Marac data: guidance for Maracs

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About this guide

This guide contains information for Maracs about collecting data to contribute to SafeLives’ National dataset, and using the SafeLives website to upload or view that data. For those who have responsibility for submitting data to SafeLives, guidance is available on how to complete the data collection template (section 2) and how to prepare and upload the data to the SafeLives website (sections 4 and 5). The remaining sections will be relevant to everyone who has a log-in to the website and would like to view their Marac data.

If you have any questions about this guide or about Marac data please contact the Marac data team on marac@safelives.org.uk or call 0117 403 3220.
1. About Marac data collection

Why should I collect Marac data?

We believe that by contributing to SafeLives Marac data collection you will benefit in a number of ways:

- SafeLives will analyse and return your data quarterly, providing comparison data using most similar forces, region and national data.
- The analysis will help you to understand how the MARAC is performing by looking at key performance indicators such as volume, against expected rates.
- You will be able to track the impact you have on the victims’ safety, through the repeat victimisation rate.
- The data will track the range of agencies making Marac referrals, thereby promoting accountability and consistency between agencies.
- The data will assist you in monitoring the diversity of referrals compared to the local population.
- The data can be used to evidence the needs of your local population to support funding applications and commissioning of services.

Collecting a national Marac dataset also allows SafeLives to work proactively with the National Marac Steering Group to identify and address common issues at a strategic level, and develop policy to support you in your work.

2. Collecting your data

To collect and submit Marac data to SafeLives, you will need to complete the Marac data template after every Marac meeting.

You can download the template from the Marac data page on our website, under ‘related resources for collecting your data’: click here.

Completing the Marac data template

You only need to complete the first tab of the template (the ‘Meeting Data’ tab); the other two tabs are for checking the data, and will be explained later in this guide. You will need to complete a row for each meeting held (more information below). Old data should never be deleted from the spreadsheet, even after it has been submitted to SafeLives, so each time you add a new meeting date it should be added in the next row after the last meeting. If you are responsible for collecting data for more than one Marac, each Marac should have a separate spreadsheet.
What does each column mean and what do I put in it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marac Name</td>
<td>This is the name of the Marac that the data relates to. This will be the same for every line (if you collect data for more than one Marac, each Marac should have a different spreadsheet). If you're not sure what name the Marac is known by at SafeLives, log into the website (see section 3 of this document) and have a look at what it is called on the drop down menu when you upload your data (see section 4 of this document).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Marac</td>
<td>This is the date the Marac meeting was held; all other columns in the row will be completed in relation to cases heard at that meeting date. If, for any reason, a Marac is not held please enter the date on which it should have been held and then enter ‘0’ across the whole row. <strong>If you are a new Marac:</strong> Put the date of your first Marac in the date held column. <strong>If you are an existing Marac but submitting data for the first time:</strong> Put the date for the first Marac for which you have continuous records. For example, if you have been running for 3 years but only started collecting data in January, then enter the date of the January Marac and follow with subsequent meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases discussed</td>
<td>This is the total number of cases that were discussed at this Marac meeting – this includes new cases, repeat cases and cases where the victim is aged 16 – 17 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of repeat cases</td>
<td>This is the number of cases seen at this Marac which come under the definition of a ‘Repeat’ as explained below: SafeLives defines a ‘repeat’ as ANY instance of abuse between the same victim and perpetrator(s), within 12 months of the last referral to Marac. The individual act of abuse does not need to be ‘criminal’, violent or threatening but should be viewed within the context of a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. Some events that might be considered a ‘repeat’ incident may include, but are not limited to:  - Unwanted direct or indirect contact from the perpetrator and/or their friends or family  - A breach of police or court bail conditions  - A breach of any civil court order between the victim and perpetrator  - Any dispute between the victim and perpetrator(s) including over child contact, property, divorce/ separation proceedings etc. These events could be disclosed to any service or agency including, but not exclusive to, health care practitioners (including mental health), domestic abuse specialists, police, substance misuse services, housing providers etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in the household</td>
<td>The number of children in the household is counted as the number of children normally expected to be in the house on a regular basis and who would therefore be affected by domestic abuse. Those in long term care would be excluded, and short term included. A child is defined as anyone aged 17 or under who is not themselves referred as a victim or the person causing harm. If a woman is pregnant this would not be recorded as an additional child. Children from both new and repeat cases should be counted in this column.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Referring Agency | Please record here which agency made the referral of each case to the Marac.
--- | ---

The total of all the referral route columns for the row should be equal to the total number of cases discussed at that Marac. You can check this using 'Referral Route Validation' tab – see the ‘checking the data’ section below for more information.

If you have a case where the referral came from more than one agency at the same time, please enter each agency as fraction of 1. E.g. if it came from two agencies at the same time, please enter it as 0.5 of a referral in each agency’s column. If the referral came from three agencies, note two of them at 0.3 and the remaining agency as 0.4; this is so that the total adds up to 1. It doesn’t matter which agency you note a 0.4 as this will make little difference to the data.

If you have a Marac to Marac referral, please record this as the original referring agency.

If an agency completes the RIC and identifies that the case meets Marac threshold but refers to Marac through a different agency, this should also be recorded under the original referring agency.

If you have any agency which refers to MARAC regularly but is not listed on one of the columns, please put it in the ‘other’ column.

Categories of agencies:

- **Police**
- **Idva / Idaa (Scotland)** – This includes Idvas / Idaas from charitable and statutory organisations
- **Childrens Social Care / Children and Families Social Work (Scotland)** – Also known as Children and Young People’s Services
- **Primary Care Services** – This normally includes referrals from Community Based Health Services, e.g. Midwives, Health Visitors, School Nurses, GPs, etc. Dentists, Ophthalmologists and Pharmacists are also part of Primary Care.
- **Secondary Care / Acute Trust** – This includes all hospital based services, e.g. Accident & Emergency, Obstetrics, Elderly Medicine, Sexual Health (GUM) Clinics etc.
- **Education** – this includes referrals from Schools or Education Welfare Officers
- **Housing** – This includes Housing and Homelessness organisations – both voluntary and statutory
- **Mental Health** – This includes community and hospital based mental health services and mental health charities.
- **Probation / Criminal Justice Social Work (Scotland)**
- **Voluntary Sector** – This includes other specialist DV services and any non-statutory body that is not included elsewhere on this spreadsheet. This also includes specialist BME / LGBT organisations from the voluntary sector. If the Idva who refers is from a voluntary agency, it is still recorded under ‘Idva’ rather than under ‘Voluntary Sector’.
- **Substance Abuse** – This includes referrals from both voluntary and statutory Substance Abuse Agencies.
- **Adult Social Care / Adult Protection (Scotland)**
- **MASH** – Referrals directly from a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- **Other** – This includes any agency or organisation making a referral to Marac not included in the list above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases from black and minority ethnic community</td>
<td>For the purposes of this spreadsheet any victim discussed at Marac who is not White British is defined as being from a Minority Ethnic Community. Within Northern Ireland victims discussed at Marac who are White Irish are not defined as being from a Minority Ethnic Community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of LGBT cases</td>
<td>This is the number of cases where the victim identifies as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) or Trans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For further information on cases involving LGBT people, including advice on data monitoring, please see <a href="https://www.safelives.org.uk/spotlight/lgbt">SafeLives LGBT+ spotlight</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases where victim has a disability</td>
<td>This is the number of cases where the victim has a disability in line with the <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equalities-act-2010">Equalities Act 2010</a>. The Act defines a person as having a disability if 'he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This means that, in general:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the person must have an impairment that is either physical or mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the impairment must have adverse effects which are substantial;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the substantial adverse effects must be long-term;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the long-term substantial adverse effects must be effects on normal day-to-day activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This can be identified by either the victim themselves or a professional who has met with/worked with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More information and guidance can be found in <a href="https://www.safelives.org.uk/guidance/disability">SafeLives guidance on disability</a> and <a href="https://www.safelives.org.uk/spotlight/disability">SafeLives Spotlight on Disability</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of male victims</td>
<td>This is the number of victims who are male, regardless of whether the perpetrator is male or female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of victims aged 16 - 17</td>
<td>This is the number of cases where the victim is aged 16 – 17 years old at the time the case was referred to MARAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Following the extension of the definition of domestic abuse to include 16 and 17 year olds, the Home Office produced <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-using-the-new-definition">guidance on using the new definition</a> to support local areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number harming others aged 17 or below</td>
<td>This is the number of individuals aged 17 or below behaving in harmful ways towards the victim in line with the <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-using-the-new-definition">definition of domestic abuse</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This should be based on the age of the individual when the case is referred to Marac.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Checking the data

The remaining two tabs on the spreadsheet help you to check for any errors in the data.

- The ‘Referral Routes Validation’ tab checks that your referral routes data for each meeting adds up to the total number of referrals for that meeting.
- Once you have entered your data check column Z on the referral routes validation tab: it will show the number of ‘extra’ or ‘missing’ referrals in any row. If any of the rows read more or less than 0, go back into the ‘Meeting Data’ tab and check whether the referral routes in the corresponding row are correct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Number of referrals</th>
<th>Cross check of referrals should be zero</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The remaining columns in the the referral routes validation tab (columns A – Y) display your data as a 12 month rolling total (ie every meeting row shows the total data for all meetings in the previous 12 months, up to and including the date of that meeting). You can use this to see the overall trends in your data. If the numbers suddenly increase or decrease dramatically, that may indicate an error in your data and should be double checked.
- The ‘Marac results for time period’ tab is similar to the 12 month rolling total, but allows you to choose the time period. Enter a start date and an end date in the pink boxes:

  | Period Start Date: | 01/01/2017 |
  | Period End Date:   | 31/12/2017 |

- All data submitted during that period will be totalled and displayed in the table below.

What do I do with the data once I have collected it?

Data should be uploaded to the SafeLives website end the end of each quarter. Section 4 explains how to do this in detail. The quarters are:

- Quarter 1: January to March
- Quarter 2: April to June
- Quarter 3: July to September
- Quarter 4: October to December

You should receive reminder e-mails about the deadline for uploading data each quarter, but generally the deadline will be one week after the quarter has ended in Q1, Q2 and Q3, and two weeks after Q4 (to account for christmas holidays). If you do not receive reminder e-mails, please e-mail marac@safelives.org.uk.
3. Logging in to the SafeLives website

1. Go to safelives.org.uk. Click ‘Login’, in the top right hand corner of the page

2. The following page will appear. Enter the username and password sent to you by SafeLives. If you have forgotten your username or password it is quickest to e-mail marac@safelives.org.uk for a new one.

3. When you have logged in you will see a range of options, including uploading and downloading your data. More information about how to do this is available in the following sections.

4. Uploading your data

1. Save your Marac data template (see section 2) as a CSV file

   - To prepare your data for upload to the SafeLives website you must first convert your current Excel workbook into a CSV file for the website to accept the data.
   - Go onto the ‘Meeting data’ tab.
   - In the menu, go to ‘File’ and ‘Save As’
In the ‘Save As’ box enter your ‘File name’ (this can be anything) and in ‘Save as Type’ choose CSV (Comma delimited) – press ‘Save’

If you receive the following warning messages select ‘OK’ and then ‘Yes’:

- **Microsoft Excel**
  - The selected file type does not support workbooks that contain multiple sheets.
  - To save only the active sheet, click OK.
  - To save all sheets, save them individually using a different file name for each, or choose a file type that supports multiple sheets.

- **Microsoft Excel**
  - Some features in your workbook might be lost if you save it as CSV (Comma delimited).
  - Do you want to keep using that format?

Remember to also save the original file in Excel format (‘Excel Workbook’ in file type) before you close it, so that you have a copy to continue adding data to for next quarter. The CSV file will look like the below when you open the file.
2. Upload your data

- Log into the website as described in section 3 of this guidance.
- You will now see the Marac data user page. Click on the ‘Marac User Data Upload’ tab.

- From the drop-down menu select the Marac for the data you want to upload. You will only see Maracs that you have permission to upload data for.

- Click on ‘Choose File’ and select your CSV file to upload
- Click ‘Import’

Note: Under the ‘Choose file’ button you will see a message stating that importing the file you will be deleting any data held. Do not worry that data will be erased as every quarter you will be re-uploading your historical data with the new entries, as explained in section 2.

If your upload is successful you will see a confirmation message.

5. Error messages when uploading your data

If there are errors in your datasheet the website will alert you and will usually state the row and/or column where the error is. The error needs to be corrected in both the Excel and CSV file. When corrections are complete re-save both files and re-upload the CSV file to the website.

To quickly find the solution to your error message, search this document with words found within the error message you have received. If you have received an error message that is not in this document, or you are unable to fix it, then please contact the Marac data team on marac@safelives.org.uk or call 0117 4033 220.

Example 1: The ‘number_of_cases_discussed’ does not match the sum of referrals by agencies (Police to Other) at row [x] in the CSV.
The selected file [file name.xls] cannot be uploaded. Only files with the following extensions are allowed: csv.

What does this mean?
This error indicates that the file is not the correct format (CSV file).

How do I fix it?
To fix this error, convert your current Excel workbook into a CSV file by following the steps above in section 4.1 (pages 7-8).

Example 3: The 'Date of Marac' field is missing at row [x] in the CSV.

What does this mean?
This error indicates empty cells exist which contain hidden data and/or formatting.

How do I fix it?
• In the 'Marac Data' tab, go to the first empty row below your last meeting
• Hold down the following keys at the same time: Ctrl, Shift, down arrow, then keeping your left hand fingers on the Ctrl & Shift key move your right hand finger from the Down arrow to the Right arrow. All empty cells below your data should now be selected.
• Go to the Home tab >> Editing section >> Clear >> Clear all.
• This will remove any hidden data and formatting in empty cells.
• Re-save the Excel and CSV files and re-upload the CSV file to the website.

If that didn’t work, try this:
This error could also indicate that a blank row has been accidently inserted within your meeting data. Go to the row as specified in the error message (row 303 in the above example). If there is completed meeting data above and below this row, then click on the row number 303, this will select the whole row >> right click >> delete. Re-save the Excel and CSV files and re-upload the CSV file.
Example 4: SQLSTATE[22003]: Numeric value out of range: 1264 Out of range value for column 'date_of_data' at row 1

What does this mean?
This error usually indicates there is a typo in one of the cells in the Date of MARAC column (Column B). Unhelpfully, the error message on the website does not indicate the correct row number for the error, it instead always states ‘at row 1’.

How do I fix it?
In order to find the error, open the Excel file and check your recently inputted data for Marac meetings in the recent quarter. Check that the dates in Column C are correct. The mistake is usually the year (e.g. 2091 instead of 2019). Correct the date, re-save the Excel and the CSV files, then re-upload the CSV file to the website.

Couldn’t find the mistake? Try this:
If you are unable to quickly spot where the date mistake is, then try the following:

- Select all of the data, by clicking on the down arrow in the right top corner of the spreadsheet:

- Go to the Insert tab >> click Pivot table. Press ok on the create PivotTable pop up box. This will create a new tab within your workbook with a pivot table in it:

- In the ‘Pivot Table Fields’ on the right, tick the box for ‘Date of Marac’. This will then list all of the date fields by year in the pivot table, allowing you to scan for any unusual years (e.g. in the image below the year 2071 is an error):

- Once you identify the mistake, search for that meeting date in the ‘Marac data’ tab by using the Find and replace box (hold down the Ctrl and F button to make this box appear):
• Correct the date, delete the tab with the pivot table on, and then re-save the Excel and CSV files and re-upload the CSV file to the website.

Example 5: The ‘Date of Marac’ field is not in proper format at row [x] in the CSV.

What does this mean?
This error message indicates a date cell in column B has a different format than the accepted format which is DD/MM/YYYY.

How do I fix it?
Select all cells with dates by clicking in cell B2 and then holding down the following keys at the same time: Ctrl, Shift, down arrow >> right click on selected cells > click ‘Format Cells’ >> in the pop up box, in the ‘Number’ tab click ‘Date’ in the Category list on the left hand side >> make sure the ‘Type’ in the right hand list is set to the format of DD/MM/YYYY and the ‘Locale (location)’ is set to English (United Kingdom) – see below image for example of the correct settings. Press OK, re-save the Excel and the CSV files, and re-upload the CSV file to the website.

Example 6: At row [x], column [x], value {x} in the CSV.

What does this mean?
This error message indicates that a value has been inputted in an incorrect format for that column. In the above example, the word ‘four’ has been inputted in row 302, column J but column J only accepts number formats.

How do I fix it?
To fix this, go to the cell identified in the error message (e.g. cell J302 in above example) and correct the value. Re-save the Excel and CSV files, and re-upload the CSV file to the website.
Example 7: The 'number_of_victims_aged_16_to_17_years' is higher than 'number_of_cases_discussed' at row [x] in the CSV.

What does this mean?
This indicates that data has been inputted for a meeting (in this case a meeting in row 302) where the number of victims aged 16-17 (column X) is higher than the number of cases discussed (column C).

How do I fix it?
Go to the row/s in the 'Marac data' tab as identified in the error message and correct the data. Re-save the Excel and CSV file, and re-upload the CSV file to the website.

6. Viewing and downloading your data

You can view or download your data at any time by logging into the website as described in section 3 of this guidance. If you do not have a log-in for the website but would like one, please contact marac@safelives.org.uk. Please note that if you are not the Marac Chair, Administrator or Coordinator we will need to receive permission from the Marac Chair to set up an account for you. The Marac chair can give permission by e-mailing marac@safelives.org.uk.

Viewing your Marac data

After logging in, click on the ‘Marac data view’ tab.

From the drop down menu, select the time period you would like to view.

In the viewing panel you will now see data for a range of indicators for the Maracs you have permission to view. You will also see data at national, police force and most similar force group level. Guidance to help you understand the data is available here.
Downloading your Marac data

After logging in, click on the Marac data download tab.

From the dropdown box choose the data period you want to download. Click ‘Download CSV’.

The file will download to your computer where you can open it or you will see a message box asking if you want to open or save the data file. The data file will open in a CSV format (as below).
You will see national, most similar force group, and police force figures plus data for the individual Maracs you have permission to access for the quarter and year you have selected.

In this format the columns open in the same width which limits the viewing of the text. This can be altered by either 1) placing your cursor on the right hand border of each cell in the top grey row (A,B,C etc.) until it changes into a cross - double-click and this will automatically extend the column width. 2) placing your cursor on the right hand border of each cell in the ribbon – hold down left click on the mouse and manually drag the column to the width you require.
You can easily format your download to make it more presentable to share by editing. For example, you can add borders, change fonts and add shading to highlight certain columns and headings using the formatting section of the menu.