

RED FLAG WEEKLY

ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE FOR SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

EDITION
15

MONDAY
27 JULY 2026

SAFETYSOLUTIONSTRAINING.CO.UK

THIS WEEK

Five stories. One clear message for employers.

Fresh evidence on normalised abuse, a lone-worker knife robbery, targeted online harassment, repeated threats to NHS staff and new post-incident guidance all point to the same duty: anticipate risk, support workers and prove the controls work.

MEDIA

01

New official research shows how abuse, threats and online hostility can become treated as part of the job.

TRANSPORT

02

A late-night delivery stop became a violent robbery involving a lone worker, a vehicle, cash and no colleague nearby.

POLICING

03

A harassment case shows how workplace conflict can continue through fake accounts, fabricated complaints and external channels.

NHS

04

Repeated abuse and threats at Royal Oldham Hospital led to a formal order restricting a known offender.

NHS

05

New NHS framework sets out post-incident support.



MEDIA / PUBLIC-FACING STAFF / LONE WORKER

Safety Concerns Have Become Normalised Across UK Journalism

New official research shows how abuse, threats and online hostility can become treated as part of the job.

SOURCE DCMS research	SURVEY 531 valid responses
LONG SURVEY 396 respondents	PUBLISHED 24 July 2026

Department for Culture, Media and Sport research found that nearly three-quarters of surveyed journalists had experienced harassment, abuse, threats or legal intimidation connected with their work. Among long-survey respondents, 72 per cent had experienced safety concerns and 66 per cent agreed that those concerns had become normalised as part of the job. The research also identified online abuse, personal identification, lone working, live reporting and limited support for freelance or independent journalists as recurring issues. The survey should not be presented as representing every UK journalist, but it is strong evidence of a visible public-facing workforce managing risk beyond the office.

VINCE'S VIEW

The sector may be journalism, but the pattern is familiar across housing, health, enforcement, charities and public services. When abuse becomes accepted as part of the job, reporting often falls and people begin managing risk alone. The lesson is that visible roles need clear threat-assessment routes, online evidence capture, travel planning and a response when hostility identifies a worker's home, car or family. Visibility created by the role must be treated as an occupational risk.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

- Treat public visibility as a workplace risk.
- Set clear routes for reporting threats and online abuse.
- Support freelance, mobile and isolated workers explicitly.

02
LW

TRANSPORT / DELIVERY / LONE WORKER

Lone Delivery Driver Cut With a Knife During Cash Robbery

A late-night delivery stop became a violent robbery involving a lone worker, a vehicle, cash and no colleague nearby.

WORKER Delivery driver	LOCATION Newtownards
TIME About 1 am	INJURY Hospital treatment

The Police Service of Northern Ireland said a male delivery driver stopped in Landsdowne Road, Newtownards, at about 1 am on 19 July. Three men reportedly attacked him, cut his face with a knife and stole money from his car before escaping on foot. The driver required hospital treatment. Police appealed for witnesses and dashcam or CCTV footage.

VINCE'S VIEW

This is a direct lone-worker risk involving isolation, money, a vehicle and limited immediate help. What matters is that the organisation knows where drivers are, limits cash exposure and provides a reliable emergency contact process. Drivers should feel supported to withdraw from unsafe situations without fear of criticism for delaying or abandoning a task. The response plan must work at 1 am, not just during office hours.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

- Review lone-worker arrangements for night deliveries.
- Limit cash exposure and set clear escalation points.
- Make emergency contact arrangements usable out of hours.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

<https://www.psnl.police.uk/latest-news/appeal-information-following-report-robbery-landsdowne-road-area-newtownards-sunday>
Police appeal: 19 July 2026



POLICING / WORKPLACE HARASSMENT / ONLINE SAFETY

Former Officer Sentenced for Online Campaign Against a Colleague

A harassment case shows how workplace conflict can continue through fake accounts, fabricated complaints and external channels.

DEFENDANT Former constable	CONDUCT Oct 2024 to Oct 2025
SENTENCE Community order	RESTRICTION Three-year restraining order

Avon and Somerset Police said former constable Jack Wood admitted harassment and wasting police time. Between October 2024 and October 2025, he used fictitious email accounts and social-media profiles to harass a former colleague and submit fabricated complaints to police and public figures. Bristol Magistrates' Court imposed a 12-month community order, including 200 hours of unpaid work, and a three-year restraining order. The force said the conduct caused clear distress and was intended to undermine, harass and embarrass former colleagues.

VINCE'S VIEW

Online harassment can be persistent, targeted and difficult for a worker to escape. Organisations often need to preserve emails, profiles, complaint patterns and other digital evidence rather than examining each contact in isolation. Support should continue even where either party has left the organisation. A clear link between HR, security, legal and police reporting prevents the worker being sent around the system alone.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

- Capture digital evidence as a pattern, not isolated messages.
- Keep support open after employment relationships change.
- Link HR, legal, security and police reporting routes.



NHS / LOCAL AUTHORITY / COURT ORDER

Three-Year Hospital Ban Follows Repeated Threats to Staff

Repeated abuse and threats at Royal Oldham Hospital led to a formal order restricting a known offender.

VENUE Royal Oldham Hospital	ORDER Criminal Behaviour Order
DURATION Until 28 June 2029	RISK Threats to staff

Oldham Council said Andrew Stonier repeatedly abused and threatened nurses and other staff at Royal Oldham Hospital, including threatening to set fire to the hospital. Manchester Magistrates' Court granted a Criminal Behaviour Order after an application by the council's Community Safety Team. The order prevents him entering the hospital until 28 June 2029, except for a pre-arranged appointment or genuine emergency treatment. Breach of a Criminal Behaviour Order without reasonable excuse is a criminal offence and may result in arrest and prosecution.

VINCE'S VIEW

Staff should not have to manage repeated threats as disconnected incidents. Where the pattern is clear, health services, councils, police and legal teams need to share information and use proportionate controls. The order is not a substitute for staff training or local security, but it is evidence of escalation being taken seriously. One recurring theme is knowing when to move from incident response to formal restriction.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

- Identify repeat offenders and repeat locations.
- Use multi-agency controls where proportionate.
- Keep local staff trained for immediate safety decisions.

Oldham Council

05
PIS

NHS / SOCIAL CARE / EMPLOYER DUTY

New NHS Framework Sets Out What Must Follow Violence and Abuse

The incident does not end when the aggressor leaves. The employer's next decisions can shape recovery and learning.

PUBLISHED

1 July 2026

COVERS

Violence and abuse

SETTINGS

Wards, homes and remote roles

INCLUDES

Contracted staff

NHS Employers published a post-incident support framework endorsed by the NHS Staff Council and Social Partnership Forum. It covers violence and abuse in wards, community services, patients' homes and remote or contact-centre roles. The framework sets out immediate safety and psychological first aid, formal reporting, manager contact, defusing within three to ten days, trained debriefing, after-action review and longer-term support. It also says contracted staff, including security workers, must be included in support arrangements.

VINCE'S VIEW

Too many organisations focus on preventing the incident and improvise everything afterwards. A worker may need immediate safety, help getting home, time away from the public and clear information about what happens next. Experience shows that managers need to know their responsibilities before the incident occurs. Reporting, welfare, police involvement where appropriate, and organisational learning should form one joined-up process.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

- Define post-incident support before incidents occur.
- Train managers on welfare, evidence and escalation.
- Include agency, contracted and remote workers.

October 2026 Strengthens the Evidence Employers Need.

66

DAYS TO THE FIRST OCTOBER
EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT
CHANGE

October 2026 is not a single switch-on date. GOV.UK lists the Employment Tribunal claim time limit increasing to six months on 1 October 2026. The harassment reforms are listed for 30 October 2026.

Those harassment reforms strengthen the sexual-harassment prevention duty from reasonable steps to all reasonable steps. They also introduce employer liability for qualifying third-party harassment where the statutory conditions are met.

Earlier 2026 changes also matter for employers. From 6 April, qualifying disclosures about sexual harassment were brought expressly within whistleblowing protection. Statutory Sick Pay became payable from the first full day of sickness absence, and the lower earnings limit was removed. The Fair Work Agency was established on 7 April.

- Risk assessments should identify foreseeable abuse, harassment and aggression.
- Training should be current, role-specific and supported by trusted reporting routes.
- Supervision should help staff withdraw, report and preserve evidence.
- Records should show review after incidents and whether further reasonable preventative steps were available.

In any dispute, the evidence is likely to include prevention, reporting, supervision, training, incident review and whether further reasonable measures could have been taken.

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WEEKLY

ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE FOR SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Training Built Around What Your Staff Actually Face

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LONE WORKER SAFETY

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Red Flag Weekly is researched and written by Vince Donovan, Director, Safety Solutions Training Ltd. Every story in this edition is verified against a named, public source. No statistics are invented or estimated.