



Home Office

Sarah Dines MP
Minister for Safeguarding

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Dame Diana Johnson MP
Home Affairs Committee Chair
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

4 September 2023

Dear Dame Diana,

Thank you for your letter of 07 July regarding victim and stakeholder confidence in NRM decisions.

As you state, the Home Office introduced Multi Agency Assurance Panels (MAAPs) in 2019 as part of the NRM decision-making process to review all negative conclusive grounds decisions prior to decisions being served. MAAPs were introduced as a matter of policy in an advisory capacity only, with decision making responsibility remaining with the Competent Authorities.

In December 2022, due to the increasing pressure on the timeliness of NRM decision-making, MAAPs were removed from the process due to their design contributing to the number of days to issue a decision. All negative NRM decisions, both reasonable and conclusive grounds, continue to undergo a second pair of eyes review by a second caseworker or manager, the requirement for which existed prior to and during the existence of MAAPs.

All negative NRM decisions must go through this second pair of eyes, however this review forms part of the decision-making process and is not specifically allocated as a standalone decision.

In some cases, a decision maker may discuss a case with a second pair of eyes prior to the decision being drafted. Should the second pair of eyes disagree with a negative decision, either during discussion or at the point of reviewing the draft, a negative decision will not be issued.

As such, whilst details of the second pair of eyes review can be recorded within individual case notes and feedback given from the reviewer to the decision maker on the individual

case, the data the digital system can provide on this is limited and not yet been tested regarding the reliability of this data.

The Home Office continues to give consideration to a possible alternative assurance process following the removal of MAAPs. This consideration includes whether the structure could be similar to that of MAAPs, with an independent Chair, or with an alternative structure. We are also considering other factors such as the scope and nature of assurance, for example whether assurance of reasonable grounds decisions and positive decisions should be covered. However, the Home Office remains committed to any alternative assurance process being such that it will not contribute to decision making timescales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah Dines". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Sarah Dines MP
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