CJI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Meeting Outputs

Wednesday 8 October 2025 in Knockview Buildings

Attendees:

Independent member: (Chair)	Mandy Kilpatrick (MK)
Independent Member:	Cathy Galway (CG)
DoJ Sponsor Division:	Claire Robinson (CR)
DoJ Internal Audit:	Amanda Oliver (AO)
AAB Accountants	Suzanne Villiers (SV) Lee McClelland (LMcC)
NIAO:	Catherine O'Hagan (CO'H)
FSD:	Jessica Brooks (JB)
Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI):	Jacqui Durkin (JD) James Corrigan (JC) Meloney McVeigh (MMcV) David MacAnulty (DMacA)
ARAC Secretary:	Linda Boal (LB) CJI

Agenda No	Description / Comments
1	**Introduction/acknowledgements.** ● MK welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly LMcC to his first meeting.
2	**Apologies.** Teresa Campbell (AAB) and Aidan Lynch (DoJ).
3	**Declaration of interest/Conflict of interest.** ● None.
4	**Minutes of previous meeting – 5 June 2025 and matters arising.** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

Matters arising:

- All actioned.

5 **Report summarising any significant changes to CJI's Risk Register.**

- The CJI Risk Register was updated in September 2025 following a review by CJI staff and distributed to ARAC members in advance.
- The three main risks remain as: Risk 1 Quality of Inspection product; Risk 2 CJI's Relevance to/within the CJS; and Risk 3 the Resilience and Sustainability of CJI.
- MMcV gave an overview of the Risk Register, noting the edits made and highlighting the significant changes since the previous meeting which were:
- Risk 1 – Three causes added were: QMS inspection process is not followed; Insufficient Inspector resources and unaffordable external expertise and support; and ineffective inspection monitoring and management. The Impact, Key Controls and Risk Appetite were updated to reflect these changes. Of particular note was confirmation that the ISO Accreditation contract has been awarded for a further three years. Management will explore the benefits and cost of a bespoke inspection project management system to improve inspection management as recommended in the Internal Audit report.
- Risk 2 – Two causes were added: lack of co-operation by inspected organisations around availability of data, management information and personnel leads and staff absence leading to delay; and the number of Inspection Reports published in year. The Key Controls and Risk Appetite were updated and MMcV advised that the new website was well established with ongoing monitoring by the Business Support Team. A post project evaluation is planned for May 2026.
- Risk 3 – Two causes were added: Delay in implementing the 2025 public sector pay settlement and Insufficient staff complement. MMcV advised that a Business Case was required by Department of Finance to shorten the CJI Inspectors Pay Scale in mirroring the shortening of the NICS DP and analogous to SCS pay scales by the removal of the minimum pay point and maintain close alignment with the bottom of the NICS G7 salary scale. This will delay the approval of the 2025 Inspector pay remit and implementation of the 2025 pay award for this staff group.
- A Business Case has been prepared for approval to recruit a replacement Inspector and establish an Associate Inspector list.
- MK and CG thanked MMcV for the update on changes to the Risk Register.

6 **Consider any residual actions arising from the previous year's work of both Internal and External Audit (RTTCWG Final Report).**

- The final Report to Those Charged with Governance 2024-25 together with covering letter was distributed to members in advance. It reported no residual actions.

7 **Internal Audit.**

- AO gave an overview of the following papers:
- Internal Audit and Mandate for CJI. AO drew particular attention to sections 13 and 30 in the document. There were no queries from members.
- Internal Audit Review of CJI Inspection Programme. The overall audit opinion was Satisfactory with one Priority 2 recommendation in relation to exploring the

benefits and cost of an Inspection/Project Management System to plan, assign, track and monitor inspection work. The recommendation has been accepted and is being taken forward.

- MK commented it was very timely to have this work undertaken and JD thanked Martin Hampton for his work on this Audit.

8 **Update on the six-month set of accounts.**

- JB gave an overview of the current financial position which shows an underspend as consultancy (other Inspectorate) costs are paid later in the year.
- The latest forecasts for the full year indicate pressures for pay and non-pay costs.
- The six-month accounts show no issues for concern and are due for internal review by 31 October.
- CG asked if there would be a specific budget for Associate Inspectors and JC advised this would be on a demand led and affordability basis.
- JB will go on maternity leave in December and another Accountant has been appointed from within DoJ Financial Services Division to cover in her absence.
- MMcV thanked JB for all her work with CJI and extended the best wishes of the Committee.

9 **Concern Handling**

- JD advised the Committee that CJI has received an increasing number of round-robin type emails on criminal justice system related issues. While the CJI Raising Concerns Policy is followed and issues escalated to relevant organisations to respond, the time taken to consider and deal with increasing queries is putting pressure on resources.
- JD advised that concerns identified by Inspectors during inspection fieldwork are also escalated to inspected organisations and a timely response and assurance of appropriate action is required. JD is also mindful of proposed new legislation and how it may apply to ALBs in relation to a Duty of Candour and response to identified risks.
- MK asked if the CJI Policy allows for stopping responses from vexatious correspondents. JD replied that the policy was applied and it took some time to get to that point; she said she understood how frustrating it can be for correspondents when they are advised that CJI cannot investigate individual complaints outside its remit.
- JD asked the Committee to note the challenges this is presenting and that the Committee will be kept advised of issues as they arise.

10 **Report from management on whistle blowing, matters of concern and fraud issues.**

- MMcV reported a nil return.

11 **Report from management on any direct award contracts.**

- MMcV reported a nil return.

12 **Report summarising the expenses submitted by the Chief Inspector and the Deputy Chief Inspector.**

- The report detailing expenses incurred by the CI and Deputy CI was noted by all members.

13 **Review of CJI's gifts and hospitality register.**

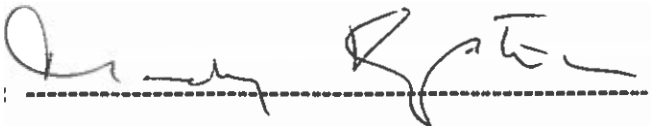
- The reported information was noted by all members.

14 **AOB**

- There were no further points for discussion.

15 **Dates of next meetings.**

The following dates are proposed for the next meetings:
Winter - Thursday 15 January 2026 at 10am;
Spring - Thursday 16 April 2026 at 10am; and
Summer – Thursday 4 June 2026 at 10am.
Location: Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ.



15 January 2026

Mandy Kilpatrick
Chairperson

Date: