



HM Prison &
Probation Service



MAPPA: Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

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Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

- A framework of statutory arrangements for managing the risk posed by sexual, violent and terrorist offenders.
- Operated by criminal justice and social care agencies in England and Wales.
- Arranged in line with the 42 criminal justice areas and overseen by a Strategic Management Board (SMB) in each area.
- On March 31 2025, there were 97,050 offenders managed under MAPPA.
- MAPPA are not an organisation but a set of arrangements; aside from the requirement to work together and to share information, the framework does not confer on agencies additional powers, responsibilities or obligations. Each agency must operate within its own statutory frameworks, policies and procedures.

Why do we need MAPPA?

- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements were introduced in response to learning from several high-profile cases where there had been significant failings in information sharing between agencies and across geographical borders.
- The aims of MAPPA when they were introduced were to improve public protection by improving information sharing and coordination among agencies.
- The purpose of MAPPA is to ensure agencies share information and work together so that risk assessments can be as robust and comprehensive as possible taking into account information held by all agencies and so that risk management plans can be coordinated, drawing on the risk management strategies available to a range of agencies.

MAPPA Categories and Management Levels

The MAPPA Categories determine who is eligible for management under MAPPA.

The MAPPA management levels determine how the person is managed dependent on what is required to manage the risk.

There are 4 MAPPA Categories

- **Category 1:** Sexual Offenders subject to Notification Requirements (75%)
- **Category 2:** Violent Offenders, 12 months of more in custody or Hospital Order (24%)
- **Category 3:** Other Dangerous Offenders, with a conviction/caution that indicates a risk of serious harm (0.6%)
- **Category 4:** Terrorism and terrorism risk offenders (0.2%)

There are 3 Levels of management

- **Level 1:** Multi-agency support for lead agency management (98.5%)
- **Level 2:** Multi-agency management with active involvement of more than one agency requiring regular formal meetings (1.3%)
- **Level 3:** Enhanced multi-agency management involving more senior oversight (0.2%)

The number of MAPPA offenders has increased by 4% over the past 12 months across all Categories. For further information see MAPPA Annual Report: [National Report 2024-25 - MAPPA](#)

Agencies involved with MAPPA

There are six main groups involved with MAPPA:

1. **The Responsible Authority (RA):** (Police, Probation and Prison) Has a duty to ensure risks of MAPPA offenders are assessed and managed.
2. **Lead Agency:** The agency with the main statutory authority and responsibility to manage a MAPPA offender in the community.
3. **Duty to Cooperate Agencies (DTC):** They work with the RA on aspects of the offender's life (e.g. education, employment, housing, social care, immigration).
4. **Associate Agencies:** Also work on aspects of the offender's life but do not have a statutory duty to engage.
5. **Strategic Management Boards (SMB):** Oversee the process and governance of MAPPA in their area, monitoring performance, measuring KPIs, produce annual reports.
6. **Secretary of State for Justice:** Produces statutory guidance and appoints **Lay Advisors** A member of the public that provides independent advice and scrutiny.

Identification

MAPPA nominals should be identified at the point of sentence or when it becomes apparent that they require discretionary management.

Individuals are subject to MAPPA management as follows:

- Category 1: As long as the Notification Requirement is in place.
- Category 2: Until the Sentence End Date, or the absolute discharge of a Hospital Order.
- Category 3: As long as discretionary management at Level 2 or 3 is required.
- Category 4: Until the Sentence End Date or as long as they are subject to Notification Requirements, whichever is the later, or on a discretionary basis if there is identified terrorist risk and Level 2 or 3 management is required.

Once the above provisions come to an end, MAPPA management ceases as individuals are no longer eligible.

Level 1 Management

- Risks are managed by the lead agency with support from relevant partner agencies.
- There is still the legal Duty to Co-operate
- Formal multi-agency meetings are not required, although more informal Professionals' meetings may take place.
- All Responsible Authority and Duty to Co-operate agencies must engage with MAPPA and contribute as needed.
- Appropriate where risks can be managed without the enhanced oversight of Level 2 or Level 3 MAPPA meetings.

Referrals to MAPPA Level 2 or Level 3

- The lead agency has the principal responsibility for setting the MAPPA management level and referring an individual for Level 2 or 3 management. This should be done 6 months prior to release from custody or discharge from hospital or sooner in more complex cases. The decision should be informed by information from other agencies.
- Other agencies considering making a referral should discuss this with the lead agency in the first instance, escalating any difference in professional opinion through line management in each agency.
- The MAPPA Co-ordination Unit, on behalf of the Responsible Authority, will determine whether the offender meets the criteria for L2 or 3 management.
- For Category 4 referrals, the Probation National Security Division and Counter Terrorist Police will determine whether the offender meets the threshold for L2 or 3 management.

MAPPA Level 2 and 3 Meetings

- Formal meeting with set agenda (MAPPA D), structured minutes and rules about confidentiality.
- Meetings can be held in person or be remote.
- Probation and / or Police will chair meetings.
- Professionals from relevant RA, DTC and associate agencies will be in attendance.
- The focus of the meeting is on agreeing a risk assessment and a plan to manage the risk.
- The MAPPA risk management plan is developed by the Lead agency in partnership with panel members.
- Agencies agree actions – it is the responsibility of the agency the action is allocated to, to complete it.
- There must be regular review meetings (minimum every 8 weeks for Level 3 and 16 weeks for Level 2 meetings).

Four Pillars of Risk Management



ViSOR – MAPPA Database

- ViSOR is a national shared database for recording Official Sensitive (with High Control) information about risk and intelligence on offenders who pose a risk of serious harm to the public.
- Aim is to reduce the number of victims and prevent re-victimisation.
- It is the only shared database accessed by the 3 agencies that form the Responsible Authority:
 1. HM Prison Service
 2. The Probation Service
 3. The Police Service
- Critical Information – ‘first or last piece of the jigsaw’.

MAPPA: Some points to remember

- MAPPA are about managing risks posed by the offender, not by anyone else, e.g. partners, siblings etc.
- There must be a conviction or a caution where the circumstances are indicative of a risk of serious harm. This does not necessarily have to be current, but someone with no convictions or cautions cannot be managed under MAPPA.
- MAPPA do not confer any additional powers or duties beyond the duty to share information and co-operate in the assessment and management of risk.
- For MAPPA to work, there need to be powers with which to manage the individual. For example, this could be licence supervision, a Hospital Order, a Civil Order or Notification Requirements. Without a 'hook' there is little that MAPPA can achieve.

MAPPA and VFIs

- MAPPA categories relate to offences set out in legislation e.g. Sexual, Violent or Terrorist offences apart from discretionary cases.
- Where a VFI has been convicted of a qualifying offence, they will automatically be managed under MAPPA. They could be managed under any category
- Discretionary management (most likely Category 3) may be very relevant where the current or past offending gives cause for concern. Discretionary management is limited to Level 2/3.
- Any agency can make a referral.
- As with Domestic Abuse and terrorism, MAPPA practice can evolve as we learn more about this cohort.

How effective is MAPPA in reducing risk and supporting public protection, and what does the evidence tell us about its strengths and limitations in managing complex or emerging risks?

- Manage complex risks well.
- Work particularly well at Levels 2/3.
- Not set up to manage new emerging risk.
- Established to manage known sexual and violent offenders, not early intervention or primary prevention, set up to prevent re-offending.
- There must be a known risk and a relevant offence.
- Strengths of MAPPA: clarity of purpose, legislative underpinning, well understood by practitioners.
- Can be replicated in other environments. Learn what works well and apply in different setting.
- Limitations: MAPPA Co-ordinate, they do not provide additional services where they don't exist e.g. dual diagnosis.

Evidence of MAPPA Effectiveness

“Overall, we found that MAPPA is working reasonably well. In most cases inspected, we saw evidence that agencies were sharing information, identifying and analysing risk, and taking action to protect actual and potential victims.”

“...where formal meetings take place, MAPPA enhances risk management and protection of the public in the majority of cases. Additional support and resources are often gained that would have been unlikely without the MAPPA forum. Used effectively, multi-agency meetings provide necessary scrutiny and oversight in complex cases” Twenty years on, is MAPPA achieving its objectives? A joint thematic inspection of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

Evidence of MAPPA Effectiveness

“MAPPA is a well-established process and I do not conclude that wholesale change is necessary.” Jonathan Hall KC's Independent Review of MAPPA in the management of terrorist and terrorism-risk offenders (2020). [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)

“NSD, probation, police and prison services worked well together and are approaching managing counter terrorism cases collectively.” The Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorates' inspection of the National Security Division (NSD) and multi-agency management of terrorist offenders (2023).

A comprehensive study conducted by Anglia Ruskin University published in April 2023 concluded: ‘the reoffending rates of those managed under MAPPA are less than half of that of the national average, with the one-year MAPPA proven reoffending rate at 12.2% compared to the national overall one year, proven reoffending rates of between 30.0% and 31.3% over a similar time frame.’ The Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) National MAPPA Research Programme (2023-2024), [The National MAPPA Research – ARU](#)

How well do MAPPA partners share information and coordinate decision-making where there are signs of fixation, behavioural concern or escalating risk, particularly before clear offending thresholds are met?

- As before – MAPPA not designed for the pre-offending space.
- Where there are previous convictions and there are statutory powers then MAPPA can be utilised to manage emerging risks.
- However, where the subject does not have previous convictions or cautions, then MAPPA can have no role.



Are current MAPPA thresholds, categories and referral routes suitable for violence-fixated individuals?

- Only if the subject has a conviction indicative of serious risk of harm.
- Practice within the framework can evolve as evidence and suitable interventions evolve for this cohort.

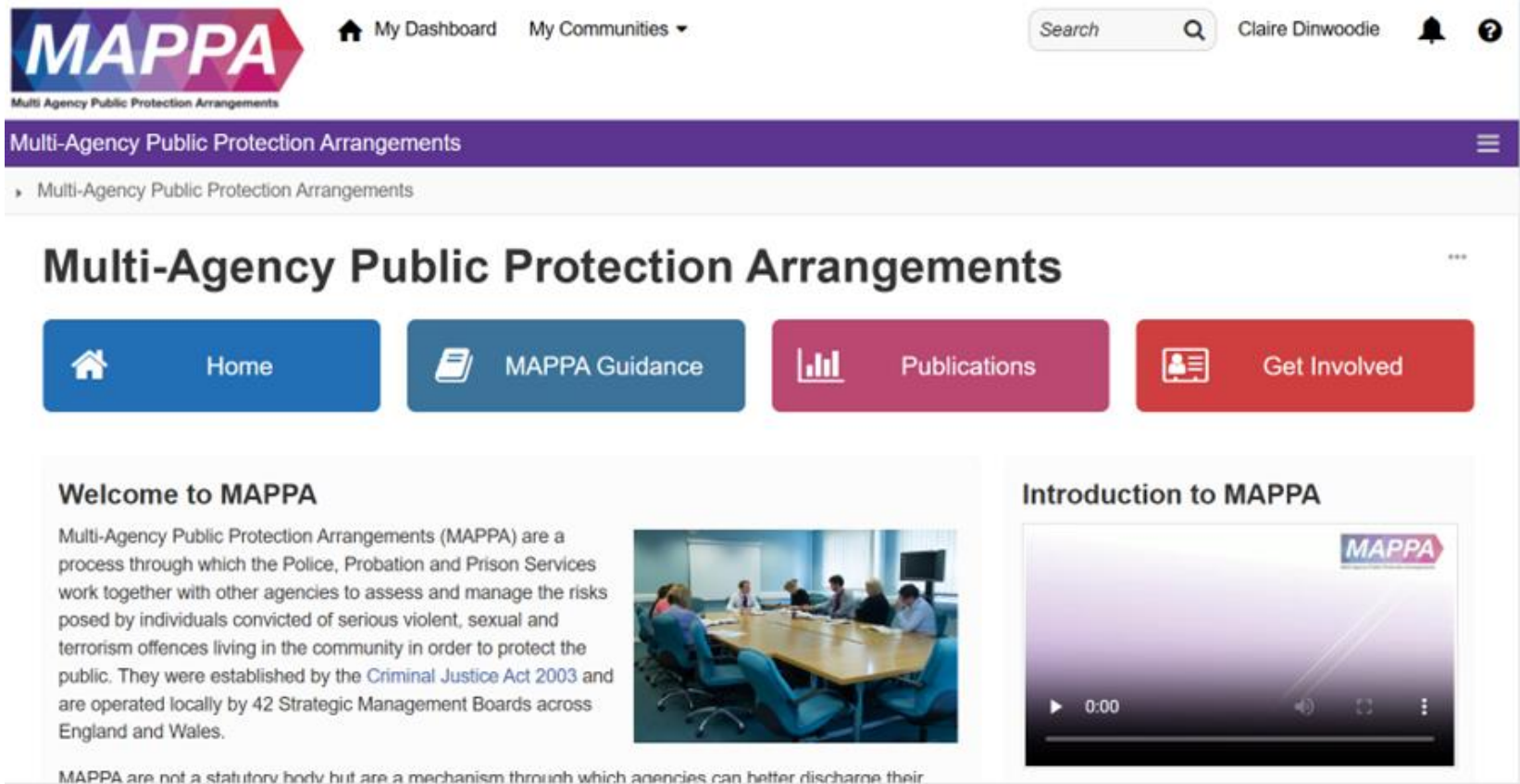
How well is MAPPA integrated with mental health, safeguarding and early intervention services?

- All Duty to Co-operate agencies are required to engage on a strategic basis as well as individual cases. This provides an escalation route, where cases are particularly complex.
- Working together – good processes – but can come under strain, for example, when there is dual diagnosis, no agency is confident that they have resource or expertise to manage the risk – lack of understanding can mean agencies are seen as passing the buck.

Conclusions

- Positives: MAPPA are effective at reducing reoffending and managing complex cases. They are well understood and there is a high level of practitioner confidence in the process.
- Limitations: MAPPA do not bring with them any additional powers, responsibilities or resources. They serve an information sharing and co-ordination function.
- In addition to legislation to compel agencies to work together, there needs to be some resource as with Channel and IOM.

The MAPPA Website



The screenshot shows the MAPPA website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the MAPPA logo (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) on the left, and links for 'My Dashboard' and 'My Communities' in the center. On the right, there is a search bar, the user name 'Claire Dinwoodie', and icons for notifications and help. Below the navigation bar is a purple header with the text 'Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements' and a hamburger menu icon. The main content area features a large heading 'Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements' followed by four colored buttons: 'Home' (blue), 'MAPPA Guidance' (blue), 'Publications' (pink), and 'Get Involved' (red). Below these buttons, there is a 'Welcome to MAPPA' section with a text block explaining the purpose of MAPPA and a video player titled 'Introduction to MAPPA'. The text block states: 'Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are a process through which the Police, Probation and Prison Services work together with other agencies to assess and manage the risks posed by individuals convicted of serious violent, sexual and terrorism offences living in the community in order to protect the public. They were established by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and are operated locally by 42 Strategic Management Boards across England and Wales.' The video player shows a thumbnail of a meeting and a progress bar at 0:00.

MAPPA
Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

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Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

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Welcome to MAPPA

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are a process through which the Police, Probation and Prison Services work together with other agencies to assess and manage the risks posed by individuals convicted of serious violent, sexual and terrorism offences living in the community in order to protect the public. They were established by the [Criminal Justice Act 2003](#) and are operated locally by 42 Strategic Management Boards across England and Wales.

MAPPA are not a statutory body but are a mechanism through which agencies can better discharge their

Introduction to MAPPA

0:00

www.mappa.justice.gov.uk

You may need to request an account by emailing mappa@justice.gov.uk