



News Release

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MAPPA MONITORS RECORD NUMBER OF OFFENDERS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC IN WEST MERCIA

A multi-agency approach to managing dangerous offenders in the community in West Mercia is ensuring the public is protected from more offenders than ever according to new figures published today.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) teams in England and Wales were put in place seven years ago to use more robust management systems for those offenders who live in our communities through the sharing of information and expertise. The teams, comprising police, prison, probation and other relevant agencies ensure joint working and communication effectively manages risk to the public.

Assistant Chief Officer for West Mercia Probation, Julie Masters, said:

“The management of potentially dangerous offenders in the community presents very real challenges for all of the agencies concerned. In West Mercia we continue to develop effective and co-operative working between all those involved in the management of those few offenders who pose the greatest risk to our communities”.

Superintendent Martin Lakeman, who heads up the force’s Public Protection Unit, said:

“It is impossible to remove risk completely but we are confident that the vital shared information we refer to as ‘the golden thread’ is working well and, thanks to better legislation and more investment in resources, we can reassure people living and working in West Mercia that we have effective supervision of individuals and a robust way to deal with any of those who do breach their conditions.”

Rt Hon David Hanson MP, Minister for Justice said:

“The first duty of the Criminal Justice System is to protect the public. Putting in place thorough systems to ensure high level vigilance of serious sexual and violent offenders on their release from prison is vital in our work protecting communities from crime. The MAPPA system we put in place just seven years ago, with police, probation and other agencies working closely together, has been successful in reducing the risk to the public.

“Since their introduction, other countries around the world view MAPPA as a beacon of best practice in public protection. They are a fundamental part of the way in which the Government has reformed the criminal justice system to ensure it is focussed on its core aim of protecting the communities it serves.

“The offenders dealt with under MAPPA are those whose behaviour can be aggressive, irrational and confrontational. This means that the risk of further offences is ever present – that risk can never be eliminated entirely - but the majority of those subject to active MAPPA management do not seriously re-offend due to robust and effective management.

"We have made significant changes to legislation in recent years to enhance public protection, including the new sentence of imprisonment for public protection which ensures offenders are not released until the Parole Board determines that it is safe to do so. This means that more dangerous offenders are now in prison where they belong."

In 2007, the Home Office published the child sex offender review which set out plans to strengthen the disclosure, registration, accommodation, management and treatment of child sex offenders. Pilots have been announced to trail the disclosure of child sex offenders within the community, a consultation has been launched to look at lie detector tests for sex offenders and we are examining further the use of drug treatment for sex offenders.

Phil Wheatley, Director General of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) said:

“Prison and Probation staff within the MAPPA community ensure that the protection of the public and a reduction in re-offending is kept at the forefront of all their work. There are no easy solutions and many of the riskiest offenders present complex problems for supervising but MAPPA is constantly assessing and improving its practices.

"This year ViSOR - the database for sexual, violent and other dangerous offenders - was rolled-out to every Probation Area and Prison establishment in England and Wales. For the first time Police, Probation and Prison Services are working on the same IT system, thus improving the quality and timeliness of risk assessments and of interventions to prevent re-offending."

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. A copy of the MAPPA report and national figures are available at www.probation.justice.gov.uk in the Public Protection section.
2. This is the seventh year in which annual reports by the 42 Responsible Areas in England and Wales have been published by Written Ministerial Statement in parliament, following the implementation of MAPPA in 2001.
3. The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000) established the MAPPA and placed them on a statutory basis. The Criminal Justice Act (2003) re-enacted and strengthened those provisions. The legislation requires the Police, Prison and Probation Services (acting jointly as the 'Responsible Authority') in each of the 42 areas of England and Wales:
 - to establish arrangements for assessing and managing the risks posed by sexual and violent offenders;
 - to review and monitor the arrangements;
 - as part of the reviewing and monitoring arrangements, to prepare and publish an annual report on their operation.
4. A range of other agencies have also been placed under a duty to co-operate with the Responsible Authority. These include:
 - Local Authority Social Services
 - Primary Care Trusts, other NHS Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities
 - Jobcentre Plus
 - Youth Offending Teams
 - Registered Social Landlords which accommodate MAPPA offenders
 - Local Housing Authorities
 - Local Education Authorities
 - Electronic Monitoring providers
5. There is also a requirement to appointment two lay advisers to each of strategic management boards that review the MAPPA.
6. MAPPA is the term to describe the arrangements set up locally to assess and manage offenders who pose a risk of serious harm. Offenders eligible for MAPPA are identified and information is gathered/shared about them across relevant agencies. The nature and level of the risk of harm they pose is assessed and a risk management plan is implemented to protect the public.
7. In most cases, the offender will be managed under the ordinary arrangements applied by the agency or agencies with supervisory responsibility. A number of offenders, though, require active multi-agency management and their risk management plans will be

formulated and monitored via MAPP meetings attended by various agencies.

8. National MAPPA guidance indicates the use of 3 levels of management. Offenders will be moved up and down levels as appropriate:

Level 1 - Ordinary Management These offenders are subject to the usual management arrangements applied by whichever agency is supervising them. But this does not rule out information sharing between agencies, via ViSOR and other routes.

Level 2 - Active Multi-agency Management The risk management plans for these offenders require the active involvement of several agencies via regular multi-agency public protection (MAPP) meetings.

Level 3 - Active Multi-agency Management As with level 2 but these cases additionally require the involvement of senior officers to authorise the use of special resources, such as police surveillance or specialised accommodation, and/or to provide ongoing senior management oversight.

9. There are three categories of offenders managed through MAPPA.

Registered sexual offenders (Category 1) - sexual offenders who are required to comply with the notification requirements (sometimes called the “sex offenders register”); ie to notify the police of their name, address and other personal details and notify any changes subsequently;

Violent offenders (Category 2) – offenders sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months or more, or detained under hospital orders. This category also includes a small number of sexual offenders who do not qualify for registration and offenders disqualified from working with children; and

Other Dangerous Offenders (Category 3) – offenders who do not qualify under categories 1 or 2 but who currently pose a risk of serious harm, there is a link between the offending and the risk posed, and they require active multi-agency management.

10. Sexual Offences Prevention Orders, Notification Orders and Foreign Travel Orders are intervention tools that restrict the behaviour of offenders and can be applied for through the courts with the intention of preventing them committing serious further offences.
- Sexual Offences Prevention Orders place prohibitions on behaviour and can be used where an offender with a conviction or caution for an offence listed in Schedule 3 or Schedule 5 is considered to pose a risk of serious sexual harm. It does not matter when the conviction or caution was received.

- Notification Orders require sexual offenders who have been convicted overseas to register with police, in order to protect the public in the UK from the risks that they pose.
- Foreign Travel Orders prevent offenders with convictions for sexual offences against children from traveling abroad where it is necessary to do so to protect children from the risk of sexual harm.

A breach of these orders, without reasonable excuse, is a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

Contact

If you have any queries, please contact:-

Probation – Jackie Bell, PR Officer – 01562 748375 ext 253

**Police – Rachel Anstee, West Mercia Constabulary Media Comms Unit
- 01905 331663**