) (police, RCMP, ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit)</li> <li>○ Stalking Assessment and Management (SAM) (police, RCMP, ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit)</li> <li>○ HCR-20 (ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit)</li> <li>○ Risk of Sexual Violence Protocol (RSVP) (ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit)</li> </ul>
British Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) (Correctional Services, Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit, Vancouver Police Department)</li> <li>○ B-SAFER (municipal police domestic violence units)</li> <li>○ Aid to Safety Assessment Planning (ASAP)<sup>6</sup> (Victim Services)</li> <li>○ Stalking and Assessment Management (SAM) (Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit, Vancouver Police Department and the Behavioural Sciences Unit of the RCMP, Surrey, British Columbia)</li> <li>○ HCR-20 (Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit, Vancouver Police Department and the Behavioural Sciences Unit of the RCMP, Surrey, British Columbia)</li> <li>○ Threat Assessment Questions for Field Personnel (Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit, Vancouver Police Department)</li> </ul>
Northwest Territories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Currently reviewing tools used by Alberta (RCMP)</li> <li>○ Yellowknife Interagency Family Violence Protocol (involves YWCA Alison McAteer House (local family violence shelter), Centre for Northern Families, Public Prosecution Service of Canada, NWT Regional Office, Yellowknife RCMP Detachment, Stanton Territorial Health Authority, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Canada/NWT Service Centre, Income Security Programs and Yellowknife Victim Services)</li> </ul>
Yukon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) (Correctional and Probation Services, RCMP)</li> <li>○ Level of Service Inventory –Revised (LSI-R) (Probation Services)</li> </ul>
Nunavut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offender Risk Assessment Management System –Primary Risk Assessment (ORAMS-PRA) (Correctional Services)</li> <li>○ Currently reviewing LS/CMI for future use (Correctional Services)</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Collaborative efforts between victim services and criminal justice personnel have been established locally in some areas of the province.

## 5. Description of Tools, Investigative Checklists and Protocols

### 5.1 Aid to Safety Assessment Planning (ASAP)

The Aid to Safety Assessment Planning is a manual that was created as a result of a partnership between the Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, BC Ministry of Public Safety and the BC Institute Against Family Violence. The objective of this manual is to reduce the risk of violence by providing a comprehensive and coordinated safety management strategy that victim service workers can use in cooperation with other relevant justice agencies to support women in making safety assessment decisions.

It was designed to examine the risk factors from the victim's perspective and emphasizes the need for relevant agencies and the victim to work together and, where appropriate, share information on known risk factors. The manual and sample worksheet incorporates items from established tools such as the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) and the Brief Spousal Assault Form for Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER) to create appropriate safety plans.

The ASAP<sup>7</sup> manual outlines eleven (11) Abuser Factors that identify the abuser's actions that increase a woman's risk of being abused or decrease her level of safety.

#### 11 Abuser Factors

1. Abuser's Violence
2. Violent Threats, Ideation and Intent
3. Escalation of Physical/Sexual Violence or Threats
4. Violations of Civil and Criminal Court Orders
5. Negative Attitudes about Violence against Women in Relationships
6. Other Criminality
7. Response to Shifts in Power and Control Dynamics
8. Employment or Financial Problems
9. Substance Use Problems
10. Mental Health Problems
11. Other Abuser Factors e.g. Access to Firearms, Significant Life Change

It also includes twelve (12) Safety Support Factors that outline what a victim needs to ensure the best possible safety plan while identifying barriers to her safety.

#### Safety Support Factors

1. Level of Personal Support
2. Living Situation
3. Level of Fear
4. Barriers Created by Social Attitudes or Beliefs

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5. Impacts of Abuse
6. Employment and Financial Concern
7. Child-related Concerns
8. Substance Abuse
9. Access to Services
10. Responsivity to Services
11. Provision of Information
12. Coordination of Services

Overall, there are five (5) key steps in using the ASAP manual:

1. Gather the information;
2. Identify the presence and relevance of abuser and safety support factors;
3. Develop risk scenarios;
4. Work with the woman on her safety plan and;
5. Note priority actions.

The ASAP manual is currently being used by victims' advocates and Victim Services in New Brunswick. In British Columbia, collaborative efforts between Victim Services and criminal justice personnel have been established locally in some areas of the province.

To order a copy of the ASAP manual, please visit the Centre for Counselling and Community Safety, Justice Institute of British Columbia web site:

<http://www.jibc.ca/cccs/CustSol/Publications.html#asap> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

## **5.2 Alberta Relationship Threat Assessment Management Initiative (ARTAMI)**

The Alberta Relationship Threat Assessment Management Initiative (ARTAMI) is a provincial, multi-disciplinary resource designed by a group of experts to help victims by working to reduce and prevent serious violence and death in high-risk family relationships and stalking situations.

The ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit includes a Crown prosecutor, a family law expert, a victim safety specialist, a Children's Services liaison, four RCMP members, four municipal police officers in addition to having access to the services of a forensic psychologist.

The unit provides a wide range of services including expert recommendations on risk and threat assessments to police, prosecutors, child intervention case workers, women's shelters, corrections personnel, and mental health experts in order to help victims of high-risk relationship violence and stalking.

### **5.3 Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER)**

The Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER) was developed collaboratively by the British Columbia Institute Against Family Violence, P. Randall Kropp, Ph.D., Stephen D. Hart, Ph.D., Henrik Belfrage, Ph.D. and the Department of Justice Canada.

The development of the B-SAFER tool was based on a number of objectives: to facilitate the work of criminal justice professionals in assessing risk in spousal violence cases, guide the professionals to obtain relevant information necessary to assess level of risk, assist victims in safety planning and ultimately work to prevent future harm and more critical incidents.

This tool includes a checklist of ten (10) risk factors<sup>8</sup> and an interview guide. The first five (5) risk factors relate to a person's history of intimate partner violence:

1. Violent Acts
2. Violent Threat or Thoughts
3. Escalation
4. Violations of Court Orders
5. Violent Attitudes

The second section relates to a person's history of psychological (personal) and social (interpersonal) adjustment problems:

6. General Criminality
7. Intimate Relationship Problems
8. Employment Problems
9. Substance Use Problems
10. Mental Health Problems

The B-SAFER also includes a Recommended Risk Management Strategies section regarding monitoring/surveillance, control/supervision, assessment/treatment and victim safety planning in addition to a conclusory opinions section regarding case prioritization, life-threatening violence, imminent violence and likely victims.

The tool is currently being used by municipal police domestic violence units in British Columbia. In New Brunswick, B-SAFER is being used by both the RCMP and municipal police departments.

For more information on this tool, please refer to the following websites.

[http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2005/rr05\\_rr05\\_fv1-rr05\\_vf1/index.html](http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2005/rr05_rr05_fv1-rr05_vf1/index.html)

(date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

<http://www.proactive-resolutions.com/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

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<sup>8</sup> Reprinted with permission.

## **5.4 Court Information Package**

In Prince Edward Island, all municipal police departments and the RCMP currently use a Court Information Package designed specifically to capture specific information in domestic violence cases.

## **5.5 Danger Assessment**

The Danger Assessment is used by Victim Services in New Brunswick. In Nova Scotia, staff of transition houses, Victim Services and Child Welfare Services (under Department of Community Services) are trained to use the Danger Assessment tool, developed by Jacquelyn Campbell, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N. from the United States. The use of this tool is part of the collaborative process through the High Risk for Lethality Case Coordination Protocol Framework. Information sharing is initiated with relevant agencies if any of the primary service providers designate a file as high risk.

The Danger Assessment tool is comprised of two parts: the first portion of the tool evaluates severity and frequency of abuse by providing the woman with a calendar of the previous year. The woman is asked to mark dates of past abuse on a calendar. Incidents are ranked from least to most severe. Indicators include: slapping, pushing, punching, kicking, bruises, “beating up” (i.e. burns, broken bones and miscarriage), threat to use a weapon and finally, use of a weapon with wounds.

The second portion of the tool is a 20-item instrument which includes a weighted scoring system to count yes/no responses of risk factors linked with intimate partner homicide.

For more information, please refer to the following website:

<http://www.dangerassessment.org/WebApplication1/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

## **5.6 Domestic Violence Court Project**

In Moncton, New Brunswick, a Domestic Violence Coordinating Team was developed as part of the Domestic Violence Court Project. The team includes a Crown prosecutor, a probation officer, a victim services coordinator, a court coordinator, legal aid services and police agencies. Weekly communication occurs on cases appearing in court for sentencing, court monitoring of an offender’s sentence or when there is a request to change a contact condition order between the victim and the accused.

A Domestic Violence Court Docket is circulated weekly to the social workers and all involved in the Domestic Violence Court, in order to facilitate a coordinated response for domestic violence files. Social workers provide a court coordinator with the status of their case (i.e., court orders and their intervention plan) before the Court of Queen’s Bench which avoids conflicting court orders coming from the Court of Queen’s Bench and the Provincial Court. It also allows a judge to make a more informed decision and avoids duplication or

lack of intervention. The court coordinator is responsible for sharing this information with the Domestic Violence Coordinating Team.

## **5.7 Domestic Violence Inventory (DVI)**

The Domestic Violence Inventory, developed by Behaviour Data Systems Ltd., is used as an optional tool by Community Corrections personnel in the province of Nova Scotia, to assess risk and need levels of offenders charged with a domestic violence offence. When a case is categorized as high risk for lethality, spousal/intimate partner violence is flagged and case management strategies specific to domestic violence are implemented. All offenders charged with domestic violence must attend a domestic violence educational program.

This self administered tool includes six scales: Truthfulness Scale, Violence Scale, Control Scale, Alcohol Scale, Drugs Scale and Stress Coping Abilities Scale. The results of the DVI support the general/overall risk assessment provided by the Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) and are also included in pre-sentence and post-sentence reports.

For more information on the Domestic Violence Inventory, please visit the following website. [http://www.bdsltd.com/TestsA\\_DVI.asp](http://www.bdsltd.com/TestsA_DVI.asp) (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

## **5.8 Domestic Violence Police Investigation Checklist**

Municipal police departments and the RCMP in Prince Edward Island currently use the Domestic Violence Police Investigation Checklist.

The checklist was developed by a committee comprised of representatives from all police agencies in the province, Victim Services, Court Services, Crown attorneys and a provincial family violence coordinator. The committee oversees the *Victims of Family Violence Act*<sup>9</sup> and coordinates police training related to family violence.

This checklist is a form completed by the investigating officer and is reviewed by the police supervisor. Both mechanisms are in place to ensure comprehensive police investigations of domestic violence incidents. Information regarding the accused, available evidence and notification of victim services is included in the form. The development of the investigative checklist involved the review of similar checklists and was tailored to meet the particular needs of this area.

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<sup>9</sup> The *Victims of Family Violence Act* is a provincial law that came into effect on December 16, 1996.

## **5.9 Domestic Violence Supplementary Report Form (DVSRF)**

The Domestic Violence Supplementary Report Form (DVSRF) was created by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) Behavioural Science Section, in response to the May-Iles Inquest.<sup>10</sup>

Police services throughout Ontario have been provided with this investigative checklist which includes a list of 19 risk factors, to be administered by front-line investigating officers in domestic violence cases. Supervisors are required to sign off on all forms and are consulted on high risk cases regarding next steps and established protocols.

Some of the identified risk factors include past history of violence, access to firearms, sexual abuse and bizarre and unexplained behaviour. Once an interview is completed, the Crown examines the results which assist in informing decisions on bail issuance for individuals accused of domestic violence.

## **5.10 Family Violence Investigation Report (FVIR)**

The Family Violence Investigation Report was developed by the Family Violence Police Advisory Committee<sup>11</sup> in the province of Alberta. As part of the developmental phase of this form, many different risk assessment tools were reviewed. It was piloted in 14 sites across Alberta between January 2007 and May 2007. The pilot sites were comprised of three municipal police services, one First Nations police service and ten RCMP detachments in the province.

The form was designed as an investigative/case management tool. The 19-item report form was created to assist police departments in the province of Alberta in a number of areas: gathering critical information within 12 hours of the incident, assisting in the writing of a police report, planning victim safety and raising awareness of front-line officers on risks associated with suspect history, complainant's perception of personal safety and future violence and information on relationship background.

This checklist is useful for addressing questions and information required for bail hearings, providing information for sentencing considerations and providing Crown prosecutors with a quick overview of cases. Furthermore, it helps direct victim safety planning strategies and offender management plans.

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<sup>10</sup> Arlene May was murdered in March 1996 by her former boyfriend who then killed himself. Arlene's murder followed months of abuse, threats and harassment, which she had reported to the police numerous times. At the time of the murder/suicide, he had been charged with several offences against Arlene and was free on bail that prohibited him from having any contact with her. The Chief Coroner of Ontario decided to hold an inquest into her death and into the issue of domestic violence generally. Inquest into the deaths of Arlene May and Randy Iles, February 16 - July 2, 1998, Coroners Courts, Toronto, Ontario. <http://www.owjn.org/archive/arlene.htm> (date accessed: April 10, 2009)

<sup>11</sup> The Public Security Division of Alberta Solicitor General chairs the committee which is comprised of officials from the municipal police services, the RCMP, First Nations Police Service, the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, Children and Youth Services, and the Criminal Justice Division of Alberta Justice. The committee meets on a regular basis with a focus on protection issues and the criminal justice system.

## 5.11 Family Violence Risk Factor Checklist

This checklist was developed by representatives from various community organizations in Winnipeg as well as Winnipeg Police Services, Manitoba Justice Prosecutions, Probation and Victim Services as well as the RESOLVE program at the University of Manitoba. Consultation occurred with a forensic psychologist, Dr. Gail Robertson from the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine.

The checklist is not used as a formal tool but rather provides a comprehensive list of risk factors related to the offending individual and the victim which can assist workers to make safety assessments. Manitoba Justice Victim Services staff are required to forward a report which includes an analysis of safety factors to Prosecutions in the event a complainant requests changes to protective conditions (i.e. no contact/no attendance conditions) contained on a court order.

## 5.12 HCR-20

The HCR-20 was developed by Christopher D. Webster, Ph.D., Kevin S. Douglas, LLB, Ph.D., Derek Eaves, M.D. and Stephen D. Hart, Ph.D. It is a broad-based violence risk assessment tool which may be applied to a variety of cases, including domestic violence. It examines historical, clinical and risk management and is comprised of twenty (20) items.<sup>12</sup>

<b>Historical Scale</b>	
H1	Previous Violence
H2	Young Age at First Violent Incident
H3	Relationship Instability
H4	Employment Problems
H5	Substance Abuse Problems
H6	Major Mental Illness
H7	Psychopathy
H8	Early Maladjustment
H9	Personality Disorder
H10	Prior Supervision Failure
<b>Clinical Scale</b>	
C1	Lack of Insight
C2	Negative Attitudes
C3	Active Symptoms of Major Mental Illness
C4	Impulsivity
C5	Unresponsiveness to Treatment
<b>Risk Management Scale</b>	
R1	Plans Lack Feasibility
R2	Exposure to Destabilizers
R3	Lack of Personal Support
R4	Noncompliance with Remediation Attempts
R5	Stress

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The HCR-20 is currently being used by the ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit in the province of Alberta and the Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit of the Vancouver Police Department and the Behavioural Sciences Unit of the RCMP in Surrey, British Columbia.

For more information on the HCR-20, please refer to the following website.  
<http://www.proactive-resolutions.com/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

### **5.13 High Risk for Lethality Case Coordination Protocol Framework**

The High Risk for Lethality Case Coordination Protocol Framework is a joint provincial protocol of the Nova Scotia Departments of Justice, Community Services and Public Prosecution Service. Local committees in all counties are involved with how the protocol can be best implemented in each area.

When a case is deemed to be a “high risk” situation, the High Risk for Lethality Case Coordination Protocol Framework requires information sharing among primary service providers including: police, victim services workers, community corrections staff, transition houses, men’s intervention programs and child welfare. The Framework was developed to help identify and reduce risk of death and increase safety for victims by providing support/safety planning for the victim and avoid duplication of services.

Crown attorneys are also informed of the risk assessment results and can take this information into account with respect to victim safety, when considering conditions of release. At the time of this report, however, this information is not being formally introduced in court proceedings.

### **5.14 Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI)**

The Level of Service Case Management Inventory, developed by Don Andrews, Ph.D., James Bonta, Ph.D. and J. Stephen Wormith, Ph.D., is considered to be a general risk and needs assessment and case management tool for all offenders and is not specific to spousal violence offenders.

The tool is administered by community corrections staff and probation officers primarily to outline and monitor case plans. It also assists in the identification of appropriate levels of supervision on the basis of an offender’s rehabilitation and programming needs.

Key areas measured are: criminal history, education/employment, family/marital, leisure/recreation, companions, alcohol/drug problem, attitudes/orientation, criminogenic/non-criminogenic needs, responsivity and case management.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Case management is not considered an area of assessment. It is where the officer outlines and monitors the case plan.

The LS/CMI is currently used by Adult Probation Services in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick and as an optional tool for Correctional Services in Nova Scotia. Manitoba Correctional Services is currently in the process of moving to the LS/CMI in the coming year. Correctional Services in Nunavut is currently reviewing this tool for future use.

For more information on this tool, please refer to the following web site.  
<https://www.mhs.com/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

### **5.15 Level of Service Inventory-R (LSI-R)**

The LSI-R, developed by Don Andrews, Ph.D. and James Bonta, Ph.D., is an assessment and screening tool for all offenders and is not specific to spousal violence offenders. This tool measures risk factors in areas of criminal history, employment, family/marital, companions, alcohol/drug problems, emotional/personal and attitude/orientation. This tool helps inform decision criteria regarding offenders' service and supervision needs.

The LSI-R is currently being used by Community and Correctional Services in Prince Edward Island and Probation Services in the Yukon.

For more information on the LSI-R, please refer to the following web site:  
<https://www.mhs.com/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

### **5.16 Offender Risk Assessment Management System–Primary Risk Assessment (ORAMS-PRA)**

This tool was developed by Correctional Services in Manitoba and is used in all custodial facilities and corrections centres in the province. However, Manitoba Correctional Services is currently in the process of moving to the LS/CMI in the coming year. Correctional Services in Saskatchewan and Nunavut have also implemented the ORAMS-PRA.

The Primary Risk Assessment (PRA) is a component of the ORAMS. It is used as a general risk and needs assessment tool to assist in predicting an offender's risk to re-offend. It also provides the foundation for how case plans are prepared. All offenders sentenced to probation, a conditional sentence or incarceration and for those whom a court report has been ordered undergo the Primary Risk Assessment.

### **5.17 Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA)**

The Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) was the result of collaborative efforts between the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and the Mental Health Centre (MHC) based in

Penetanguishene, Ontario. This empirically based, actuarial risk assessment tool was developed in response to both the May-Iles and Hadley Inquest<sup>14</sup> recommendations and recommendations made by The Joint Committee on Domestic Violence<sup>15</sup> to the Attorney General of Ontario in 1999.

The ODARA was originally developed for front-line police officers but is available for use by victim services, health care workers, probation and correctional services personnel in addition to domestic violence caseworkers in some provinces. This tool assesses risk of future wife assault in addition to the frequency and severity of these assaults. Although it was not designed to predict risk of lethality, the authors have found a correlation between higher ODARA scores and more severe assaults in the future. The form is made up of the following 13 items.

Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment Items (ODARA)<sup>16</sup>

1. Previous Domestic Incident
2. Previous Non domestic Incident
3. Prior Correctional Sentence of at least 30 days
4. Failure on Previous Conditional Release
5. Threat to Harm or Kill Anyone at the Index Assault
6. Confinement of the Partner During/at the Index Assault
7. Victim Concerned/Fearful of Future Assaults
8. Two or More Children
9. Victim has a Biological Child from a Previous Partner
10. Perpetrator's Violence Against Others
11. Perpetrator's Substance Abuse
12. Assault on Victim when Pregnant
13. Any Barrier to Victim Support

The ODARA is currently being used by police departments in Ontario. In Nova Scotia, a number of agencies use the ODARA including the RCMP, municipal police departments, military police and Correctional Services. Probation Services in New Brunswick uses this tool. In Saskatchewan, provincial correctional centres, Probation Services and domestic violence caseworkers associated with domestic violence courts and police-based victim services programs use the ODARA.

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<sup>14</sup> Gillian Hadley was murdered in June 2000 by her husband (from whom she was separated) Ralph Hadley. Shortly after he murdered Gillian, he killed himself. He had assaulted her and her disabled child and had criminal charges pending against him. He had also been charged with criminal harassment after stalking her following their separation. He was under an order of the court to remain away from her. The Hadley Inquest resulted in 58 jury recommendations. <http://www.owjn.org/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009)

<sup>15</sup> In November 1998, a Joint Committee on Domestic Violence, composed of senior government officials and experts on domestic violence, was created to advise the government of Ontario on how best to implement the 213 recommendations arising from the Coroner's Inquest into the murder of Arlene May, a victim of domestic violence and the suicide of Randy Iles, the perpetrator of that violence. <http://www.ontariocourts.on.ca/ojc/en/decisions/2002/baldwin.htm> (date accessed: April 10, 2009)

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For more information on the ODARA, please refer to the following article:

Hilton, N.Z., Harris, G.T., Rice, M.E., Lang, C., Cormier, C.A., & Lines, K.J. (2004). A brief actuarial assessment for the prediction of wife assault recidivism: The Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment. *Psychological Assessment*, 16, 267-275.

For additional information and for a full scoring and interpretation booklet, please refer to the following website: <http://www.mhcop-research.com/odarasum.htm> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

## **5.18 Professional Assessment**

There are established protocols in the province of Manitoba with the aim to reduce risk to victims of spousal violence. Social workers categorize spousal violence cases into two groups for assessment: 1) Charged, and 2) Not Charged. The social workers use their professional judgement to assess the level of risk. This assessment information is used to help Crown attorneys make decisions regarding the case. In instances where a case is deemed high risk, community support surveillance officers are assigned to closely monitor the individual.

## **5.19 Response Protocol for Quebec Police Services**

The Department of Public Security has developed a protocol for police response to domestic violence that recommends the use of a Memorandum of Agreement between police services and the various stakeholders. A domestic violence response protocol model has been made available to police services. At this time, it is not known which police services are using the protocol.

## **5.20 Risk Management System**

The Department of Social Development, Child Protection Services of New Brunswick administers a tool entitled the Risk Management System which includes a domestic violence component. This tool is based on the New York State Department of Social Services safety assessment and risk management tools. The tool was reviewed following a recommendation submitted in July 1998 by the Child Death Review Committee.

The New Brunswick Risk Management System contains nine key components including: nine (9) risk decision points, criteria to guide each decision, documentation of each decision, an immediate safety assessment and safety plan, a comprehensive risk assessment tool in addition to a service plan connected to the risk assessment.

Child Protection Services share the results of their risk assessments with the police and victim services, providing the victim is a client of victim services. Information sharing also occurs where there is a need to coordinate an intervention plan.

The Child Welfare System of New Brunswick is currently under restructuring to introduce differential responses and part of this project is to develop a more comprehensive assessment, based on the family's strengths.

### **5.21 Risk of Sexual Violence Protocol (RSVP)**

The Risk of Sexual Violence Protocol (Stephen D. Hart, P. Randall Kropp and D. Richard Laws with Jessica Klaver, Caroline Logan and Kelly A. Watt) is a 22-item risk assessment tool associated with the risk of sexual violence, examining static, dynamic and manageability factors. The assessment is based on a foundation of effective assessment, case management and the required interventions to manage and reduce risk. It is used in cases of domestic violence, if deemed appropriate.

This tool is currently used by the ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit in the province of Alberta.

For more information, please refer to the following website.  
<http://www.proactive-resolutions.com/> (date accessed April 10, 2009.)

### **5.22 Saskatchewan Primary Risk Assessment (SPRA)**

Probation officers in the province of Saskatchewan are certified in the use of the Saskatchewan Primary Risk Assessment tool (SPRA). It is a 15-item scoring sheet which includes risk levels and cut-off ratings along with an accompanying scoring and information record for more detailed information. The SPRA is a slightly modified version of the Offender Risk Assessment Management System – Primary Risk Assessment and is used in case plan development, risk management and risk reduction strategies.

### **5.23 Séjournelle Project**

The objective of this project is to develop and implement a model for cross-sectoral initiatives aimed at preventing assault and homicide in order to provide enhanced safety for victims of domestic violence. The project is patterned after the model used in Duluth, Minnesota.

The project has two main components: a common framework for evaluating the safety of victims of domestic violence and the development of cohesive and coordinated cross-sectoral initiatives and services. The project involves representatives of the Sûreté du Québec, the Bureau des substituts du Procureur général, Quebec correctional services, the Commission québécoise des libérations conditionnelles, a shelter and support centre for women who are victims of domestic violence and a resource centre for abusive men. All are working together to improve their services and programs for women who are victims of domestic violence and abusive men with a view to preventing repeat offences and increasing victim safety.

The agency in charge of the project is currently developing a tool for evaluating the safety of women who are victims of domestic violence that includes a risk assessment. The agency is hoping to test the evaluation tool, which should be used with partners under Memoranda of Agreement.

## **5.24 Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)**

The Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA) was developed by P. Randall Kropp, Ph.D., Stephen D. Hart, Ph.D., Christopher D. Webster, Ph.D. and Derek Eaves, M.D. This tool consists of a 20-item checklist covering criminal history, psychological functioning, and current social adjustment. It may be used by a variety of professionals including: law enforcement professionals, correctional officers and government agencies. It is designed to assess the risk of future abuse in adult male offenders in addition to incorporating the evaluators' professional judgment as part of the assessment. SARA includes the following twenty (20) indicators categorized under four (4) sections:<sup>17</sup>

<p><b>Criminal History</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Past Assault of Family Members</li><li>2. Past Assault of Strangers or Acquaintances</li><li>3. Past Violation of Conditional Release or Community Supervision</li></ol> <p><b>Psychosocial Adjustment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Recent Relationship Problems</li><li>5. Recent Employment Problems</li><li>6. Victim of and/or Witness to Family Violence as a Child or Adolescent</li><li>7. Recent Substance Abuse/Dependence</li><li>8. Recent Suicidal or Homicidal Ideation/Intent</li><li>9. Recent Psychotic and/or Manic Symptoms</li><li>10. Personality Disorder with Anger, Impulsivity, or Behavioural Instability</li></ol> <p><b>Spousal Assault History</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>11. Past Physical Assault</li><li>12. Past Sexual Assault/Sexual Jealousy</li><li>13. Past Use of Weapons and/or Credible Threats of Death</li><li>14. Recent Escalation in Frequency or Severity of Assault</li><li>15. Past Violation of "No Contact" Orders</li><li>16. Extreme Minimization or Denial of Spousal Assault History</li><li>17. Attitudes that Support or Condone Spousal Assault</li></ol> <p><b>Alleged (Current) Offence</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>18. Severe and/or Sexual Assault</li><li>19. Use of Weapons and/or Credible Threats of Death</li><li>20. Violation of "No Contact" Order</li></ol>
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The SARA is used by criminal justice personnel in a number of areas across the country, including: Newfoundland and Labrador (Correctional Services), New Brunswick (Correctional and Probation Services), Ontario (police), Alberta (police, RCMP, ARTAMI Threat Assessment

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Unit), British Columbia (Correctional Services, Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment, Vancouver Police Department) and the Yukon (Correctional and Probation Services, RCMP).

For more information, please refer to the following website:  
<http://www.proactive-resolutions.com/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

### **5.25 Spousal/Partner Abuse, Assault Court Package Supplement**

The RCMP in Newfoundland and Labrador complete this form for Prosecution Services in the province. It includes relevant factors relating to previous incidents of violence and history of court orders. It is attached to case files and used in bail hearings.

### **5.26 Stalking Assessment and Management (SAM)**

The Stalking Assessment and Management Guidelines manual was created by P. Randall Kropp, Ph.D., Stephen D. Hart, Ph.D., and David R. Lyon, Ph.D. It is based on structured professional guidelines for assessing stalking. This tool includes a number of assessment items which are categorized under three main areas: the nature of stalking, the perpetrator's risk factors and the victim's vulnerability factors.

The administration of the SAM includes a number of steps including: identifying information, factors present, scenarios of stalking, case management plan and case prioritization.

In the province of Alberta, the SAM is used by police, the RCMP and the ARTAMI Threat Assessment Unit. In British Columbia, the SAM is used by the Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit of the Vancouver Police Department and by the Behavioural Sciences Unit of the RCMP in Surrey, British Columbia.

For more information on this tool, please refer to the following website:  
<http://www.proactive-resolutions.com/> (date accessed April 10, 2009.)

### **5.27 Threat Assessment Questions for Field Personnel**

The Threat Assessment Questions for Field Personnel was recently created by the Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit of the Vancouver Police Department. Thirteen (13) risk factors<sup>18</sup> are included in this investigative guide.

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**Threat Assessment Questions for Field Personnel**

**Current Status of Relationship:**

- Are there past, recent/pending separations?
- During separations has the accused stalked/harassed victim?
- Has the accused displayed jealous behaviors?

**History of Violence/Abuse in Relationship:**

- Has there been physical/sexual/verbal/emotional/financial abuse and has abuse escalated in the last 12 months?
- Has the victim ever required medical attention?

**Assaults/Threats:**

- Has the accused ever hurt, injured/threatened to hurt victim, a family member, another person/animal?
- Does the accused use extreme minimization or denial of assaultive behavior?

**Weapons:**

- Has the accused ever used weapons against victim or threatened to use weapons?
- Does the accused own a firearm or have plans to acquire a firearm?

**Children:**

- Have children witnessed the abuse by accused?
- Have children been abused?
- Has the Ministry of Children and Family Development been involved with the family?

**Abduction:**

- Has the accused ever abducted/threatened to abduct children?

**Strangulation:**

- Has the accused ever strangled or bitten the victim?

**Employment:**

- Has the accused employment history changed during the last 12 months?
- Does the accused have problems maintaining employment?

**Criminal Status:**

- Is the accused currently before the courts?
- Has the accused ever violated a court order including Peace Bond or no contact?

**Substance Abuse:**

- Is the accused currently using alcohol/drugs?
- Is substance abuse escalating?
- Does violence increase when the accused has been consuming?

**Mental Health/Suicide:**

- Does the accused have a mental illness?
- Has the accused ever expressed homicidal/suicidal ideas?
- Has the accused ever attempted suicide?

**Thoughts and Plans of Violence:**

- Has the accused ever made serious threats, committed acts of stalking/made plans to harm others?



**Victim Vulnerability:**

- Is the victim socially/physically isolated, unwilling to leave home?
- What is the victim's perception of personal safety?
- What are the cultural barriers to getting help?

## **5.28 Victim's Statement of Risk**

The Victim's Statement of Risk is a risk indicators checklist developed by the Joint Committee on Domestic Violence in Ontario and is used by police agencies in the province. Victims answer the questions when they provide their initial statement to the investigating police officer. This brief form contains a list of questions that may indicate a degree of risk to the victim's safety. Although not a risk assessment, the form was developed to provide useful information to Crown attorneys and the Courts.

## **5.29 Violence in Relationship Investigative Checklist**

This checklist is used by RCMP investigators in Newfoundland and Labrador to assist in determining heightened risk to victims. It is attached to all spousal/relationship files and is used to help inform the case history of any previous incidents of violence. It is also used to develop integrated and cooperative community partner strategies with victim services in order to manage the risk to victims.

## **5.30 Woman Abuse Protocols**

The Coalition for Woman Abuse Policy and Protocol in Prince Edward Island was formed in 1998 to address the need for a comprehensive woman abuse policy. It is a partnership of the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention, Victim Services, the PEI Medical Society, Woman Abuse and the PEI Legal System Research Team of the Muriel McQueen Ferguson Centre for Family Violence Research, the Aboriginal Women's Association, the PEI Nurses Association, RCMP, The Learning Center, The Family Violence Consultant for the province of PEI, the PEI Inter-Ministerial Women's Secretariat and the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

For more information on the Woman Abuse Protocols in Prince Edward Island, please refer to the following website: <http://www.cliapei.ca/womanabuse/> (date accessed: April 10, 2009.)

## **5.31 Yellowknife Interagency Family Violence Protocol**

This interagency protocol outlines how individuals or organizations can work together when they investigate a family violence incident in the Northwest Territories. The eight agencies involved in the protocol include the: YWCA Alison McAteer House (local family violence shelter), Centre for Northern Families, Public Prosecution Service of Canada, NWT Regional Office, Yellowknife RCMP Detachment, Stanton Territorial Health Authority, Yellowknife Health and

Social Services Authority, Canada/NWT Service Centre, Income Security Programs and Yellowknife Victim Services.

The protocol increases information-sharing and interagency collaboration with the goal of increasing victim safety. The implementation of this protocol is in its early stages. However, it is working towards contributing to the development of models and strategies to improve the criminal justice system response to family violence.

## 6. Conclusion

During the course of this project, respondents from all provinces and territories have expressed different challenges, needs and levels of resources in their jurisdictions regarding spousal violence risk assessments and other types of tools. Based on these comments and concerns, it was evident that there are wide variations in terms of how jurisdictions across Canada are able or are structured to respond to the complexity of spousal violence cases.

Despite these differences, a consistent message became quite clear. According to our respondents, the level of effectiveness in reducing risk in spousal violence and improving subsequent safety plans for victims is inextricably linked to the following issues:

1. Developing or improving the coordination of services and information-sharing through protocols;
2. Making interdisciplinary training available to all stakeholders; and,
3. Coordinating risk assessments, practices and operations among all criminal justice personnel and social/victim services.

There is a notable overlap in terms of the use of specific tools across the country. At the same time, many jurisdictions have expressed interest in developing and eventually implementing standard practices across the country with regards to spousal violence risk assessment tools. This report will contribute to further discussions at the federal, provincial and territorial levels on the issue of risk assessment tools and maximizing safety for victims of spousal violence.