

Welcome to this week's edition of Defuse News

A weekly briefing for people whose profile attracts attention.

Is your name on the list?

📰 The news

On 4 October, The Sunday Times reported that police are contacting more than 100 prominent people about their security.

Detectives are understood to have found a list of names during the inquiry into the killing of Ann Widdecombe. A man has been charged and awaits trial; what that list was, and what it meant, is for the court. I won't comment on the case, and nothing below describes it.

📋 A list is more common than you'd think

If a client is among those contacted, the natural reaction is shock that anyone keeps such a list. Among people who go on to harm public figures, it is quite ordinary.

The US Secret Service's Exceptional Case Study Project examined 83 people who harmed or came close to harming prominent figures in the United States between 1949 and 1996. It found that:

- many had considered several potential targets;
- many changed their first choice more than once.



🏛️ What decided it in Britain

Since 2000, the serving MPs and their staff killed or badly hurt by lone individuals were, with one exception, harmed by someone from their own constituency:

- Cheltenham, 2000
- East Ham, 2010
- Batley and Spen, 2016

Roshonara Choudhry had researched MPs who voted for the Iraq war; Stephen Timms was the one whose surgery she could walk into.

Even the exception turned on access. Ali Harbi Ali travelled from London and, the judge found, intended to kill one or more MPs. His attention moved between several, including Michael Gove, before settling on Sir David Amess, whose surgery was open to constituents.

The grievance set the pool; access picked the person.

My own reading is that several of these individuals had others in mind and simply couldn't reach them.

⚖️ A list can also mean very little

After the 2017 shooting at a congressional baseball practice in Virginia, investigators found six members' names on a sheet of paper. The FBI found only cursory research into two of them and did not establish it as a target list.

A list takes its meaning from the behaviour around it.



🏠 What this means for private families

A private client has no constituency surgery. The equivalent is whatever a stranger can find without effort, for example:

- a home address in a planning application;
- a routine visible on a spouse's social media.

When a grievance attaches to what your client represents (the founder of a company, or the owner behind a contested development), the name that rises is often the easiest one to reach.

> **Removing free access to personal information is how a family stops being the convenient choice.**

✅ If the police call about a list

1. **Ask what they can share**, including whether anyone close to your client is also named.
2. **Find out what a determined stranger could learn** about your client and those around them from public records and social media, then close what you can.
3. **Keep one dated record** of unwanted contact across the household, so any change in attention shows early.

💡 **Nobody can control whether their name appears on someone's list. A family can control whether theirs is the easy one to reach.**

🎙️ Next on The Defuse Podcast

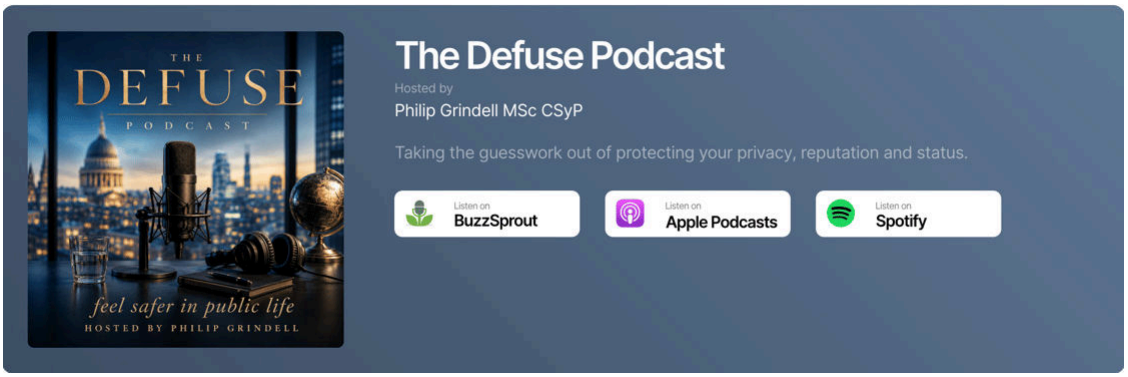
My next guest is **Dr Karie Gibson**, a licensed psychologist who most recently led the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit (she was Unit Chief of BAU-1, which houses the Behavioral Threat Assessment Center). Before that she was an FBI profiler and Special Agent, and earlier a forensic evaluator for the State of Washington.

Her operational work has meant hundreds of "persons of concern" cases. Each one turns on the question behind this edition (who is moving from grievance towards action, and what would stop them).

She co-authored the FBI's *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*, and now advises private companies on insider risk, high-risk terminations and reputational threats.

If you advise a family or a business, this is a rare chance to hear how that thinking works from someone who has led it at national level.

🎧 **Subscribe to [The Defuse Podcast] on your favourite platform so you don't miss this episode.**



📚 On my desk this week



The September issue of the *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* arrived this week. It's published quarterly by the American Psychological Association, and a copy comes with my membership of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP).

I read it for a plain reason. Research on violence risk keeps moving, and advice to a family should rest on what the evidence says today. The journal is applied by design; its authors and readers come from policing, psychology, law, private security and HR, which is close to the mix of people around most of our clients.

Two papers in this issue caught my eye:

- **Insider threat.** Tony Bernard Scott, Eduardo Vasquez and Afroditi Pina look at how anger rumination and job satisfaction influence support for insider threat behaviours. Most households and family offices depend on a small circle of trusted staff, so a grievance that builds quietly inside that circle deserves the same attention as one from outside.
- **Workplace violence.** Bryan McNutt sets out the value of employee assistance programmes in threat assessment and management, which is relevant to any family office or business with staff.



If anything in this newsletter has caused you to think, you may benefit from our help.

Contact us at info@defuseglobal.com

Defuse Ltd, 124 City Road, Old Street, London EC1V 2NX, United Kingdom, +44 02072930932

Unsubscribe Manage preferences

Chat

- New Chat

Search

Close modal

The data of AITOPIA isn't real-time. WebAccess Feature combines the intelligence of AITOPIA with realtime web information, allowing GPT to handle real-time information-related questions more effectively. Upgrade to gain this feature, and worry no more about outdated information!

Upgrade Now

Page Content

The Target May Not Be Who You Think It Ishttps://25099926.hubspotpreview-eu1.com/_hcms/preview/email/424460136646?portalId=25099926&preview_key=MgeWinfN&_preview=true&from_buffer=false&hsPreviewerApp=email

Summarize

Get a brief overview of the main points and key takeaways



AITOPIA
This week's edition of Defuse News focuses on the idea that the perceived target of attention or risk may not be the true target. It highlights various patterns in personal risk, including behavioral threats and unwanted attention. Key insights include how easily individuals can be found online, the fact that the person attracting attention is often not the only one at risk, and the need for broader awareness among those surrounding high-profile individuals. The piece emphasizes that those most capable of noticing potential risks are often not part of the security team. Overall, it serves as a guide for individuals and families on managing personal privacy and safety proactively.

Compare with GPT-6 Astra

Stop generating



AITOPIA

Vision

Close modal

Upload an image to easily get intelligent explanations and extract text from your images.

Supported image types are JPEG and PNG
Drag your Image here or click to upload
Or

Take a screenshot

Upload File

Close modal

Upload a PDF, Word, Excel, or PowerPoint file to easily get intelligent summaries and answers for your documents.

Supported file types are PDF, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Drag your file here or click to upload

Ask me anything...

Group Chat Web Access



00:00

10 Upgrade

Free Plan

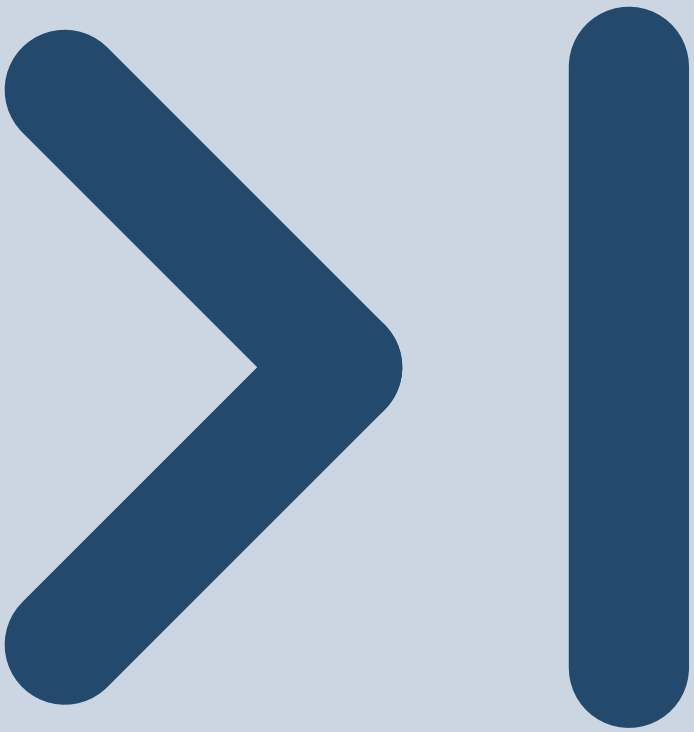
10

Upgrade

Fast Text
10
AITOPIA, GPT-6 Luna, GPT-4o Mini, GPT-5 Mini, GPT-4.1 Mini, Claude 3.5 Haiku, Grok 3 Mini, Claude 4.5 Haiku, Gemini 3 Flash, Gemini 2.0 Flash, Gemini 2.5 Flash, Gemini 2.5 Flash-Lite, Gemini 3.1 Flash-Lite, Llama 3.3 70B, Llama 4 Maverick, Llama 4 Scout, GPT Image 1 Mini, GPT Image 1.5, SDXL v1.0, DeepSeek V3

Advanced Text
1
GPT-6 Astra, GPT-5.6 Luna, GPT-5.1, GPT-5.5, GPT-5.6 Sol, GPT-5.6 Terra, GPT-5.4, GPT-5, GPT-4o, GPT-5.2, GPT-4.1, o1 Mini, o3 Mini, o4 Mini, Grok 4.3, Claude Sonnet 5, Grok 3, Claude Opus 5, Claude 3.5 Sonnet, Claude 4.5 Sonnet, Claude 4.5 Opus, Claude Opus 4.8, Gemini 1.5 Pro, Gemini 2.5 Pro, Gemini 3 Pro Preview, Gemini 3.1 Pro, Gemini 3.5 Flash, Llama 3.1 405B, GPT Image 2, Nano Banana, Nano Banana 2, SD3, SD3 Large Turbo, DeepSeek R1

Agent
0
Invite Friends to get more credits

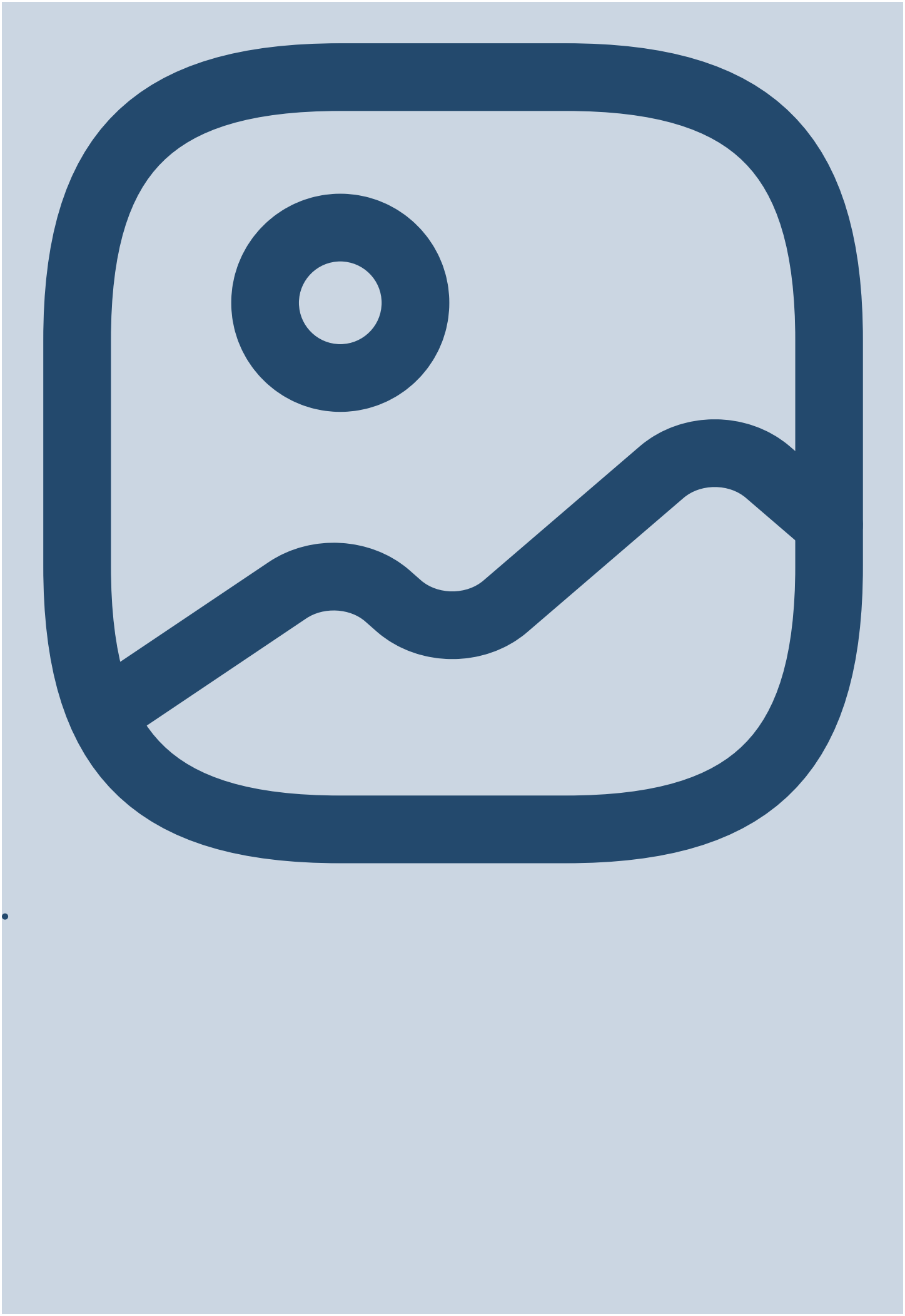










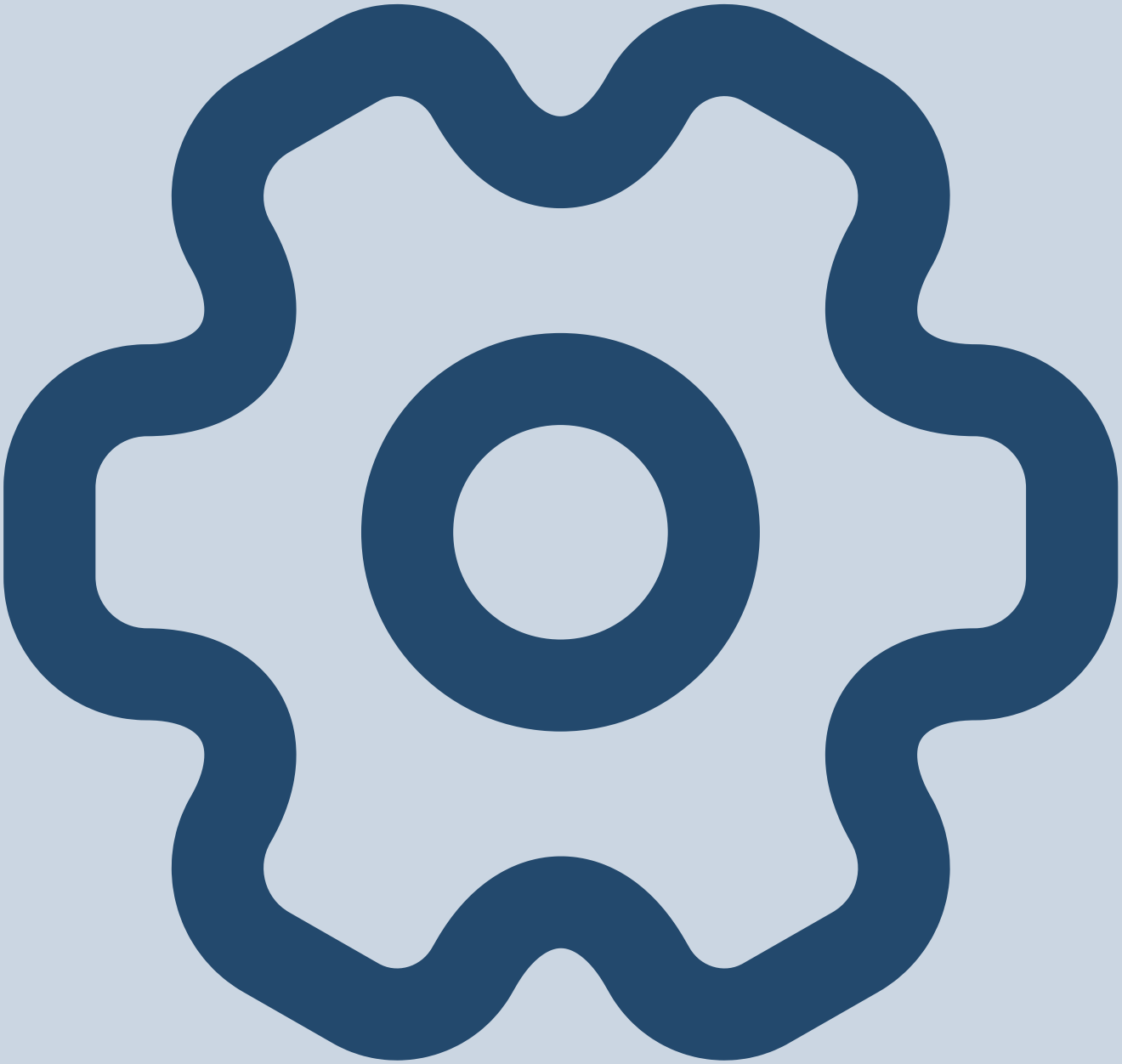














Log in as a user

What's New



How to use



Feedback

Invite & Earn

Close modal

Earn 5 Fast credits & 1 Advanced credit for both of you and your friend.Earn more when you refer more!



Refer your friend with an Invitation link



Your friends sign up



They install extension & login. You both earn credits!

Copy Invitation Link

Check Invitation Records

x



- 