

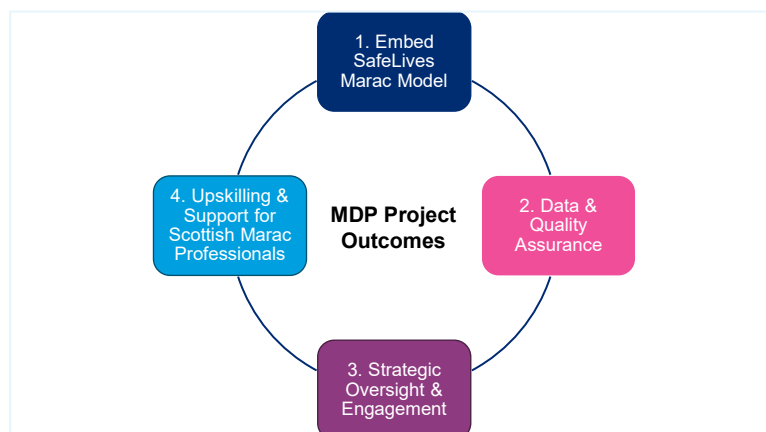
Marac in Scotland

National Update Report 2020

Background

For the past 15 years Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (Marac) have transformed the multi-agency response to domestic abuse across Scotland. In Equally Safe¹ Scottish Government committed to developing and building a national framework for Maracs in Scotland and funded SafeLives to support this through the Scottish Marac Development Programme (MDP). Through the MDP, SafeLives have been committed to supporting and optimising the operation and accessibility of Scottish Maracs since 2015. Our aim is to ensure that all victims at high risk of serious harm as a result of domestic abuse in Scotland can access support from their local Marac.

Marac Development Programme Workstreams



In 2018 the Scottish Government launched a consultation on Improving Multi-Agency Risk Assessments and Interventions for Victims of Domestic Abuse that included questions about whether Marac should be a statutory process, findings were published in late 2019². Whilst awaiting the next steps from this consultation process, this document provides an overview of themes observed across Scottish Maracs during observations carried out as part of core activities of the MDP between July 2019 and March 2020. Since then, COVID-19 and the associated lockdown response has drastically changed the nature of work both in the sector and our engagement with Maracs. The Scottish Government and COSLA have published guidance for local authorities to assist multi-agency decision making and long-term strategic planning for VAW provision³. We were pleased to see Maracs named as a key feature in future resilience planning and remain committed to supporting the Scottish Government and other stakeholders in their planning for post-COVID recovery, ensuring the views and voice of Scottish Maracs are represented.

As part of our response to COVID-19 SafeLives have also produced an overview of Marac operation in Scotland during lockdown, and guidance on operating remote Maracs⁴ and we are committed to continue supporting Scottish Maracs through these unprecedented times.

¹ Equally Safe is Scotland's strategy to eradicate to violence against women and girls

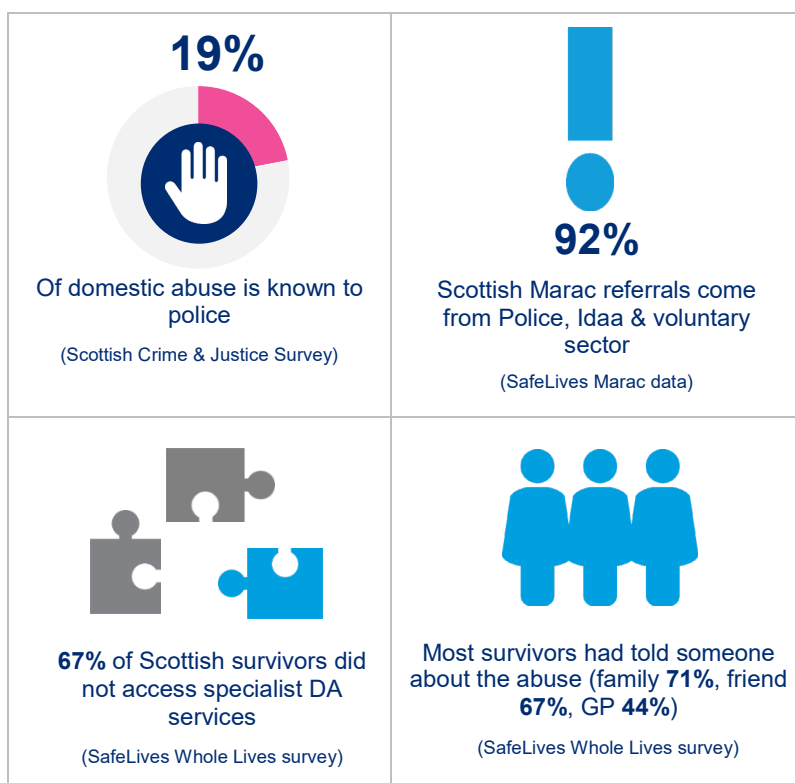
² Improving Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Interventions for Victims of Domestic Abuse

³ Coronavirus (COVID-19) Supplementary National Violence Against Women Guidance

⁴ Responding to COVID-19: SafeLives guidance for multi-agency forums (including Maracs)

Executive Summary

There are currently 32 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (Maracs) operating in 29 Local Authorities in Scotland. As part of the Marac Development Programme (MDP), SafeLives carried out 25 Marac observations between July 2019 and March 2020. The **10 Principles of an Effective Marac** underpin effective operation of Marac and support everyone involved to deliver the aims of Marac and inform the Marac observation process. This summary sets out the key themes from those observations and recommendations for next steps for Scottish Marac Development.



Effective Marac operation has been identified through Equally Safe as a key component in addressing violence against women and girls in Scotland. At the heart of Marac is the working assumption that no single agency can see the complete picture of the life of a victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. Across the 25 observations the following themes emerged:

- Over two thirds of Marac referrals came from Police Scotland or Idaa services. Although this varies across Maracs, on average there are few referrals from the statutory agencies that attend Marac
- Currently the average number of Marac referrals in Scotland is about half the recommended number, although this varies widely across individual Maracs⁵
- On average, across the 25 observed meeting, 6.5 of the 9 core agencies, recommended by SafeLives for an effective Marac, were in attendance. This varied hugely across Maracs, from 3 to 9, and a number of the observed meetings were additionally attended by a range of other local agencies who contributed to a nuanced understanding of risk
- Idaas, as domestic abuse specialists, play a crucial role at Marac, however, this is compromised by a lack of appropriate funding and capacity. At two of the observed Maracs there is no longer dedicated Idaa provision for victims referred to Marac due to cuts in funding.
- The premise of Marac is that relevant and proportionate information is shared in a concise and structured manner, with each case lasting 12-15 minutes from start to finish. Across the observed meetings there were several examples of discussions exceeding this, and discussions diverting from risk

⁵ SafeLives estimates that approximately 9,000 victims annually, including repeat victims, will be at high risk of serious harm or murder as a result of domestic abuse in Scotland. This equates to 40 Marac referrals per 10,000 of the local female population

- A further theme across meetings was discrepancies in proportionate information sharing and understanding of what is relevant to share, and not all Maracs had up to date Information Sharing Protocols in place in light of the introduction of GDPR
- Across the observed meetings there were examples of truly bespoke and creative action planning, with agencies thinking ‘outside the box’ and going beyond what might be reasonably expected from their day-to-day engagement with victims, children and perpetrators
- At some meetings actions were largely “business as usual” or mainly following up on information not available during the meeting, and did not address all risks identified
- Nationally, referral levels for victims with a disability, BME, LGBT and male victims are still below expected levels, and lower than the UK-wide levels
- The lack of available and consistent funding for Marac coordinators and Idaas has repeatedly been highlighted as a major barrier for Marac development in Scotland. Currently, only 53% of Scottish Maracs have dedicated funding for Marac Coordinators. Moreover in many areas there is a discrepancy between what is funded and what is required, with many Maracs reporting feeling overwhelmed by the resources required for Marac administration
- A number of the Maracs observed did not have appropriate governance structures in place, or struggled to ensure appropriate membership of strategic oversight groups

Domestic abuse must be seen as everybody’s business in order to ensure all victims at high risk of serious harm receive a coordinated response to mitigate risk.

Next steps

SafeLives are committed to continue working with Scottish Maracs and local and national stakeholders to support joint-up Marac development and resilience in Scotland, and a response that is responsive to the needs of domestic abuse victims. As the responses to the Scottish Government consultation on multi-agency arrangements highlighted access to consistent, sustainable funding and national training that recognises local diversity, are key to ensuring the sustainability of Scottish Maracs.

We suggest prioritising the following activities, both on a national and local level, to address the themes highlighted throughout this report, and strengthen the approach to Marac in Scotland as we navigate a new landscape:

- Coordinated, consistent messages around, and support for, the value of Maracs in responding to domestic abuse from National and Local stakeholders and partners, and consistent funding to back this up
- Resources for National and Local data collection to monitor areas for development and measure impact, including working with survivors to ensure Marac is responding effectively to their needs
- Development of a collaborative review framework, for use by Scottish Maracs to support ongoing development and identify themes and trends across Scotland
- Comprehensive Information Sharing Guidance and support to build confidence and improve consistency and practice across Scotland
- Sustainable and accessible training for Marac professionals, both for agency representatives, Marac Coordinators and Marac Chairs. Given the current landscape and limitations on face to face provision this needs to be flexible and responsive to the changing picture
- Sector-specific guidance on effective Marac engagement specifically, and multi-agency working responding to domestic abuse more generally
- Strengthen the links between Marac and other multi-agency forums, e.g. MATAC, and develop formal channels to share information between forums where appropriate

Introduction

There are currently 32 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (Marac) operating in 29 Local Authorities across Scotland (see Appendix 1). As part of the core activities between July 2019 and March 2020, 25 observations of Scottish Maracs were completed⁶ and this report represents an overview of national themes across these observations. Links are also made to engagements with Scottish Maracs during COVID-19 and the Scottish Government's consultation on multi-agency arrangements for victims of domestic abuse. Finally, some recommendations for next steps for Scottish Maracs are made.

At the heart of Marac is the working assumption that no single agency can see the complete picture of the life of a victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. Marac provides a safe environment for agencies to share information relevant and proportionate information about risk and devise a joint action plan that will increase victim safety. The **10 Principles of an Effective Marac** underpin effective operation of Marac and support everyone involved to deliver the aims of Marac. The observation process, and the sections of this report, are informed by the 10 principles, at the core of which is the safety of the victim; and should be considered at all stages of the process.

The 4 Aims of Marac

 <p>Protect adult (& child) victims</p>	 <p>Make links with other public protection arrangements</p>
 <p>Protect agency staff</p>	 <p>Address perpetrator behaviour</p>

Themes from Observations

Identification and Referral

Across Scotland the majority of referrals come from Police Scotland and Idaa services, in the January to December 2019⁷ Police and Idaa services made up over three quarters of Marac referrals. This reflects similar trends from the baseline report in 2016, and although some areas have increased multi-agency referrals through training and awareness raising, on average there are few referrals from statutory agencies who attend Marac. In part this reflects reporting trends for domestic abuse, however, it does highlight that unless a victim discloses to the Police or seeks help from a specialist service, they are unlikely to access vital support from their local Marac.

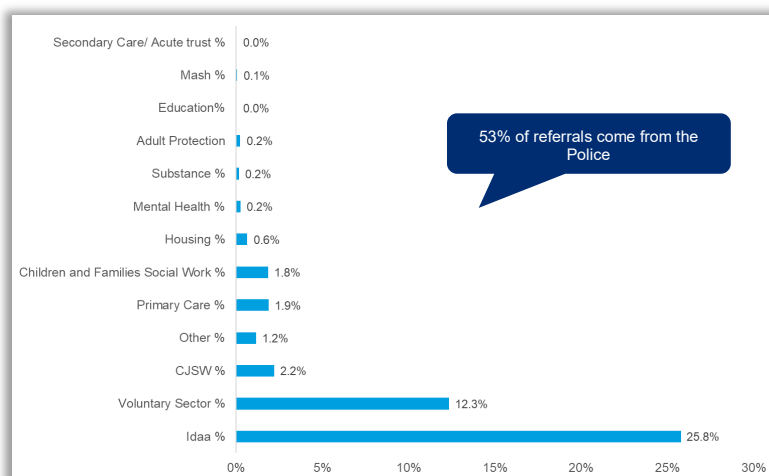
SafeLives estimates that approximately 9,000 victims annually, including repeat victims, will be at high risk of serious harm or murder as a result of domestic abuse in Scotland. This equates to 40 Marac referrals per 10,000 of the local female population (see appendix 2 for details). Currently the average number of referrals in Scotland is about half the recommended number, although this varies widely across individual Maracs.

Increasing multi-agency referrals to Marac is crucial to ensure that *all* victims at high risk of serious harm as a result of domestic abuse receive a coordinated response to mitigate risk.

⁶ A further 6 observations, representing the remaining operational Maracs, were scheduled between March and April 2020 but were unable to be carried out due to COVID-19

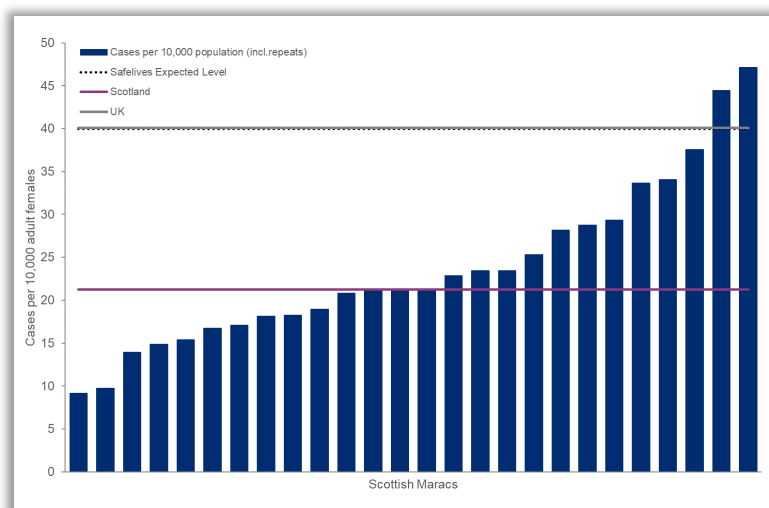
⁷ 26 Scottish Maracs currently submit quarterly data to SafeLives for analysis; however this does not include all operational Maracs, including some large Scottish cities

Referrals to Marac by non-Police agencies: January-December 2019



From engagement with Maracs across Scotland many are expressing that they are struggling to cope with the current level of referrals, let alone the recommended level. To address this some have introduced limits on how many cases can be heard in a meeting, and some have a screening process in place to determine which cases are taken forward to the meeting. Although this is in part a result of the environment in which Maracs are operating in, screening is concerning practice and may mean that some victims at high risk of serious harm do not receive a robust response to risk. It may further hollow out the confidence professionals have in Marac process and their role in it, and more importantly decision are being taken with potentially limited information, and before a complete picture of risk for the whole family has been established. This overrides the common understanding of risk and Marac referral criteria and could lead to a less effective, or unsafe, response.

Cases per 10,000 local female population: January-December 2019



Impact of COVID-19

Although at the time of writing, most Scottish Maracs have indicated that it is too soon to verify any referral trends during lockdown⁸, anecdotal reports from Maracs operating during lockdown suggest some Maracs are starting to see an increase in referrals from a range of agencies due to an increased recognition of the risks adult and child victims may face in lockdown. Almost a quarter of surveyed Maracs identified an increase in repeat referrals during lockdown. It is likely that the increased awareness raising efforts, both on a national and local level, has contributed to this. This is positive and

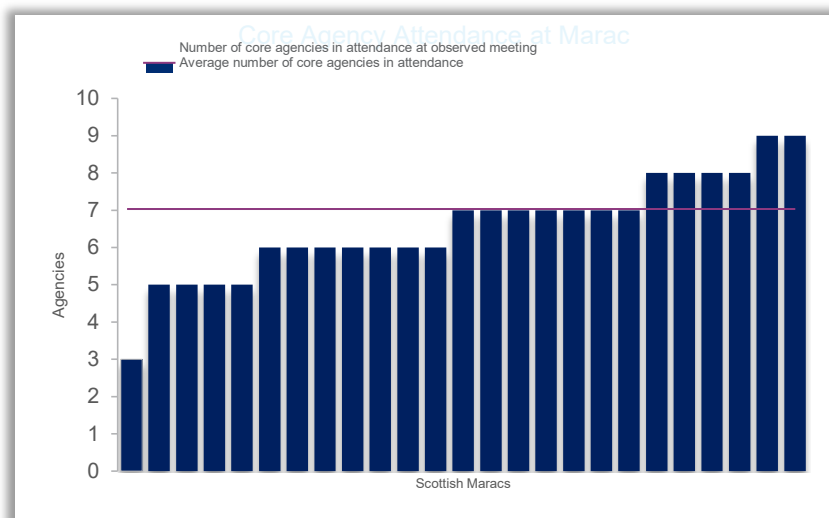
⁸ SafeLives Scottish Marac COVID-19 survey

encouraging for developments post-lockdown, however it highlights the question of capacity for many Maracs. There is a concern from many Maracs that a potential surge in Marac referrals following the end of lockdown will further stretch already thin resources. The question of capacity is closely related to operational support and will be explored in more detail below.

Multi-Agency & Idaa representation

Multi-agency representation varied hugely across the 25 observed meetings. The 9 core agencies for an effective Marac (See appendix 3) have been identified by SafeLives as crucial to ensure the risks to victims (and their families) and the management of perpetrators, are jointly and comprehensively assessed and addressed. On average, 6.5 of the 9 core agencies were in attendance at the observed meetings, although this varied from 3 to 9.

Core agency attendance at observed Marac meetings: July 2019-March 2020



Whilst it is recognised that the observations only offer a snapshot of the operation of the individual Maracs, and representation may vary at other times, lack of representation from core agencies will impact on the ability of Marac to establish a full picture of risk and to address these risks through the action plan.

“When everyone attends, Marac undoubtedly increases the safety of victims”
 Scottish Marac Representative, 2018

In addition to the core agencies, many of the observed meetings were attended by a range of other local agencies, some attend on a regular basis whereas others on an ad hoc basis based on the circumstances of the referrals being discussed. These included Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Victim Support Scotland, local voluntary and third sector organisations and partnerships working to support vulnerable adults and children, Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Teams, and local LGBT and BME specialist organisations. This was positive, and often allowed for a more nuanced understanding of risk by those present and meant risks were addressed more effectively.

The Idaa (see appendix 3 for definition) plays a crucial role in the Marac process, as a domestic abuse specialist with knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of abuse and its impact and as the voice of the victim they are able to challenge any unsafe or inappropriate updates or actions from other agencies. Nevertheless, this ability is sometimes compromised by lack of appropriate funding and capacity to support all victims referred to Marac. At two of the observed Maracs cuts in funding has meant that there is no longer dedicated Idaa provision for victims referred to Marac. This is concerning as, although other agencies have stepped into, it may mean less effective representation of victims at Marac.

Addressing multi-agency attendance and increasing referrals to Marac from a range of agencies are both related to training and awareness raising of domestic abuse and local referral pathways. Access to training for a wide range of agency staff emerged as a theme from the responses to the Scottish

Government consultation on multi-agency arrangements, with respondents calling for locally flexible training with national consistency.

Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis and lockdown have highlighted the need for multi-agency professionals to spot the signs of domestic abuse and refer to Marac and specialist support as appropriate. One third of Maracs surveyed reported that it had become more difficult to contact victims during lockdown⁹. As victims may be experiencing limitations on their ability to reach out for help, professionals must 'reach in' and offer to help. Marac offers an opportunity for agencies to work together, pooling resources and using these in new and creative ways to address risk and support adult and child victims of domestic abuse.

An unintended positive impact of Maracs having to explore alternative delivery models and moving to virtual meetings during lockdown has been that some have seen an increase in agency attendance. Moreover, over half of surveyed Maracs commented that holding virtual meetings saved time and made them more efficient.¹⁰ Going forward it will be important to ensure that any new agency professionals engaging with Marac for the first time have the right support to in place to develop their skills and understanding of the process and referral criteria, as well as knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse and coercive control.

Information sharing and Action planning

The premise of Marac is that relevant and proportionate information is shared in a concise and structured manner, with each case lasting 12-15 minutes from start to finish. Across the 25 observations there were examples of case discussions going on for significantly longer than the recommended 12-15 minutes, with information being repeated and discussions diverting from current risks and entering into a case discussion. In order to ensure all victims referred to Marac receive a robust coordinated response to risk Marac is formatted different from other case conferences which Representatives may be attending. Cases are only discussed once, unless there is a repeat incident, discussions should be focused on current risks with information kept concise, up to date, a clear distinction should be made between fact and professional opinion, and agency representatives should take care not to repeat information already shared by other agencies.

Marac meeting: Suggested case structure



Victims and survivors of domestic abuse consistently tell us of their concerns regarding the sharing of their most personal and sensitive information amongst professionals. Maracs need to have robust processes in place to regulate the sharing and recording of information in order to provide assurances to victims that only relevant and proportionate information is shared at Marac. A theme at the observed meetings was discrepancies in proportionate information sharing, with information beyond the scope of Marac being shared at some meetings and not enough information to adequately assess risks being shared at others. Discussions around what was and was not appropriate to share in the light of GDPR were also a feature of some meetings.

The need for clear guidance on data protection and information sharing came through as a common thread in the responses to the Scottish Government consultation on multi-agency arrangements. During lockdown, and considering new working from home practices, including for Marac professionals, it is even more important that information sharing protocols (ISPs) are up to date and GDPR compliant¹¹. Although most observed Maracs had ISPs in place, in some areas these were due to be updated to incorporate changes to data protection legislation and in a few areas, there was no formal ISP in place.

⁹ SafeLives Scottish Marac COVID-19 survey

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ SafeLives have produced [guidance for Scottish Maracs](#) to help them become GDPR compliant

“Attending Marac allowed me to see how important the sharing of information can be to enable discussions on how to reduce harm and [address risk]”

Domestic Abuse Practitioner, Whole Lives Scotland, 2019

Action planning at Marac is based on the assumption that Marac representatives are empowered by their organisations to offer bespoke actions in response to the level of risk identified. Marac actions should be specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and timed and should follow on from the information shared and respond to the risks identified.

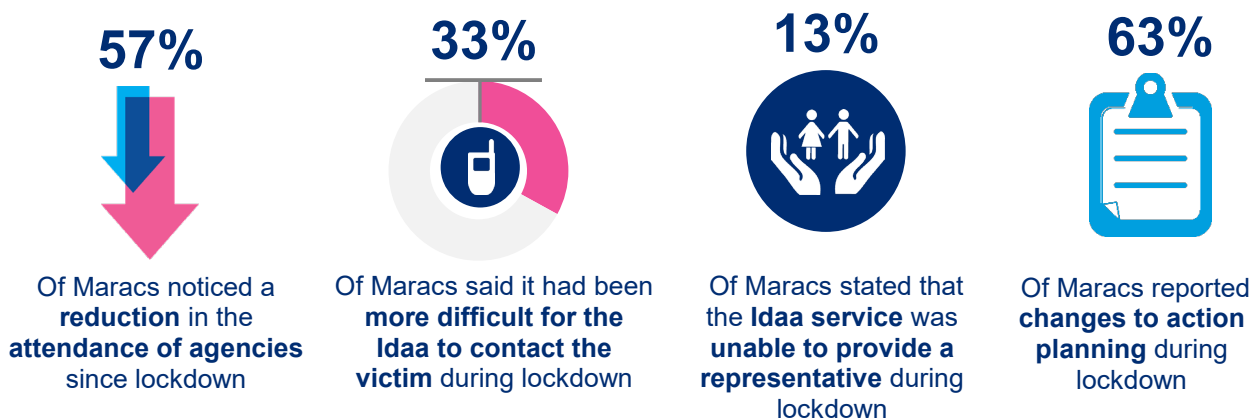
Across the observed meetings there were examples of truly bespoke and creative action planning, with agencies thinking ‘outside the box’ and going beyond what might be reasonably expected from their day-to-day engagement with victims, children and perpetrators. There were examples of creative, joint up actions in relation to safely contacting victims, making use of agencies routine engagement with victims to schedule Idaa visits for example. However, at times there was also examples of less creative actions and a discrepancy between the information being shared, the risks identified, and the actions offered. At several meetings there were examples of “business as usual” actions and action plans which were mainly following up on information not available during the meeting.

Making links between Maracs and other public protection and multi-agency arrangements is one of the aims of Marac and a key component of effective multi-agency working. Across the observed meetings there were examples of effective links being made between different forums. In particular consideration of the appropriateness of ‘Power to Tell’ applications under DSDAS¹² often featured as routine reflecting that Marac professionals are often well placed to identify new, or past, partners, thus disrupting perpetrator patterns of behaviour. Engagements with Marac professionals across Scotland has however highlighted the overlap between Marac and MATAC forums and discrepancies across the country in how the two forums are able to feed into each other.

Impact of COVID-19

Just under two thirds of Maracs surveyed by SafeLives commented on how action planning had changed during lockdown. Mainly this was due to changes in face-to-face support provision, service capacity and victims not wanting to report abuse to Police during lockdown.

Key findings from SafeLives COVID-19 Survey¹³



Maracs are one of the key multi-agency forums for domestic abuse in Scotland, and with COVID-19 and lockdown restricting victims’ space for action and movement further, it is more important than ever to promote and ensure joint-up working. The guidance from Scottish Government and Cosla recognises the central role that Maracs play in supporting victims of domestic abuse, but also recognises the need for sustained support to be able to respond effectively, especially given renewed pressures brought by COVID-19.

Diversity

For victims with protected characteristics Marac professionals should consider what additional risks and barriers to engaging with supports may be present and how these can best be addressed in a multi-

¹² Police Scotland Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS)

¹³ SafeLives Scottish Marac COVID-19 survey

agency context. This will inevitably involve engaging with specialist organisations and ensuring representation of the right professionals at Marac. Across the observed meetings there were several examples of professionals taking appropriate care to address risks posed and in particular considering the potential for agency-created risks through engagement with vulnerable victims.

Nationally, referral levels for victims with a disability, BME, LGBT and male victims are still below expected levels, and lower than the UK-wide levels. This might reflect a need to review referral pathways and ensuring the right representation at Marac to capture the experiences of victims with protected characteristics, but it might also be related to reporting practices where equalities monitoring data may not always be available or capture effectively.

Victims with protected characteristics at Marac



In order to ensure Maracs are responding effectively to all victims, Maracs should strive to ensure representation from a wide range of local agencies, capturing the experiences of diverse victims. Where they exist locally, specialist services should be invited to attend meetings either on an ad hoc or regular basis.

Operational support and governance

The lack of available and consistent funding for Marac Coordinators, administrators and Idaas was highlighted as a major area for development in the 2016 Baseline Report and was stressed again in a majority of the responses to the Scottish Government consultation on Multi-Agency arrangements.

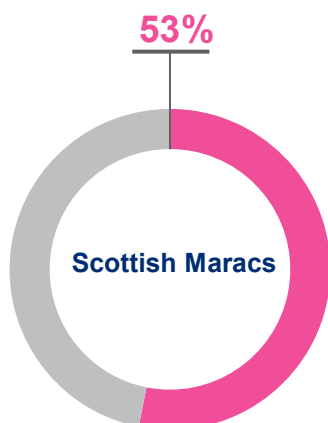
Without national funding for Marac coordinators, many Maracs are dependent on short-term, project-based funding for both Marac Coordinators and Idaa provision for Marac. In many areas Maracs are operating with the minimum administration possible, meaning there is little resource available for ongoing development or training support. Out of the 32 operational Maracs, only little over half have sustainable funding arrangements in place, which is having a detrimental impact on the effectiveness and sustainability of Marac in Scotland.

In many areas where there is no dedicated funding for Coordinators, Police Scotland have taken on the administration and Coordination of Marac, often on top of other core business. Some of the more successful funding models involve multi-agency, and sometimes cross-local authority, funding arrangements. However, even where there is funding for Coordinators there is often a discrepancy between what is funded and what is required, with many Maracs reporting they feel overwhelmed by the resources required for Marac administration, especially where one Coordinator covers more than one Marac or local authority.

Marac should be governed by a strategic group with overall responsibility for the safe operation of Marac, and with clear routes of escalation for any operational issues. Examples of good practice in this regard include areas with both dedicated operational and strategic groups, meeting regularly and with clear and distinct remits, appropriately senior membership, and clear feedback routes between them. Given the lack of resources for Marac in Scotland, not all of the observed Maracs benefitted from formal governance groups, and some struggled to ensure the right membership and attendance at the steering

group. Proactive engagement from strategic oversight groups with overall responsibility for Marac is a pre-requisite for effective operation.

Proportion of Maracs with dedicated funding for Coordinators



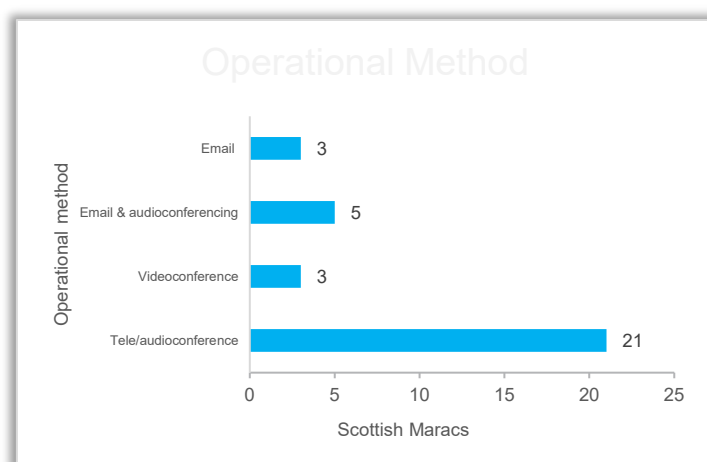
Whilst there is significant buy in to Marac at an operational level, a lack of governance of a Steering Group at a strategic level can make things hard for Marac representatives and Chairs who have no clear route of escalation. The successful implementation of Marac in Scotland can be largely attributed to the commitment and enthusiasm of local areas and individuals, recognising a gap in the response to domestic abuse and acting on this. However, the lack of sustainable funding and support for Marac nationally have led to discrepancies in resources and in how the model has been implemented locally and has led to the development of a 'post-code lottery' of service provision across Scotland¹⁴. Without the appropriate strategic support for Marac, both on a local and national level, it can be hard to motivate operational partners to meaningfully engage in the process.

The Scottish Government consultation on multi-agency arrangements for victims of domestic abuse was welcomed, but there is still uncertainty about the future of Marac in Scotland. To ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of Scottish Maracs a clear commitment to the process is needed, including national oversight with room for local application.

Impact of COVID-19

Despite funding challenges, there is a clear commitment to Marac across Scotland, which was not least highlighted by Scottish Maracs' ability to pivot to virtual delivery in response to COVID-19 and associated lockdown measures. All operational Maracs have continued to operate during lockdown, using various technology to enable virtual meetings.

COVID-19 operational methods



¹⁴ Our **Whole Lives Scotland** report, released in 2017, pointed to inconsistencies in the response to domestic abuse across Scotland, creating a 'postcode lottery' for victims, survivors and whole families

Just under two thirds of Maracs (60%) who responded to SafeLives Scottish Marac COVID-19 survey said that they had adequate resources to support the Marac process. Half (50%) said that this hadn't changed since the start of lockdown, with 40% saying that it was a change.¹⁵ Ensuring Maracs have access to long-term sustainable funding will be a key factor in post-COVID recovery planning and effective responses to domestic abuse in Scotland.

Next steps

SafeLives are committed to continue working with Scottish Maracs and local and national stakeholders to support joint-up Marac development and resilience in Scotland, and a response that is responsive to the needs of domestic abuse victims. As the responses to the Scottish Government consultation on multi-agency arrangements highlighted, access to consistent, sustainable funding and national training that recognises local diversity, are key to ensuring the sustainability of Scottish Maracs.

We had hoped, under the new Delivering Equally Safe fund, to be able to evolve the MDP, deep-diving into what 'best practice' multi-agency work for domestic abuse looks like and supporting the needs of different agencies in responding effectively to adult and child victims. Given COVID-19, the evolving picture around lockdown restrictions, and the impact this might have on victims' safety, it is more important than ever to ensure joint-up, multi-agency work is at the heart of our response to domestic abuse.

We would suggest prioritising the following activities, both on a national and local level, to address the themes highlighted throughout this report, and strengthen the approach to Marac in Scotland as we navigate a new landscape:

- Coordinated, consistent messages around, and support for, the value of Maracs in responding to domestic abuse from National and Local stakeholders and partners, and consistent funding to back this up
- Resources for National and Local data collection to monitor areas for development and measure impact, including working with survivors to ensure Marac is responding effectively to their needs
- Development of a collaborative review framework, for use by Scottish Maracs to support ongoing development and identify themes and trends across Scotland
- Comprehensive Information Sharing Guidance and support to build confidence and improve consistency and practice across Scotland
- Sustainable and accessible training for Marac professionals, both for agency representatives, Marac Coordinators and Marac Chairs. Given the current landscape and limitations on face to face provision this needs to be flexible and responsive to the changing picture¹⁶
- Sector-specific guidance on effective Marac engagement specifically, and multi-agency working responding to domestic abuse more generally
- Strengthen the links between Marac and other multi-agency forums, e.g. MATAC, and develop formal channels to share information between forums where appropriate

¹⁵ SafeLives Scottish Marac COVID-19 Survey

¹⁶ In response to COVID-19 SafeLives are exploring new methods of training delivery, and are delivering a series of Marac webinars during the summer 2020 as part of the MDP

About SafeLives

We are SafeLives, a UK-wide charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse, for everyone and for good.

We work with organisations across the UK to transform the response to domestic abuse. We listen to survivors, putting their voices at the heart of our thinking. We look at the whole picture for each individual and family to get the right help at the right time to make families everywhere safe and well. And we challenge perpetrators to change, asking ‘why doesn’t he stop?’ rather than ‘why doesn’t she leave?’ This applies whatever the gender of the victim or perpetrator and whatever the nature of their relationship.

Our Scottish publication **Whole Lives** highlighted that every year, nearly 130,000 people in Scotland experience domestic abuse. There are over 9,000 people at risk of being murdered or seriously harmed; over 12,000 children live in these households. For every person being abused, there is someone else responsible for that abuse: the perpetrator. And all too often, children are in the home and living with the impact. Domestic abuse affects us all; it thrives on being hidden behind closed doors.



We must make it everybody’s business

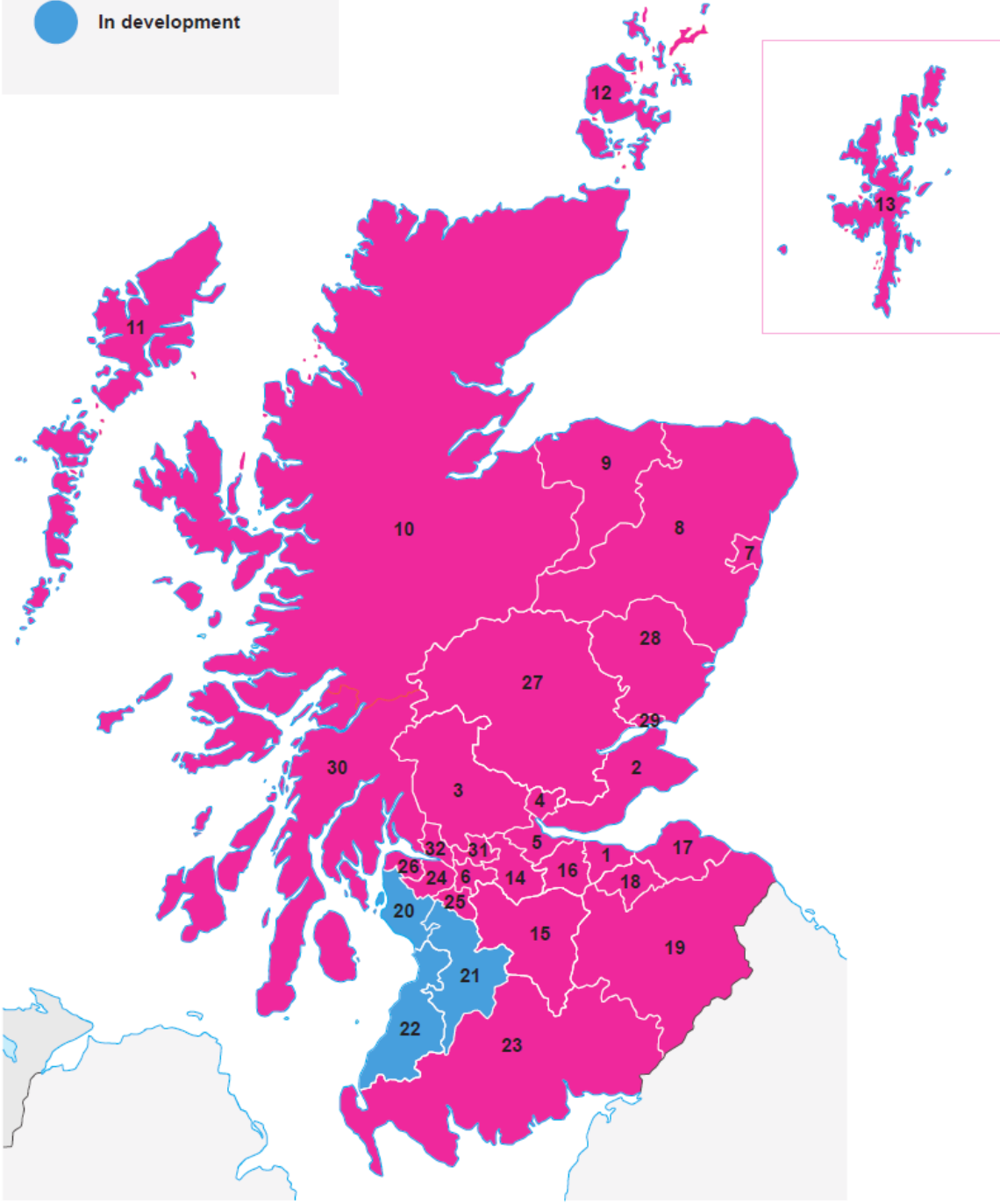
Contact

Please contact Scotland@SafeLives.org.uk for further information or questions in relation to this report.

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Appendix 1. Scottish Maracs

Marac(s)	Marac Group	Local Authority	Coordinator
Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire Moray	Grampian	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council The Moray Council	Police Scotland – Partnership Coordination Unit
Angus Dundee Perth & Kinross	Tayside	Angus Council Dundee City Council Perth & Kinross Council	Police Scotland - DAIU
Argyll & Bute West Dunbartonshire	West of Scotland	Argyll & Bute Council West Dunbartonshire Council	LA – VAW services
Caithness & Sutherland Inverness Lochaber Skye & Ross-shire Orkney Shetland Western Isles	Highland & Islands	The Highland Council Orkney Islands Council Shetland Islands Council Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles)	NHS Highland - VAWP
Clackmannanshire Falkirk Stirling	Forth Valley	Clackmannanshire Council Falkirk Council Stirling Council	Police Scotland - DAIU
Dumfries & Galloway	Dumfries & Galloway	Dumfries & Galloway Council	LA – VAW services
East Dunbartonshire	East Dunbartonshire	East Dunbartonshire Council	Police Scotland – DAIU
East Lothian Marac Midlothian	East & Midlothian	East Lothian Council Midlothian Council	LA – Public Protection Office
East Renfrewshire	East Renfrewshire	East Renfrewshire Council	LA – DA services, SW
Edinburgh	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh Council	WA – EWA
Fife Marac	Fife	Fife Council	LA – VAW services
Glasgow	Glasgow	Glasgow City Council	Police Scotland – DAIU
Inverclyde	Inverclyde	Inverclyde Council	LA – VAWP
North Lanarkshire South Lanarkshire	Lanarkshire	North Lanarkshire Council South Lanarkshire Council	LA/WA – WASLER
Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire Council	LA – Communities Team
Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders Council	LA – Safer Communities Team
West Lothian	West Lothian	West Lothian Council	LA – DASAT



Edinburgh 1. City of Edinburgh	Grampian 7. Aberdeen City 8. Aberdeenshire 9. Moray	Lothian and Borders 16. West Lothian 17. East Lothian 18. Midlothian 19. Scottish Borders	Strathclyde 24. Renfrewshire 25. East Renfrewshire 26. Inverclyde
Fife 2. Fife	Highland and Islands 10. Highland 11. Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar 12. Orkney 13. Shetland	South west Scotland 20. North Ayrshire 21. East Ayrshire 22. South Ayrshire 23. Dumfries and Galloway	Tayside 27. Perth and Kinross 28. Angus 29. Dundee City
Fourth Valley 3. Stirling 4. Clackmannanshire 5. Falkirk	Lanarkshires 14. North Lanarkshire 15. South Lanarkshire		West of Scotland 30. Argyll and Bute 31. East Dunbartonshire 32. West Dunbartonshire
Glasgow 6. City of Glasgow			

Appendix 2. Scotland recommended cases calculation

Scottish Marac Data: Recommendations for Scottish Maracs

According to the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2012/13 3% of the Scottish population experienced domestic abuse (physical and psychological) in a 12 month period.

- ✓ Scottish adult female population = 2,289,669
- ✓ 3% of population = 68,690

In order to work out the percentage who have experiences high risk abuse we have looked at the percentages who have experienced physical effects of abuse, 45%, and where the police have become aware, 21%, (this might not have been directly reported to the police). We have used these two indicators as a proxy for high risk. We know that psychological abuse and coercive control can also put someone at high risk and so the estimated figure will be a conservative estimate, however in the absence of raw data we believe that this is a good starting point.

- ✓ 45% of 68,690 = 30,911
- ✓ 21% of 30,911 = 6,491

We based the recommended figure on the adult female population (2,289,669 – taken from the National Records of Scotland Mid 2012 Population Estimates) then added 5% for male victims at high risk.

- ✓ Add 5% of 6,491 = 6,815

The high risk figure for Scotland would therefore be 7,000.

From additional research that SafeLives has undertaken we know that between 28-40% of victims will experience repeat incidents of domestic abuse and be referred back to the Marac. We therefore add on 30% (2,100) for repeat referrals.

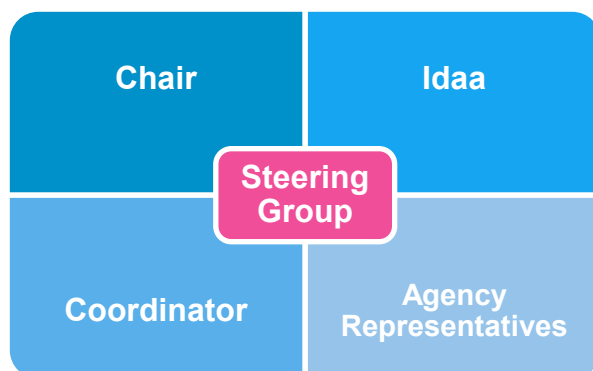
- ✓ Add 30% of 7,000 = 9,100

This equates to 9,100 high risk referrals to Maracs per year in Scotland (which we are confident is a conservative estimate).

This equates to 40 referrals per 10,000 of the local adult female population (the same figure as in England and Wales). For individual local authority figures please contact Scotland@SafeLives.org.uk.

Appendix 3. Core Agencies

Operating an effective Marac is made more difficult (and in some cases impossible) without the involvement of key roles and structures.



In order to ensure the risks to victims (and their families) and the management of perpetrators, are jointly and comprehensively assessed and addressed, SafeLives have identified 9 core agencies for an effective Marac. Depending on local circumstances, additional agencies may also attend Marac – this should be outlined in the operating and information sharing protocols.

The core agencies for Marac in Scotland are:

- ✓ Police Scotland
- ✓ Idaa (or equivalent specialist Domestic Abuse Service)
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Children and Families Social Work
- ✓ Criminal Justice Social Work
- ✓ Adult Support and Protection
- ✓ Health (including mental and physical health of adults and children)
- ✓ Addiction/Substance Misuse Services
- ✓ Housing (including homelessness)

Appendix 4. Idaa definition

Idaa

- Provides specialist support before, during and after the Marac to address the risks faced by the victim; representing their views and wishes at the meeting, sharing expertise and co-ordinating the action plan

Definition of an Idaa (from SafeLives, ASSIST and Scottish Women's Aid)

The main purpose of Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates (Idaa) is to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm from intimate partners or ex-partners to secure their safety and the safety of their children. In some services, particularly specialist black and minority ethnic (BME) services they may also work with clients who are at risk from extended family members. Serving as a victim's primary point of contact, Idaas normally work with their clients from the point of crisis to assess the level of risk, discuss the range of suitable options and develop safety plans.

They are proactive in implementing the plans which address immediate safety, including practical steps to protect their clients and their children, as well as longer-term solutions. These plans will include actions from the Marac as well as sanctions and remedies available through the criminal and civil courts, housing options and services available through other organisations. Idaas work over the short to medium-term to put them on the path to long-term safety. They receive specialist training and hold an SQA qualification.

Since they work with the highest risk cases, Idaas are most effective as part of an Idaa service and within a multiagency framework. The Idaa's role in all multi-agency settings is to keep the client's perspective and safety at the centre of proceedings.

Idaas will sit within a spectrum of domestic abuse organisations, and their specific role is to take on the intensive high risk-led work at the beginning of the client's journey. Once that risk is managed to point where the client is no longer high risk, the Idaa will refer on to other domestic abuse services to meet their long-term safety and support needs.

What is the role of the Idaa at Marac?

The Idaa is crucial to the Marac process. In the context of the meeting itself, their role is to keep victim safety central to the process. They are likely to have more information about the victim's situation including information about the perpetrator and what might influence their safety than any other agency. This information will be crucial in developing a safe and appropriate risk management plan for each victim and their family.

Finally, they will be expected to keep the victim informed of any decisions made by the other agencies where safe to do so, and to make sure that the other agencies provides their service safely. Since risk is dynamic and changing, a decision, which was safe at one time, may not be safe only a short time later and therefore the impact of an agency's actions can be affected.

SafeLives recommend that an Idaa should have a caseload of no more than 100 referrals per annum of which we would expect around 60-70% to engage with the service. It is therefore critical that Maracs and the Idaa service locally is properly resourced in order to support the volume of victims that a Marac is dealing with