

CJI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Meeting Outputs

Thursday 15 January 2026 in Knockview Buildings

Attendees:

Independent member: (Acting Chair)	Cathy Galway (CG)
Independent Member:	Mandy Kilpatrick (MK)
DoJ Sponsor Division:	Claire Robinson (CR)
DoJ Internal Audit:	Amanda Oliver (AO)
AAB Accountants	Suzanne Villiers (SV)
NIAO:	Catherine O'Hagan (CO'H)
FSD:	Lindsay Peel (LP)
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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CG welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2	Apologies. Aiden Lynch (DoJ), Teri Foden (NIAO) and Teresa Campbell (AAB).
3	Declaration of interest/Conflict of interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
4	Minutes of previous meeting – 8 October 2025 and matters arising. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed. Matters arising:

- None.

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

- The CJI Risk Register was updated in December 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 advised that the recruitment exercise to appoint a full time Inspector and Associate Inspectors closed on Friday 9 January and had a good response rate. Shortlisting will take place this week with interviews planned for February.
- CG and MK thanked MMcV for the comprehensive update on the revised Risk Register.

6 **External Audit: NIAO Audit Strategy 2025-26.**

- The Audit Strategy for 2025-26 was shared with all members in advance of the meeting.
- CO'H advised that DoJ's ALBs had been divided between three Directors and Suzanne Jones would likely attend a future ARAC meeting.
- SV spoke to the paper and confirmed the audit would be carried out by AAB Group Accountants Ltd on behalf of the NIAO.
- The audit will be the same as last year with no significant changes to the plan. The Strategy included details of materiality, audit approach, audit timetable, fees and staffing. Materiality would be consistent with last year.
- The audit timetable was detailed in the report which also included actions for the Audit Committee.
- SV asked members to confirm that they were not aware of any incidents of fraud that she should be aware of and a nil response was confirmed.

7 **Review the overall CJI Assurance Framework.**

- MMcV spoke to the paper which is reviewed on an annual basis and reflects the Three Line of Defence Model.
- The document includes key areas of assurance, conclusion and areas for improvement to take forward.
- MMcV noted that both of the non-executive members had reviewed the Framework and the Effectiveness Review before they were shared with the Committee and that their comments had been incorporated.
- JC stated that the ARAC was of great value to CJI in terms of governance and support. A competition for the recruitment of a new non-executive member was distributed by the DoJ Permanent Secretary and will close Friday 16 January. This meeting may be the last one for MK and JC thanked her for all her support and commitment to the ARAC over the past years. CG echoed those points and added that the CJI Audit Committee was always well planned and organised with papers being available in advance and thanked MMcV and LB for their work to support the Committee. MK noted that in her experience CJINI's approach represented an exemplar for ALB ARACs. JD added her thanks to MK.
- All members confirmed they were content with the paper.

- 8 **Consider the Committee's own effectiveness in its work.**
- MMcV had reviewed and updated the paper which was distributed to members in advance of the meeting.
 - The completed Self-Assessment checklist was shared with members.
 - CG and MK confirmed they were content with the paper.
- 9 **CJI Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy (the Policy)**
- The Policy had been updated to reflect changes to the DoF policy. It was shared with all CJI staff and added to the Quality Management System process map.
 - CG welcomed the updated policy which was thorough and clear.
 - CR confirmed Sponsor Department were happy with the document.
- 10 **Overview of nine-month set of accounts**
- LP presented an update on the financial position reporting that there were no issues and work was on course for the end of year.
 - The 2025/26 budget was confirmed in December when the identified pressures were funded.
 - The nine-month accounts have been prepared and will be submitted to FSD.
 - CG asked if there were any further pressures identified at this point. JD advised that while the budget for next year is unknown, due to pay and other cost rises, it may not be sufficient to fund a prison inspection and other additional expertise required for inspections.
 - CG asked that where any risks are identified to CJI's delivery of statutory requirements, that ARAC is advised of this and mitigating actions.
- 11 **Report from management on whistle blowing, matters of concern and fraud issues.**
- MMcV reported a nil return.
- 12 **Report from management on any direct award contracts.**
- MMcV reported a nil return.
- 13 **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.
- 14 **Review of CJI's gifts and hospitality register.**
- The reported information was noted by all members.
- 15 **AOB**
- CG thanked MK for all her support and commitment to the ARAC and to CJI on what could be her last Audit Committee meeting.
- 16 **Dates of next meetings.**

PROTECT



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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Galway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

16 April 2026

Cathy Galway
Chairperson

Date: