



REVIEW OF THE **MULTI-AGENCY REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS (MARA)**

In 2025 there was a Review of MARA. MARA is a partnership between the police, prisons, supervising Probation Officers and the Department of Justice. This leaflet tells you what Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) Inspectors found in that Review. A copy of the full Review Report is in the library for you to look at.

WHO WE ARE

CJI independently inspects and reviews organisations like the prisons, the police, prosecution and probation. CJI is funded by the Department of Justice but isn't part of it.

What is a Review?

A Review checks out how well something is working and what needs to be better.

Why was there a Review of MARA?

CJI's Chief Inspector was asked by the Minister of Justice to look at how well MARA was working. MARA is a partnership between the police, prisons, supervising Probation Officers and the Department of Justice. We looked at how well the arrangements were working and how people supervised under the arrangements were supported to return to their family and their community and not to return to prison in the future.



GOOD PRACTICE

We saw some examples of good practice during the Review. These included:



the strong and respectful relationships, in most cases, between Supervising Officers and people supervised under MARA to help with their transition back into the community and stop them committing offences again; and



positive relationships between MARA Supervising Officers and the Police Officers they worked with.



WHAT NEEDS TO IMPROVE?

We made eight recommendations; three of these were strategic and aimed at MARA leaders and five were operational and aimed at improving 'on the ground' practice.

THESE INCLUDED:



A clear vision for MARA setting out how the arrangements will be developed in the short, medium and longer term and a framework to measure outcomes or what has been achieved;



Improved guidance for people working in MARA about who does what and when they do it;



That the Northern Ireland Prison Service clearly sets out how all its different parts come together to support MARA work; and



A multi-agency training plan and improved administrative, information sharing and recording systems.

HOW DID PEOPLE SUPERVISED UNDER MARA CONTRIBUTE TO THIS REVIEW?

Inspectors also spoke with people supervised under MARA who were in prison and people who were living in the community.

We are grateful to everyone who took the time to speak to us or who wrote to us about MARA for this Review.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



We hope that all the MARA partners will implement the strategic and operational recommendations to improve MARA so they support reintegration back into the community and rehabilitation. This is important in contributing to safer communities in Northern Ireland.

If you would like to know anything more about us or this inspection please get in touch with:

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