

PRESS RELEASE - Thursday, 26 November, 2015

JOINT THEMATIC REVIEW OF MAPPA IN SCOTLAND

Strictly embargoed until 1300 hours

An in-depth review of the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) has found they are working effectively and making a critical contribution to public protection.

In the review carried out by the Care Inspectorate and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland areas for development were identified to improve overall efficiency of the process.

A report, published today (Thursday, November 26), follows an extensive review of the arrangements which were established in 2007 to reduce the potential risk of serious harm posed by registered sex offenders and keep communities safe.

While the report notes that the number of registered sex offenders in Scotland continues to rise, it also highlights key strengths in the way they are managed by organisations including the police, social work services and the prison service.

There is strong evidence that MAPPA is well-established across Scotland and that Police Scotland, Criminal Justice Social Work, Scottish Prison Service and NHS Boards through joint working and information sharing, discharge their duties effectively.

It highlighted that very few registered sex offenders are convicted of a further serious violent or sexual crime and the vast majority comply with the sex offender notification requirements monitored by Police and Criminal Justice Social Work.

The management of sex offenders in the community remains a sensitive subject despite the fact that 98% of registered sex offenders have not been convicted of a further serious violent or sexual crime and that 91% comply with the notification procedures. When a registered sex offender comes to the attention of the police it is generally for not co-operating with the notification process rather than commission of another serious offence.

However, the review also recognised there is a need for a national engagement strategy which would better inform the public as to how MAPPA balances the rights of the victim, communities and offenders while contributing to keeping people safe.

Karen Reid, chief executive of the Care Inspectorate said: "This lengthy and detailed review provides evidence that MAPPA is effective and there are robust arrangements in place across the country to manage registered sex offenders.

"MAPPA has transformed partnership working between Responsible Authorities and relationships are particularly strong between Police Scotland and Criminal Justice Social Work Services.

"A major strength of MAPPA is the purposeful engagement of front-line staff and managers which contributes to the effective management of risk".

"That said, we have outlined ten recommendations requiring a national response led by the Scottish Government in partnership with Responsible Authorities.

"We will now ask the Scottish Government and Responsible Authorities to create an action plan so that our recommendations are addressed."

Andy Cowie Assistant HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland said: "We recognise that the challenges in managing registered sex offenders are often complex and that risk can never be eradicated.

"We saw professionals working effectively on a day to day basis to protect communities from harm through shared responsibility and good information exchange.

"This is a demanding area in which to work and we were impressed by the commitment of all those involved in MAPPA. The impact on them is recognised by their managers who provide quality support, advice and guidance.

"Whilst planning to address emerging issues at a local level is effective, there is a need for a robust national governance structure to prepare and plan for existing and future cross-cutting issues likely to impact on MAPPA in Scotland."

Ends

For further information, please contact:

Care Inspectorate
Press office
01382 207 171

HMICS
Susan Lumsden
0131 244 5698