

# Single Points of Contact for MARAC

This document contains guidance for the Regional MARAC Partners about what a “good” MARAC Single Point of Contact, or SPOC, looks like from an operational perspective. This is guidance only and it is acknowledged that different agencies and organisations will have different ways of processing and sharing MARAC information.

## 1. What is a SPOC?

A point of contact (POC) or single point of contact (SPOC) is a person or a department serving as the coordinator or focal point of information concerning an activity or program. A POC is used in many cases where information is time-sensitive and accuracy is important.

## 2. Why is it best practice to appoint a SPOC?

Appointing a SPOC will benefit both your agency and your wider MARAC partners. It means most MARAC information will enter and leave your organisation via one person, or one team, ensuring a consistent approach to information sharing and management. A knowledgeable SPOC will usually understand MARAC better than most people in your organisation and will act as a central point for MARAC queries, either knowing the answer, or knowing who to escalate the question to amongst the wider network of MARAC SPOCs in the region.

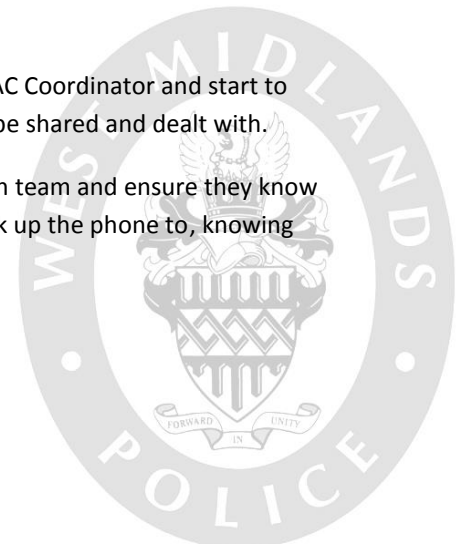
## 3. What do we recommend are the key functions of a SPOC?

### a. Training

- i. Your SPOC should be MARAC trained and comprehensively understand the MARAC process, they should understand the West Midlands MARAC Operating Protocol and support their colleagues in following and adhering to it.
- ii. They should be willing to provide basic training and understanding to their colleagues about the MARAC process, specifically around completing risk assessments and MARAC referral forms.

### b. Relationship Building

- i. Your SPOC should meet with and get to know your MARAC Coordinator and start to build trusting and open relationships where queries can be shared and dealt with.
- ii. Your SPOC should get to know the MARAC Administration team and ensure they know there is always someone in the organisation they can pick up the phone to, knowing they will be understood and supported, and vice versa.



- iii. There are a number of other key relationships for your SPOC, from the MARAC Chair to the other partners. Building strong relationships with your partners will only enhance the success of your MARAC and ultimately the experience of our victims.
- c. Information Processing
  - i. Outgoing MARAC referrals are ideally monitored by a SPOC. It helps agencies to understand their own referral rates, and ensure they are supporting their frontline practitioners when it comes to submitting referrals. SPOCs should not gate keep, but should advise. It isn't for any one professional to tell another that their judgement is wrong, but it is the duty of line managers and MARAC SPOCs to support staff in considering alternative referral routes if there is a disagreement about the appropriateness of a MARAC referral.
  - ii. A MARAC SPOC should act as the first point of contact for incoming MARAC agendas, ensuring they are processed internally and that colleagues understand what good MARAC research looks like. Additionally, they should be responsible for the safe filing of incoming MARAC minutes, ensuring their organisation is compliant with data protection policies.
- d. Attending the Meeting
  - i. Where capacity allows, your MARAC SPOC should regularly attend the MARAC meeting in order to build and maintain those key relationships, and ensure their knowledge of how their local MARAC meeting operates remains current. For many MARAC partners, it makes sense that their MARAC SPOC is also the person who attends every MARAC meeting to represent them.

#### 4. Deputies and Cover

- a. When allocating a SPOC as an individual, you will need to think about cover in the event of sickness, annual leave and staff turnover. This is why a SPOC *team* is sometimes a sensible solution, especially for larger teams and organisations. Your agency should feel confident that even in the event of the absence of your SPOC, your contribution to and attendance at MARAC will not be negatively impacted.

**For further guidance or advice around appointing a MARAC SPOC, or to arrange training for your SPOC or SPOC team, please contact your MARAC Coordinator.**

