



## KEY FACTS

A REVIEW OF  
**THE ARRANGEMENTS TO  
ASSESS AND MANAGE THE  
RISKS POSED BY TERRORIST  
RISK OFFENDERS (MARA)**

JUNE 2026



**KEY FACTS**

## WHAT WAS THIS REVIEW ABOUT?

- The Multi-Agency Review Arrangements (known as MARA) were established in 2021 to assess and manage the risks posed by people convicted of terrorist-related offences.
- The arrangements bring together the Department of Justice (DoJ), His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to share information, make decisions and supervise individuals safely in custody and in the community. The Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) referred individuals into the MARA for classification and supervision for those who met the criteria.
- The Minister of Justice requested that Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) carry out an independent Review of MARA.
- Inspectors examined how effective the arrangements were, if governance and information-sharing worked well, how they supported desistance and engagement with people under supervision and how well the public were being kept safe.



## HOW DID WE CARRY OUT THE REVIEW?

Inspectors assessed strategy and governance, delivery, outcomes and arrangements to keep people safe. They reviewed documents and case records from all MARA partners, observed MARA meetings, reviewed case files, interviewed staff and leaders across the MARA partner organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

Inspectors also spoke with people supervised under MARA in custody and in the community and sought views from registered victims.



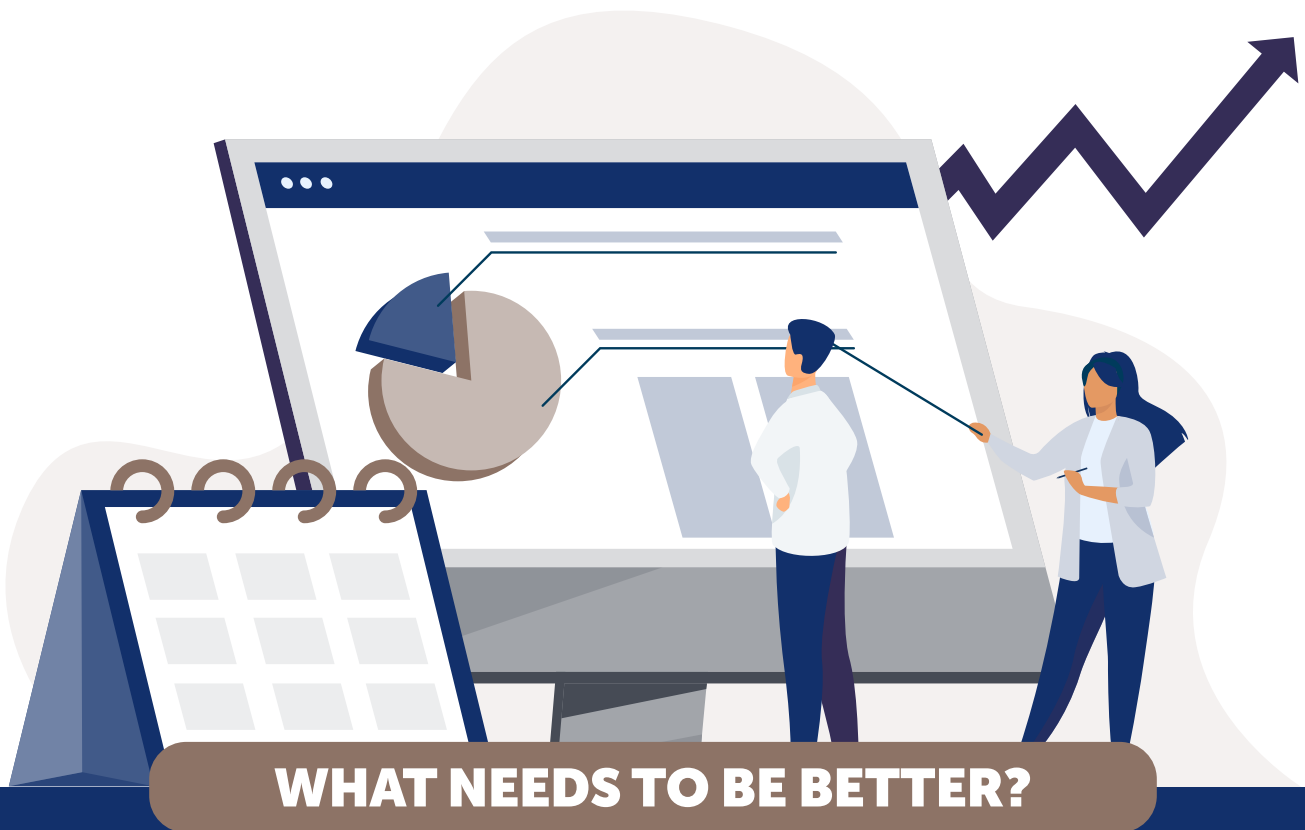
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## WHAT DID INSPECTORS FIND?

- MARA provided a necessary framework for managing terrorist-related risk after previous arrangements for supervision by the PBNI were withdrawn following a threat against staff.
- MARA partners worked together to manage a complex and sensitive group of individuals and recent legal judgments confirmed the arrangements were lawful.
- Governance meetings did not happen regularly enough, were not sufficiently focused on key issues and lacked input from wider partners, such as health and housing.
- MARA did not have an overarching vision, strategy or long-term plan. There were no agreed performance indicators or measures of success.
- Information-sharing arrangements and case recording were inconsistent and did not fully support effective risk management.
- Support for preparation for release, interventions in custody and access to psychological services needed improvement.
- Relationships between Police Officers and HMPPS Supervising Officers were positive and the team within the PSNI were focused on the effective management of people under MARA.
- Supervising Officers built strong and respectful relationships with individuals, which supported rehabilitation and public safety.



KEY FACTS



## WHAT NEEDS TO BE BETTER?

### At a Strategic (leadership) level:

- A clear vision for MARA, with short, medium and long-term objectives, including the conditions for a return to local service provision.
- A performance framework to measure outcomes and improve accountability.
- Improved MARA Guidance, including the definition of a Terrorist Risk Offender.
- A finalised Manual of Practice and Information Sharing Agreement.
- A policy framework setting out how the NIPS manages individuals in custody under MARA.

### At an Operational (on-the-ground) level:

- A consistent multi-agency training plan, including Northern Ireland-specific training for Supervising Officers and better prison staff awareness of MARA.
- MARA Panel membership and chairing should be reviewed and improved.
- Improved administrative processes for MARA Panels with regular scheduling, clearer agendas, timely minutes and documented decision-making.
- Consistent information sharing using the existing electronic case management system.
- An audit and assurance system to ensure improved recording of probation casework.



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## WHAT DO INSPECTORS WANT TO SEE HAPPEN NOW?

Inspectors want all partners to implement the Strategic and Operational recommendations so that MARA contributes to ensuring Safer Communities by:

- operating consistently and transparently;
- strengthening public protection and supervision in custody and the community;
- supporting rehabilitation, desistance and disengagement; and
- improving confidence among individuals under supervision, victims and the wider public.

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

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