

# Multi-agency tasking and coordination domestic abuse programme

Reducing re-offending by identifying perpetrators of domestic abuse and offering intervention.

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## Key details

<b>Does it work?</b>	Untested – new or innovative
<b>Focus</b>	Prevention Reoffending
<b>Topic</b>	Child sexual exploitation and abuse Offender management Violence against women and girls Violence (other) Vulnerability and safeguarding
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<b>Region</b>	North East

## Key details

<b>Partners</b>	Police Community safety partnership Government department Health services Local authority Voluntary/not for profit organisation
<b>Stage of practice</b>	The practice is implemented.
<b>Start date</b>	November 2015
<b>Scale of initiative</b>	Local
<b>Target group</b>	Adults Children and young people Offenders

## Aim

The aim of multi-agency tasking and coordination (MATAC) is to identify the most harmful and serial abusers of domestic abuse (DA) and provide multi-agency interventions to prevent re-offending. In doing so, the MATAC process aims to safeguard adult and child victims of DA by:

- supporting
- diverting
- preventing
- enforcing

This is done through a range of criminal justice sanctions and other interventions.

## The MATAC toolkit

This is referred to during the monthly MATAC meetings to inform the multi-agency action plan for each abuser. The overall aims are to:

- change offender behaviour
- reduce re offending
- prevent harm to victims

Different methods are employed for each abuser depending on the individual circumstances with a focus on prevention, diversion, and enforcement techniques. Dependent on the level of engagement, this can include:

- a referral to a DA prevention programme
- support with living arrangements via housing providers
- referrals to health regarding physical or mental health conditions
- drug & alcohol support
- social and financial support
- any other support to offer stability to their lives

Should they refuse to engage with the process, enforcement and disruption tactics will be used, including civil injunctions and orders, target hardening and Clare's Law disclosures. Partner agencies will provide support with their own tactics such as GPS monitoring and relocation of a perpetrator.

Victims are offered support from either the local individual safety plan (ISS) or independent domestic violence advisor (IDVA) service or the [Northumbria Victim and Witness Service](#).

## Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of MATAC are to:

- reduce re-offending of DA by engaging abusers in a multi-agency social and health support services to address behaviours
- protect victims of DA and their families by preventing re-offending, particularly of high harm, high frequency offenders
- reduce the prevalence of DA and reduce the risk in DA incidents by targeting high harm, high frequency offenders using a recency frequency gravity victim data (RFGV) matrix

- improve partnership engagement
- improve criminal justice system outcomes

This is measurable by the RFGV matrix and monthly MATAC meetings.

## Description

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report [Everyone's business: improving the police response to domestic abuse](#) highlights that forces across the country are not doing enough work to tackle DA perpetrators.

Northumbria Police responded to this, in line with the violence against women and girls (VAWG) objectives, by making an application to the Home Office innovation fund to develop a proactive method of identifying and tackling the most harmful DA perpetrators.

## Funding

This funding application was successful, and the innovation project ran from April 2014 to March 2017. This project is part funded from the Police Innovation fund by a contribution of £253,000 towards the overall cost of the project. The funding application was led by the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Dame Vera Baird QC and Northumbria Police who prioritise dealing with DA as part of their commitment to the VAWG strategy.

## Staffing

The MATAC team sit within the safeguarding department, led by a detective chief inspector. They are supported by a MATAC manager who is trained member of police staff. Within the team there is also an analyst and three coordinators, who are essential to the effective application of MATAC. There are also two outreach workers who complete initial engagement with perpetrators and manage caseloads before onwards referral to specialist agencies.

## RFGV Matrix

- A harm scoring algorithm referred to as the recency, frequency, gravity, victim (RFGV) matrix is used to identify those perpetrators who pose the greatest risk. The RFGV table is produced using Microsoft Excel.

- At the start of the process the incidents are sorted in date order from oldest to newest. The crimes are then also sorted in date order using 'committed from' oldest to newest.
- The Analyst coordinates the data for the RFGV model which is at the centre of the project. Using information from police DA records and police crime recording systems, the analyst uses a matrix to determine an RFGV score for each abuser.
- The maximum score attributable is 100, this being the most harmful. As a result, new abusers are selected for discussion at each of the MATAC's area meetings and an intelligence profile is produced.
- Once an abuser has been adopted onto the MATAC process, their scores will be monitored from the point of adoption, up to 12 months following their deselection. This data will be presented on a heat map which will provide a clear indication of any continuation of abuse, and what impact being part of the MATAC process has had on that offending.
- There is also a referral route into the MATAC process based upon the referrer's professional judgement. This is to capture those perpetrators that may not have come to police attention. Any partner agency or policing team can refer to the MATAC process.

## MATAC meetings

- MATAC meetings take place every 4 weeks and are organised by the MATAC co-ordinator. They are responsible for issuing meeting invites, circulating meeting documents, liaising with partners outside of the meeting process and maintaining all meeting records including agendas and actions logs.
- A cohort of partners will work collaboratively with the aim of reducing the risk posed by those abusers adopted. Each agency and member will sign up to the MATAC information sharing agreement (ISA).
- The number of abusers adopted will be subject of multi-agency review but the MATAC manager will make the final decision.
- A MATAC toolkit will be referred to during the meeting to inform the multi-agency action plan for each abuser. The overall aim is to change offender behaviour, reduce re-offending and prevent harm to victims, therefore different methods will be employed for each perpetrator depending on the individual circumstances with a focus on prevention, diversion and enforcement techniques.
- Each abuser should be assessed individually and will have different requirements.
- Consideration will be made as to whether the perpetrator is suitable for a referral to a voluntary Domestic Abuse Prevention Programme which offers 1:1 intensive work around behaviour change

but also initial stabilisation work for those with complex needs.

- The MATAC agencies will also determine if the abuser is to be served with a MATAC notice by the relevant outreach worker or neighbourhood policing team (depending on risk posed to the individual attending), or any agency currently working with the perpetrator. The notice is served to encourage the abusers to engage with the MATAC process and explains the support on offer.
- If they choose not to accept this support, then they are advised that preventative and disruption action will be taken. When a notice is delivered the safeguarding of current partners must be considered.

## Evaluation

This project was evaluated by Northumbria University and subject of a social return on investment (SROI) study carried out by Gentoo SROI practitioners and found to be highly successful.

Average reductions in re-offending of DA perpetrators was achieved of 61 percent for all offending and 65 percent for DA related offending and a social return on investment of £14.51 for every £1 invested was delivered.

## Overall impact

The abuser offending data was analysed before and after MATAC intervention, with a reduction across all areas observed between 44% to 83%. Across the force the average reduction in DA offending was 72%.

MATAC interventions are an on-going process so it is envisaged that these reductions in offending will only continue to reduce as time goes on.

The success of the project across the North-East region culminated in Northumbria Police securing further Police Transformation Funding in 2016 to build on the success and introduce the Domestic Abuse: A Whole System Approach across Durham, Cleveland, West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, and Humberside.

## Cumbria

Cumbria Police, in line with VAWG strategy objectives, have welcomed MATAC as a proactive method of identifying and tackling the most harmful DA abusers. Cumbria are using the MATAC

toolkit developed by Northumbria, with amendments to suit their force. For example, utilising police officers to implement MATAC as opposed to police staff in Northumbria.

In Cumbria, MATAC will have a subgroup within the community safety partnership. Partners are agreed via the community safety partnership to partake in the MATAC meetings. There is an internal and an external referral process into MATAC for officers and partner agencies to utilise their professional judgement should they believe that a domestic abuse abuser should be considered for adoption onto the MATAC process.

Currently, the MATAC sits within the Public Protection Unit with a detective chief inspector lead, supported by a MATAC detective inspector and a MATAC detective sergeant with two MATAC police officers and one MATAC coordinator.

## Evaluation

An evaluation is planned to run in Cumbria once MATAC has been fully operational for 12 months. The evaluation will involve a review of calls for service, safeguarding reports, crime reports and intelligence. This will include:

- an evaluation of any arrests
- the outcomes of those investigations
- subsequent orders such as domestic violence protection orders (DVPOs)
- any breaches, including bail breaches

## Learning

### Northumbria

MATAC has been embedded within Northumbria as business as usual for eight years. Research remains limited for abusers, yet the investigation into the impact created for those engaging in the Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPP) reveals that the long-term impact for abusers who attend is positive.

DVPP is currently voluntary, therefore engagement rates remain low. As MATAC develops, there is an opportunity for DVPP to become mandatory via children's services or injunctions with positive requirements, enhancing the outcomes.

Analysing MATAC brings about opportunities for learning. The positive outcomes are only a representation of how MATAC operates currently. However, the research does show a positive outcome for those involved in domestic abuse can be life changing. While domestic abuse may never be eradicated, projects like MATAC do help to mitigate the negative impact of those involved in the domestic abuse.

## Outreach workers

The introduction of the outreach workers to engage perpetrators with services has been highly beneficial and was an early learning point. These staff were recruited in 2018 following analysis of engagement levels of MATAC perpetrators. The engagement levels were low when MATAC notices were served by the neighbourhood policing team, so specialists were recruited for this engagement and since then levels of engagement have more than doubled.

The professionalisation of perpetrator engagement work is part of national workforce development with perpetrator high harm training now delivered by the charity [SafeLives](#). Both outreach workers have received this training.

## Cumbria learning

Partner agencies have reacted positively to MATAC. However, all partner agencies are experiencing difficult times (financially & staffing). Therefore their priorities are likely to remain with statutory requirements, and this may have an impact on their participation in MATAC.

We aim to secure their future investment and commitment by providing an evidence-based evaluation in 12 months' time, conveying the impact MATAC has had on victims, perpetrator behaviours and any financial benefits.

## Best available evidence

See the [crime reduction toolkit](#) for the best-available evidence on [Motivational interviewing for domestic abusers](#) | [College of Policing](#)

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## Tags

Domestic violence   Violence against women and girls