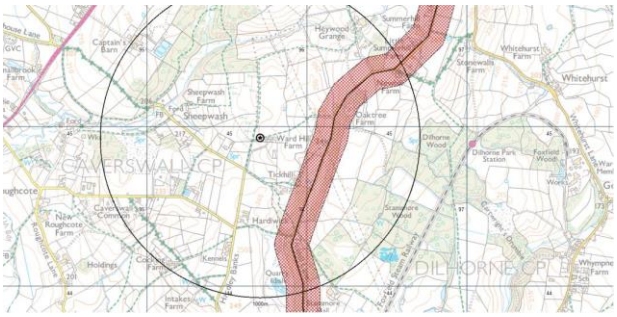
Counter Terrorism & Search-Position Ranking & Analysis System (CTS-PRAS)

PolSA CASE STUDY – SAMANTHA EASTWOOD

BACKGROUND

On 27th July 2017, midwife Samantha Eastwood was reported missing by her colleagues after she failed to show up for a shift at Royal Stoke hospital. However, it would be more than week before police discovered her body in a shallow grave, wrapped in a duvet cover and with tape across her eyes and face.
Cunning Running Software's Counter Terrorism and Search Planning Tool, (CTS-PRAS) was used for the entire duration of Staffordshire Police's missing persons search & subsequent investigation into the murder.

UTILISING THE CTS-PRAS SOFTWARE



Staffordshire Police Search Advisors, (PolSA) PS John Overend & PS Nick Maingay, transferred the cell site analysis of the suspect's mobile phone onto CTS-PRAS using the sensor coverage facility.

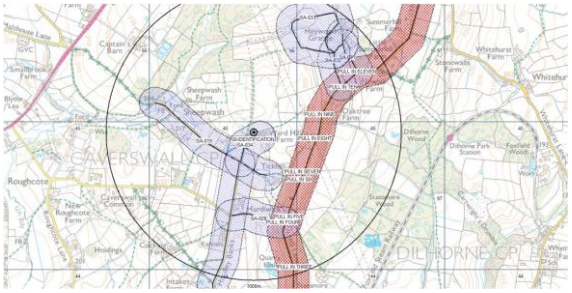
In conjunction with other witness information from the investigation team, they identified an initial search area of 3.14 km2. Any tools used to expedite the search process in the correct areas, meant an increased chance of finding Samantha safe & well.

Picture showing Tickhill Lane Search Areas – a search Buffer based on CATCHUM data. With information known to the PolSA, the decision was made to focus the search on Tickhill Lane; agreed during a teleconference with the National Search Advisor.

CTS-PRAS, enabled them to further narrow down the area to 0.25 km2. They used this reduced area, to identify and prioritise precise areas of interest to search. With the ability to export the complete search plan via layered PDF documents, they were able to forward it to the National Search Advisor and Senior Investigating Officers, so that during a teleconference, all parties could view the proposed plan or planning in full.

It was subsequently highlighted by the National Search Advisor, that having this capability enabled swift agreement of the PolSA search strategy and priority search areas. CTS-PRAS enabled the PolSA team to process & analyse the available search scenario databases, producing a search strategy plan far faster than if they had adopted a manual process.

Once the search strategy had been agreed, the search team carried out a physical site survey & by using the GPS tracking facility, they were able to accurately plot the identified search areas using statistical datasets.



The software gave the PolSA the ability to gather & compile all the data in one place, without the need to duplicate information or import information from other sources. This saved considerable time in marking & plotting search areas, that would ordinarily have been overlaid on printed maps & then transferred to an electronic map.

CTS-PRAS also provided hardcopy or electronic tasking sheets, that could be distributed to the local search officers, who carried out the search & ultimately found the deceased.

The image above shows the search areas, marked PULL IN, identified in Tickhill Lane. These were plotted using the GPS facility on CTS-PRAS which allowed for accurate recording by the PolSA.

THE OUTCOME

The maps and plans from CTS-PRAS that were used for the search then formed part of the subsequent investigation & trial of the suspect, which resulted in a successful prosecution.
Both John & Nick, the lead PolSAs, stated that without the use of the software, it would have taken them considerably longer to plan and manage search areas. It had kept them ahead of the investigation & they were able to provide faster & more accurate information to investigating officers than prior searches.