

MARAC TOOLKIT

NOVEMBER 2018

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the MARAC Toolkit is to outline the processes of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference or MARAC. This is a companion piece to the MARAC Information Sharing Agreement (ISA), which outlines how information may be shared between attending agencies.

The toolkit sets out accountability, responsibility and reporting structures for the MARAC. It will also outline the process for identifying cases, referral to and risk management through the MARAC meetings. The toolkit will also detail the responsibilities of all parties involved in the MARAC and their accountability.

The overall intention of this toolkit is to encourage greater awareness and confidence in the MARAC process, and therefore, improve engagement of all partner agencies to increase the safety of local victims of domestic abuse.

What is MARAC?

A MARAC is a multi-agency meeting which domestic abuse victims who have been identified as at high risk of serious harm or homicide are referred to. The MARAC is attended by representatives from a range of agencies including police, health, child protection, housing, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), probation, mental health and substance misuse and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

During the meeting relevant and proportionate information is shared about the current risks, enabling representatives to identify options to increase the safety of the victim and any other vulnerable parties such as children. The MARAC then creates a multi-agency action plan to address the identified risks and increase the safety and wellbeing of all those at risk. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. However, taking in to account the UK law which priorities the safety of children, the MARAC will also make links with other multi-agency meetings and processes to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator.

At the heart of a MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a victim to be able to identify and manage the risks, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. The victim does not attend the meeting but is represented by an IDVA who represents their views and wishes and ensures that victim's safety remains the focus of the meeting.

The Aims of the MARAC:

- To share relevant information to increase the safety, health and well-being of victims, adults and their children.
- Make links with other public protection arrangements in relation to children, perpetrators and vulnerable adults
- Determine whether the perpetrator poses a significant risk to any individual or to the general community.
- Jointly construct and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to all those at risk and that reduces the risk of harm.
- Reduce repeat victimisation
- Improve agency accountability
- Improve support for and the safety of staff involved in high risk domestic abuse cases.

The Need for a Multi-Agency Approach

No one partner holds all the information required to effectively assess the needs of victims and their children, or to fully assess the risk of serious harm or murder to victims.

In the majority of cases the support of more than one agency is required to ensure the longer-term safety of the victim and their children

Clear information sharing creates a supportive structure to ensure improved outcomes across services

The responsibility to take appropriate action remains with individual agencies; it is not transferred to the MARAC. Agencies should **not** wait until a case has been discussed at MARAC before taking necessary action or giving advice or access to services. It would be far more relevant for a victim to receive help prior to the meeting and information regarding this brought to MARAC.

Likewise, the MARAC should not be used as a tool to escalate cases through the system, whether it is housing, social care assessments or other services – this can be done outside of the MARAC.

The MARAC exists as a tool to facilitate effective information sharing and action planning to keep residents safe.

MARAC REPRESENTATIVES

The MARAC process will ask for representation from all service areas that can have an impact in increasing the victim's safety – including non-criminal justice agencies. There should be regular attendance from the full range of statutory agencies, specialist domestic abuse services as well as relevant voluntary and community organisations.

Whilst regular attendance is expected from all relevant statutory and voluntary agencies, there should always be a presence of several "core agencies" which is expected for there to be an effective operation of the MARAC.

Core Partners

- Metropolitan Police: East Area Command Unit
- Barking and Dagenham IDVSA service
- Community Solutions: Triage, Intervention and Support, including Housing Advice and Homelessness
- Children's Care and Support
- National Probation Service (NPS)
- London Community Rehabilitation Centre (CRC)
- North East London Foundation Trust (Health Visitors)
- North East London Foundation Trust (Mental Health)
- Barking Havering Redbridge University Trust (Maternity)
- Substance Misuse Services: Adult and Youth Services

Additional partners may attend for individual cases or to support the MARAC as required:

Supporting Partners:

- Education
- Early Help
- Youth Offending Services
- Adult Social Care
- Other specialist domestic abuse services

All agencies are required to sign the confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the MARAC.

Expectations of MARAC Representatives

All participating core agencies should have a named MARAC representative who should be of an appropriate level of seniority to commit to actions on behalf of their agency.

If a MARAC representative is unable to attend, then the representative should inform the MARAC coordinator in advance of the meeting and provide a written submission of relevant information. Alternatively, and in the case of all core agencies, a substitute representative should attend on behalf of an agency.

The MARAC representative is the key link between the MARAC and their service and acts as a single point of contact (SPOC) for relevant advice to that service about the MARAC.

Induction of New MARAC Representatives

All new MARAC representatives should inform the MARAC coordinator that they will now be attending MARAC on a regular basis before the first meeting.

Where possible a secure e-mail address should be supplied so that the MARAC administrator can send referrals, minutes and case-lists to the new representative.

The MARAC coordinator will ensure that the new representative and their secure e-mail is added to the list for the MARAC. The relevant MARAC chair should also be advised of a new member, so that the necessary introductions can be made.

A MARAC induction should include:

- The new MARAC representative should attend Domestic Abuse Awareness Training through the Local Safeguarding Children Board Training offer.
- Where replacing a MARAC representative, the new representative should have completed a hand-over meeting with the old representative, to ensure that on-going actions, cases and procedures are in place.
- The new representative should appraise themselves of the local MARAC process, dates, times and locations of MARAC meeting, who the IDVSAs on borough are, risk assessments, MARAC ISA and referral form.
- The new MARAC representative should visit the SafeLives website (www.safelives.org.uk) and make use of the resources available for MARAC representatives.

Governance and Performance Management

Domestic abuse is a priority issue in Barking and Dagenham and is seen as everybody's business. This is recognised by the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Community Safety Partnership have a sub-structure of groups to support it in strategic decision-making and operations. The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) sub group is chaired by the Borough Director for NELFT, meets quarterly, and is committed to tackling all forms of domestic and sexual violence locally.

In relation to MARAC, the VAWG sub group have MARAC steering as a fixed agenda item, to provide space to monitor and direct the performance and effectiveness of MARAC.

The MARAC Chair is responsible for reporting to the VAWG sub group on MARAC performance.

CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL

A key underpinning principle of MARAC is that any agency can identify and refer cases to the process. The MARAC Coordinator does not screen cases or assess their suitability for the meeting if the case meets the criteria then it will be listed.

To this effect referrals to the MARAC should identify the assessed level of risk (number of ticks) or alternatively provide an explanation of the referrer's assessment if based on professional judgement.

Thus, professionals within agencies can be confident that if they refer a case that meets the referral criteria to the MARAC then that case will be heard.

Identification of Cases

Agencies may identify the existence of domestic abuse in several ways, including disclosure or direct reporting from victims, third party reporting or disclosure or because of suspicions arising from the behaviour or appearance of an individual or their children.

There is therefore an expectation that agencies will incorporate questions relating to domestic abuse within their own processes and policies. When domestic abuse is identified agency staff should follow their own agency's procedures. However, all agencies' policies should:

- Encourage the victim to report the abuse to the Police.
- Signpost locally available support services.
- Notify the MASH team where there are children in the household or the victim is pregnant.

- Notify Adult Social Care if there is a vulnerable adult involved.
- Complete a Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment Risk Indicator Checklist to ascertain the level of risk and determine whether a referral to MARAC and/or IDSVA is required.

Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment Risk Indicator Checklist (DASH RIC)

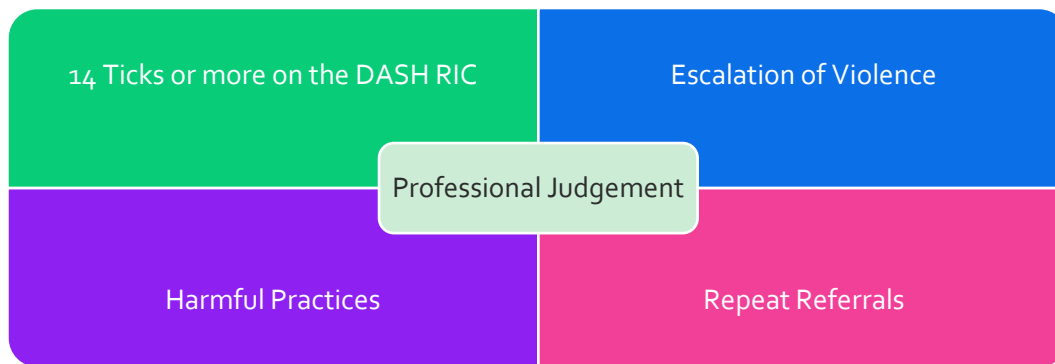
The DASH RIC is used to assess risk for victims of domestic abuse. It is the recognised assessment tool for the MARAC process and should be used by all agencies within Barking and Dagenham wherever there is a disclosure or identification of domestic abuse.

This tool is evidence based and has been developed following analysis of domestic abuse homicide and other serious incidents. The DASH RIC identifies a series of risk factors which are indicative of high risk of harm or death.

There is no specific formal training required to use the tool and it is for individual agencies to determine how they wish to implement the assessment in practice. However, all staff using DASH RIC should have a good understanding of domestic abuse and associated risk factors.

It is therefore strongly recommended that all staff in local agencies attend available training courses offered through the LSCB, Campaign events or local domestic abuse training offers.

Referral Criteria



- 14 Ticks or More on the DASH RIC
 - The DASH RIC threshold for MARAC is 14. If the final score is 14 ticks or more then this would constitute an automatic referral to the MARAC on the ground of evidenced high risk.
- Escalation of Violence
 - Where there is evidence of escalation in the frequency and/or severity of incidents.

- Additionally, where there are three or more incidents of domestic abuse that have occurred within the previous 12 months.
- So called 'Honour' Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Force Marriage is considered an automatic referral to Barking and Dagenham MARAC. Forced Marriage is explicitly identified within the current Home Office definition of Domestic Violence. Therefore, following consultation with specialist support agencies and Metropolitan Police's Forced Marriage Unit it has been determined that the standard position within Barking and Dagenham is that cases of Forced Marriage will be referred to MARAC.
- Professional Judgement: The MARAC respects that partners are experts in their fields, and that experience, skills and knowledge can differ across service areas. For this reason, it also respects that some cases will not meet the above criteria, but a worker may have an instinct that a referral should still be made. In such instances a discussion should be had with the service MARAC representative and consideration given to the following before making the referral:
 - The service working with the client believes that full disclosure has not been made resulting in an assessment of risk being made on limited information; or
 - The service believes that the victim may be minimising their risk and there is a known risk such as use of weapons, previous history or other issues which may influence ability to disclose.
 - Some other reason where the service believes that a MARAC discussion would reduce potential high risk to the victim or family.

The MARAC Panel may also take appropriate requests for a Clare's Law disclosure to be made under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme.

Repeat Referrals

In addition to the criteria for referral identified above, cases which have previously been heard at the MARAC must be re-referred in the event of a repeat incident within 12 months.

A repeat case occurs when a case that is referred to MARAC has also been discussed at the same MARAC within the preceding 12 months. Each repeat case will also be counted each time an incident that *if reported to the police would constitute a criminal offence takes place*.

All MARAC discussions are a consequence of at least one incident being reported to at least one MARAC agency and that the incident involves:

- Violence or threats of violence; and/or
- Where there is a pattern of stalking or harassment (the repeated following of communication with or other intrusions on the privacy of a victim) and or

- Where rape or sexual abuse is disclosed.
- Where in the referrer's professional judgement a further referral is deemed necessary

The repeat incident can be flagged by any of the agencies involved in the MARAC. Multiple incidents occurring between MARAC meetings only result in one MARAC discussion. It is possible for a case to go to MARAC where there is more than one perpetrator. This is counted as one case and will be reviewed if there are any incidents with any of the named perpetrators.

The following do not constitute a repeat case:

- Where a case is reviewed at the MARAC involving the same victim but a different perpetrator or group of perpetrators
- Where a case is reviewed at the MARAC involving the same perpetrator but a different victim
- Where an incident not involving criminal behaviour occurs and is therefore not reviewed at MARAC
- Where the same victim and perpetrator are being discussed at a different MARAC.
- Cases which are discussed at a MARAC meeting but for information purposes only (e.g. imminent release of perpetrator from prison)

Non-MARAC Cases

Cases should not be referred to MARAC if:

- There is no visible high risk from the RIC or professional judgement
- To get access to an IDSVA
- To provide evidence to access Housing moves (without other circumstances)
- To signpost to other services.

Where the case does not meet the risk threshold and criteria for referral to MARAC, support should be sought from local domestic abuse services.

It is important that actions are not delayed for MARAC sign-off, many if not most actions can be completed before a case comes to MARAC.

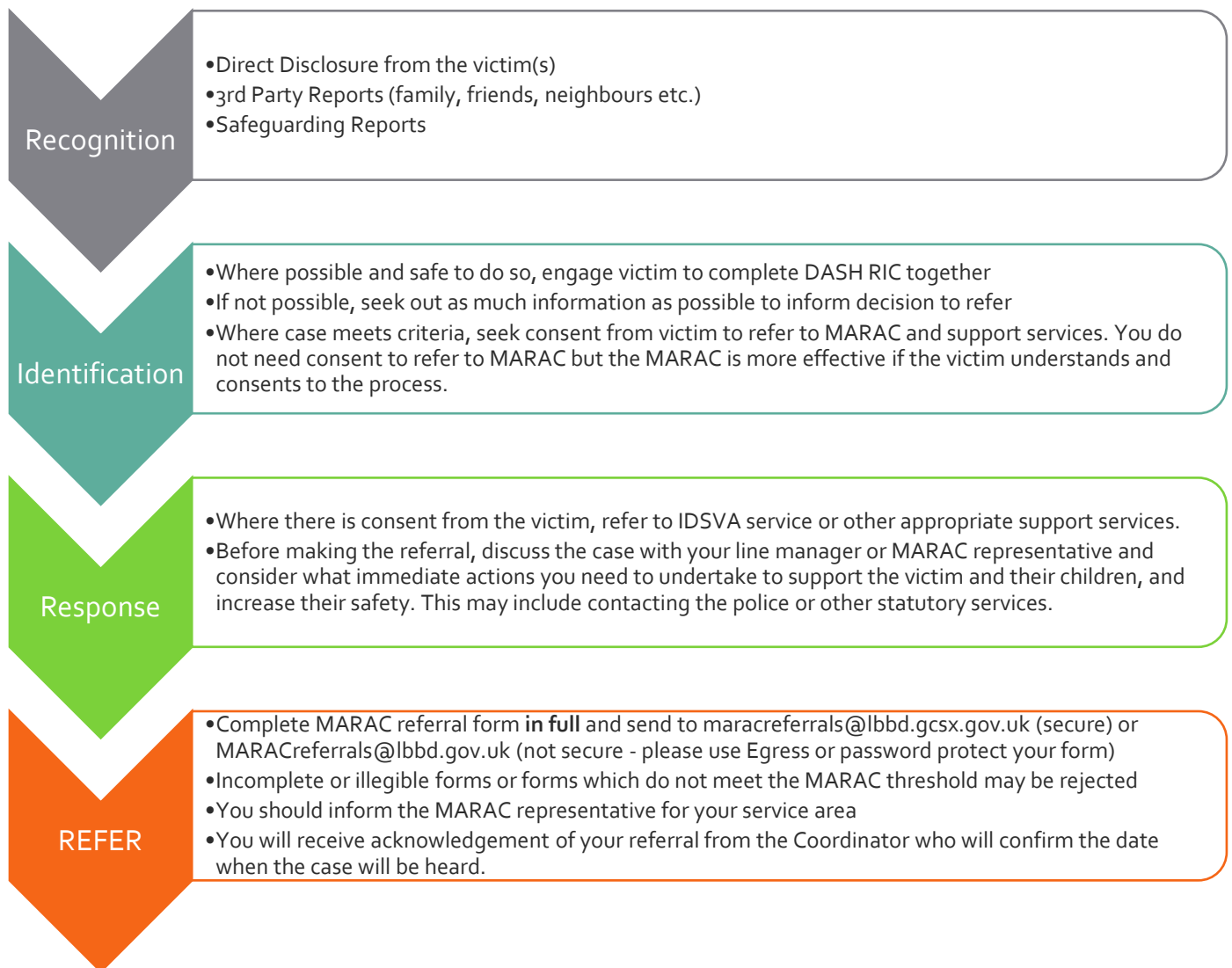
REFERRAL PROCESS

Any partner agency can refer a case to the MARAC if it meets the threshold criteria as listed above. If an agency believes that a case is high risk, but they lack confidence in the completion of the DASH Checklist then advice can be sought from their MARAC representative or the Coordinator.

The Barking and Dagenham MARAC and IDSVAs referral forms should can be found at Appendix 1. This form requires the following essential information and may not be accepted without it:

- Name, date of birth and address of victim, their children and the perpetrator
- Safe contact details for the victim and whether the address is safe to post to
- Whether the victim has given their informed consent to their information being shared at a MARAC.
- Equality details for the victim and perpetrator
- Whether there are additional considerations to the risk of the victim or family such as the victim being disabled, requiring an interpreter, or barriers to engagement
- School, college or Early Years provider for any children identified
- Details regarding the Background, Current Risk and Outcomes

The following pages set out the process for making a referral.



Deadlines

Referrals for inclusion in the MARAC must be submitted by 5pm eight working days prior to the MARAC meeting. If urgent cases are identified up to six days prior to the meeting these may be added to the MARAC agenda as emergency MARAC items. Referrals received after that date will be held over to the next MARAC meeting unless an emergency MARAC is scheduled.

Emergency MARAC

If a service identifies a case which requires MARAC support and it believes that the needs are urgent, and the case cannot wait until the next scheduled MARAC then the agency can initiate an Emergency MARAC. In the first instance the agency must contact the MARAC Coordinator.

MARAC List / Agenda

The Barking and Dagenham MARAC list of cases is circulated after 12 noon five working days before the meeting so that all agencies have the time to complete their research before the meeting. The MARAC list of cases is circulated on a word document. The agenda cannot be arranged to accommodate timed cases where an agency or professional is required for specific cases, however, requests can be made via the MARAC Coordinator for cases to be heard at the beginning of the meeting if only representing one case. It has been agreed for all cases with children to be heard at first.

Cases for information only

Where a case meets the referral criteria, but there are no outcomes identified in advance, it may be listed for information only rather than full MARAC action planning. These cases would still require pre-meeting research and would initiate standard actions e.g. flagging and tagging but would result in limited discussion and action planning.

Such cases would not be listed for information if:

- they involve a child or children, or the victim is pregnant (except where the child or children are in permanent care)
- "Vulnerable Adults" as defined by Adult Social Care
- Specific actions which have been identified or requested by the referrer
- The referrer not agreeing with the decision to list the case in this way.

The decision to list cases as either full cases or information/ consideration cases will be made by the MARAC Chair and MARAC coordinator in consultation with the referrer or referring agency. If once listed in this way a partner agency identifies information which would indicate the listing is inappropriate e.g. the presence of children, then this will be communicated to partners and the case will be moved on the MARAC agenda to be discussed as a full case. The listing of cases for information should help the time management of the agenda and may allow more cases to be heard at a forthcoming meeting, rather than having to be held over to the next meeting.

An example of an information only case may be a MARAC to MARAC referral from another authority, where the victim is childless and not classed as being vulnerable due to health or other reason. In general, such cases would not necessarily require an individual action plan, but rather only the standard 'flagging and tagging' actions.

Victim contact before the meeting

It is best practice that clients who are referred to the MARAC should be notified of the referral (if it is safe to do so), although it is acknowledged that this will not always be possible. Victims should also be offered the support of an IDSVA and where this is consented to a referral should be made prior to the MARAC.

The IDSVA will be allocated within 48 hours of referral to enable the IDSVA to contact the victim prior to the meeting. This ensures that the views and concerns of the victim can be directly communicated at the MARAC.

If the victim declines the support of an IDSVA then the referring agency should record this on the referral form and, make attempts themselves to notify the victim that the case is being presented to the MARAC. All other methods of contact should be attempted i.e. via social care, housing, education, health visitor etc.

IDSVA – Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocates

It is a standard action that all cases referred to the MARAC are also offered the services of an IDSVA. To enable the IDVA to make contact prior to the meeting it is vital that a referral to the IDSVA service is made in enough time with all appropriate details, specifically a safe contact number and consent.

Referrals to the IDVA Service can also be made for victims whose cases do not meet the threshold for MARAC but who score ten ticks or more on the DASH Risk Indicator Checklist.

A victim can decline the services of an IDSVA and if this is the case it should be stated clearly on the MARAC referral form. In these instances, the referring agency will then remain responsible for presenting the views of the victim and reporting back following the meeting.

It is the responsibility of agencies referring cases to the MARAC to also make a referral to the IDSVA Service. A copy of the IDSVA Referral form is contained in the Appendices

Consent

The key focus at each MARAC meeting should be the victim. It is therefore desirable that victim consents to the MARAC process and as such it is vital that agencies can explain the role and purpose of MARAC in such a way that consent is encouraged. This also confirms that the victim is aware of the MARAC referral as above.

Notwithstanding this, the role of the MARAC is to address high risk cases of domestic abuse where a risk of death or serious harm has been identified. Therefore, it is not a requirement that consent is

obtained and cases should still be referred where it has been withheld. For further information please refer to the MARAC ISP.

Research

Once the case list has been circulated MARAC representatives should research their own agency databases and records to identify relevant information regarding the victim, perpetrator and any children. It is good practice to include this information on a Research form.

Where an individual is known to an agency, the information should be brought or forwarded to the MARAC Co-Ordinator in advance of the MARAC. This ensures that should a representative not be able to attend a meeting the information is still available to the MARAC.

Guidance as to relevant and appropriate information is available in Safelives toolkits for all agencies and should be used as a guide. As with all information sharing is important that the level of information shared is appropriate to the risk identified.

Actions before the MARAC

It is not intended to be the case that agencies wait until the MARAC meeting before taking action to address a case and begin reducing risk. Prior to the meeting work will commence within several agencies to address issues of safety and support. These are likely to include:

- Target Hardening to improve the security and safety at the home address
- Moving the victim to a safe address or temporary accommodation if needed.
- Providing support and advice, and safety planning with the victim, including planning safe exit
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults - There may also be a need for immediate safeguarding actions in cases where children or vulnerable adults are involved. A Strategy meeting will be initiated if necessary, either with Children's Care and Support or Adult's Care and Support.

THE MARAC MEETING

The Barking and Dagenham MARAC meets three weekly, unless the Chair has previously agreed an alternative date, for example due to bank holidays, schools holidays, annual leave etc. The venue is normally a Committee Room in Barking Town Hall, but alternative arrangements can sometimes be required and will be advised to all MARAC members.

Start / Finish Times

Meetings commence promptly at 9.30am and continue until all cases have been heard. It is important that agencies ensure their representatives can attend and do not schedule conflicting appointments or other commitments for this day. As it is not possible to determine precisely when the meeting will conclude, representatives should ensure they have enough flexibility on the day to remain at the meeting till all cases have been heard.

Cases involving children or pregnant victims will be scheduled first on the agenda and cases without children or for information will follow.

Attendance

Service representatives who attend the MARAC must be sufficiently senior to be able to offer actions which they can then ensure are completed. Generally, this would require a senior officer or middle manager.

Individual case workers may attend where it would be appropriate for them to do so e.g. IDSVAs, Social Workers, key workers by invitation

When the nominated representative is unable to attend, a named deputy may attend. If there is no named deputy or the named deputy is also unable to attend, then a written report can be submitted to the MARAC Coordinator no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

For those agencies which are not identified as core agencies it is permissible to send representatives to the MARAC only when relevant cases are listed.

The MARAC Chair

The Barking and Dagenham MARAC is currently chaired by the Detective Inspector of Safeguarding in the East Area Command Unit of the Metropolitan Police Service. It has been agreed for the Police to find a substitute at a suitable rank if the Detective Inspector is unable to attend.

The role of the MARAC Chair is:

- To ensure risks are highlighted within the meeting with appropriate measures put in place to manage or mitigate those risks through the MARAC action plan.
- To effectively chair MARAC meetings and drive forward action on outstanding items.
- To ensure the efficient running of the MARAC meeting, including keeping to time overall and by case i.e. max 15 minutes per case.
- To ensure relevant agency attendance at meetings to maintain confidentiality and safety.
- To ensure that observers at MARAC meetings are appropriate.

- To read meeting papers and prepare for meetings ensuring that they have full awareness of the cases.
- To assist the MARAC coordinator to ensure that they can accurately record all actions at the meeting.
- To work to the MARAC Toolkit and uphold the principles for safe information sharing as outlined in the MARAC ISP, including ensuring the confidentiality agreement is signed at the start of the meeting.
- Through the MARAC ensure that partners are held to account for the actions agreed at meetings.
- To report performance to the MARAC Steering as set out on the VAWG sub group agenda.

The MARAC Coordinator

The Barking and Dagenham MARAC is administered by the MARAC Coordinator who is based within the Council's Community Solutions directorate.

The role of the Coordinator is:

- To be a clear point of contact for all services referring to and working with the MARAC process
- To coordinate the MARAC meeting through facilitating room bookings and managing calendar invites
- To coordinate services to complete risk reduction actions prior to MARAC meetings
- To collate a MARAC case list for circulation 5 days prior to the MARAC meeting
- To administrate the meeting, take minutes and record actions.
- Record statistics and data to inform strategic discussion and decision making
- To coordinate a quarterly operational forum
- Awareness raising, event planning and creating promotional materials.

Information shared at the MARAC

All attending agencies are required to sign the MARAC Information Sharing Protocol prior to attending the meeting. They also must sign the Confidentiality Agreement at each meeting along with all invited visitors. The MARAC ISP provides full details about information sharing and confidentiality.

Observers at MARAC

It is recognised that the MARAC approach is likely to be of interest to many partners both locally and across the country. Consequently, it is acknowledged that there is a high likelihood that request to observe the process may be received from partners across various agencies.

While there is every intention to promote the work of the MARAC and to encourage partners to contribute to such multi-agency initiatives it is nonetheless a meeting where highly sensitive information is shared and therefore Barking and Dagenham limit it to two observers per meeting and they must sign the confidentiality act.

The MARAC Coordinator must be advised who the observers are before the meeting and given an opportunity to agree or otherwise to the observer will not be permitted to attending the meeting.

ACTION PLANNING

The role of the MARAC is to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase public safety. The responsibility to take appropriate action rests with individual agencies; it is not transferred to the MARAC.

Within the MARAC meeting a tailored action plan will be developed to increase the safety of the victim, children, perpetrator, other vulnerable parties and any staff. It is a key principle of the MARAC process that action plans are specific to individual cases to address the circumstances and wishes of the victim.

This does not however prevent a series of standard actions which will be implemented for all cases.

These include:

- All agencies flagging and tagging their files in relation to perpetrator, victim and any children. This ensures that repeat incidents can be identified as such and that should a victim later have contact with another agency the appropriate level of support can be given.
- The establishment of Police TACAU (treat all calls as urgent) on the victim's and any other relevant addresses. This ensures priority status is given in the event of a report from that address.
- Referral to the IDSVAs service for specialist support and advice as well as information relating to other specialist services and providers of support.
- Providing feedback to the victim on the MARAC process. Following the meeting where the victim is engaging with an IDSVAs they will contact the victim to give a verbal update on the outcome(s). Where a victim does not consent to an IDSVAs referral the referrer should feed back to the victim.

It is expected that agencies will volunteer actions and it is not the role of the MARAC Chair or Coordinator to allocate actions to participating agencies.

Completion of Actions

A summary of agreed actions from the MARAC meeting is circulated within 5 days of the meeting. Representatives are required to complete and provide confirmation that actions have been completed to the MARAC Coordinator within a reasonable time frame. The MARAC Coordinator will query any outstanding actions if these have not been completed by the date of the next meeting. It remains however the responsibility of the named agency to ensure that actions are completed in a timely fashion.

Where agencies are unable to complete either individual or standard actions they should notify the MARAC Coordinator. If the situation cannot be resolved, the MARAC Chair or the VAWG Sub Committee will then work with the agency concerned to identify a solution consistent with the principles of the MARAC process.

Referrals to other MARAC's

MARAC's operate on a geographical basis which is not always consistent with the geographical areas served by the agencies which are represented in the MARAC process. Consequently, if a case which requires MARAC is identified but which does not fall within the geographical boundaries of the Barking and Dagenham MARAC then the case will be referred to the appropriate area via the MARAC Coordinator.

Similarly, if the victim moves out of the borough a referral will be made by the MARAC Coordinator to the local MARAC Coordinator in the area where the victim re-locates.

Jurisdiction

Where a victim has relocated across MARAC boundaries, the MARAC of the Local Authority area in which the victim is normally resident should take lead responsibility. This is to ensure that each case is referred to the MARAC most able to offer appropriate support to the victim.

As housing, children's social care, adult social care and education services are ordinarily provided by the Local Authority in which the victim is registered as living, MARAC referrals should reflect this and as such all MARAC referrals should be made to the MARAC operating in the local authority area where a victim is registered as living.

Where the victim's relocation is a permanent or long term move then a MARAC to MARAC referral will be appropriate.

In all other cross boundary cases the lead MARAC will update any other MARACs who may be able to offer support, via the MARAC Coordinator as required.

SAFEGUARDING OFFENDER MANAGEMENT MEETING

This MARAC Information Sharing Agreement includes the Safeguarding Offender Management Meeting which complements the MARAC by providing a tactical intelligence gathering function to support the management and apprehension of wanted safeguarding nominals.

This meeting is held separately with neighbouring boroughs that fall under the East Area Police Command Unit (EA CU) – Havering and Redbridge. The meeting is held virtually and has the aim of improving arrest and charge rates, improving court outcomes and reducing risk for victims.

Wanted offenders are discussed in order to clarify their address or known location(s) in order for the police to task a team to apprehend and charge them. This is a tactical function although where there is a need for a multi-agency response this will also consider actions such as removing the offender from Council tenancy as a breach of their tenancy agreement etc.

EFFECTIVENESS OF MARAC

Equality Impact Data

All partner agencies are committed to delivering services that meet the needs of all residents. The Barking and Dagenham website has a directory which lists several local, regional and national services to support people from different backgrounds and who may have differing needs or experience unique barriers to accessing support.

The MARAC and any individuals involved with it will ensure that victims are not judged or discriminated against. This includes any inappropriate or insensitive comments being made about the victim, their children or their circumstances, or the alleged perpetrator. All work undertaken at the meetings will be informed by a commitment to equal opportunities and effective practice issues in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Equality impact data within the MARAC process is monitored and reported to Safelives and the VAWG sub group. Safelives requires that the following diversity data is submitted as part of a quarterly data return.

- Number of referrals where the victim is Black and/or Minority Ethnic (BME)
- Number of referrals where the victim is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) cases
- Number of referrals where the victim has a disability
- Number of referrals where the victim is male
- Number of referrals where the victim is aged 16 or 17

- Number of referrals where the person listed as a perpetrator is under 18 years old

Evaluation

All MARAC data is collected monthly and entered into the Safelives MARAC spreadsheet by the MARAC Coordinator. The data is sent monthly to the Performance and Intelligence team.

Review

The MARAC Operating Protocol will be reviewed annually by the VAWG Sub Group to the Community Safety Partnership.

Complaints

Any MARAC agency wishing to make a complaint against another agency related to the MARAC must follow the procedure as set out below.

- Anyone who wishes to make a complaint may do so in person, by telephone, or in writing. (Written complaints can be submitted by mail or email).
- In the first instance all complaints are to be made to the MARAC Chair
- The MARAC Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and provide a timeframe in which a response will be made.
- The MARAC Chair will investigate the complaint, consider a response and write to the complainant
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response from the MARAC Chair, then an escalated letter of complaint can be sent to the chair of the VAWG Sub Group
- The Chair of the VAWG Sub-Committee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and respond within a stated time frame. The response should be reviewed by the VAWG Sub-Committee, if time permits, before it is sent to the complainant.

Breaches

The aim of the MARAC is to increase the safety of the victim(s). All agencies are advised to ensure they operate within these protocols as a breach can increase the risk to the victim(s)

Any identified breaches of either the Operating Protocol or Information Sharing Agreement, will be referred to the VAWG Sub-Committee for consideration and may be referred to the Local Safeguarding Boards as required.

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR)

Domestic Homicide Reviews were established on a statutory basis under section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004). This provision came into force on 13th April 2011

If a MARAC case becomes subject of a DHR the Independent Chair of the Homicide Review Panel or the Head of the Community Safety Partnership may make a written request to the MARAC Chair for the release of Minutes pertaining to the case.

The MARAC Chair in conjunction with the MARAC Coordinator will provide the Homicide Review Panel with copies of relevant minutes and action plans within 10 working days. MARAC information will be provided to Homicide Review Panels in the following circumstances:

- A client of the MARAC is the victim of a domestic abuse related homicide.
- A MARAC client is identified as the perpetrator of a domestic abuse related homicide and the victim is also known to the MARAC.

In all other circumstances a written request for the release of information including minutes and action plans may still be submitted to the Chair of the MARAC who will decide as to whether the request will be granted.

MARAC disclosure into court proceedings

Where disclosure of documents is requested by a court, the MARAC will follow the principles outlined by the Working party of the Family Justice Council/Safelives document; “MARAC and disclosure into court proceedings” published in December 2011.

Further Information



Further information relating to MARAC can be obtained from the MARAC Coordinator or from the SafeLives website: www.safelives.org.uk

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APV	Adolescent to Parent Violence
BME/BAMER	Black Minority Ethnic/Black and Minority Ethnic and Refugee
Express Consent	Consent which is expressed orally, or in writing, (except where patients cannot write or speak, when other forms of communication may be sufficient)
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
Crime	Any act, default, or conduct prejudicial to the community, the commission of which by law, renders the person responsible liable to punishment by fine, imprisonment or other penalty.

Crime and Disorder Act (CDA)1998	The purpose of the Act is to tackle crime and disorder and help create safer communities. It requires the police and local authorities in partnership with the community, to establish a local partnership to cut crime. This partnership must conduct an audit to identify the types of crime in the area and develop a strategy for tackling them.
Designated Information Sharing Officer (DISO)	A person nominated by the agency of sufficient standing to process or initiate requests for personal information and data (generally the MARAC representative)
DA	Domestic Abuse
DV	Domestic Violence
DVA	Domestic Violence and Abuse
DASH RIC	Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment Risk Indicator Checklist
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
FLO	Family Liaison Officer
FSW	Family Support Worker
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GP	General Practitioner
HV	Health Visitor
IDSVA	Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocate
ISA	Information Sharing Agreement
ISP	Information Sharing Protocol
ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Advocate
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) or Transgender
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
OIC	Officer in Charge
Partner Agencies/Services	Organisations who have signed up to the MARAC Information Sharing Protocol and this toolkit.
TACAU	Treat All Calls as Urgent
SA	Sexual Abuse
SafeLives	Formerly known as CAADA, a National Organisation working to end domestic and sexual violence. SafeLives developed the IDSVA and MARAC Model and collate data from MARACs across England and Wales.
SN	School Nurse
SW	Social Worker
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

APPENDICES

Appendix Item	Embedded Document	Links
MARAC Referral Form:	 MARAC Referral Form.doc	maracreferrals@lbbd.gcsx.gov.uk (secure) or MARACreferrals@lbbd.gov.uk (not secure - please use Egress or password protect your form)
IDSVA Referral Form:	 IDSVA SERVICE referral Form.docx	https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence
Service Directory	-	https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence