**Expression of Interest to become a member of the Multi-Agency Assurance Panels for the National Referral Mechanism**

**Background**

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the process by which suspected victims of modern slavery (including human trafficking) are identified and supported. Its purpose is to:

* ensure suspected victims of modern slavery are identified to enable appropriate safeguarding action to be taken;
* provide support that enables victims to leave situations of exploitation and secure specialist care, enabling them to begin to recover, rebuild their lives and build resilience; and
* officially acknowledge the abuse and exploitation experienced by victims of modern slavery.

The NRM process comprises of decisions as to whether a person is a victim of modern slavery. In summary, First Responders (in designated public bodies and certain other organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) refer individuals who are suspected to be victims to the Single Competent Authority (SCA), which then decides on the individual’s victim status, first taking a ‘reasonable grounds’ decision and finally a ‘conclusive grounds’ decision.

The Government has introduced a wide-ranging package of reforms to the NRM. These include the development of a digital system to support the NRM process and the creation of independent Multi-Agency Assurance Panels to review negative conclusive grounds decisions.

**Multi-Agency Assurance Panels: the role**

The purpose of the Multi-Agency Assurance Panels is to ensure that robust and consistent decisions are made within the NRM process. The panels of independent professionals, who have experience and expertise in working with victims of modern slavery, add an additional layer of scrutiny to negative conclusive grounds decisions made across the UK.

The panels are able to disagree with the decision made by the SCA (the decision-making body) and provide feedback to support their conclusion. The SCA subsequently considers this feedback and decides whether or not further review of the NRM case and the decision outcome are required; the final decision remains with the SCA.

**Multi-Agency Assurance Panels: the structure**

The Multi-Agency Assurance Panels comprise a range of representatives from relevant agencies, organisations and partners, including NGOs, with a background or relevant interest in modern slavery issues and in protecting vulnerable individuals. These representatives are from the following agencies:

* Police/law enforcement;
* Local authorities, and
* NGOs.

Panels may review a mix of both adult and child cases; all panel members may be required to sit on a panel considering such a mix, however where a panel is considering a case relating to a child the panel shall include at least one representative with experience and expertise in working with children from a local authority or NGO.

Ensuring the right representation of agencies is considered key to the success of the Multi-Agency Assurance Panels.

**Panel Requirements**

The Home Office is seeking additional representatives from the police/law enforcement agencies, local authorities and NGOs to take part in these panels.

As a member of the panel, the individual must have recent experience of working with victims of modern slavery (2+ years in the last 5 years), and knowledge of modern slavery issues.

The individual will have first-hand experience of dealing with vulnerable people (either adults or children), experience of working in a multi-disciplinary environment, excellent communication skills and an ability to analyse information. We also expect this role to be undertaken in line with the core Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

The Home Office provides training to all panel members on the role prior to them commencing participation in the Multi-Agency Assurance Panels. Statutory guidance which includes information on the NRM decision making process and the panels has also recently been [published](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims).

Training for panel members will be held virtually and last between one and two days. We anticipate the training will take place throughout late 2020. As the training is expected to be held virtually, travelling will not be required but, should this change, any travelling and accommodation costs will be reimbursed in line with Home Office policy.

Panels meet virtually, between Monday and Friday, so this role does not necessarily require any travel. However, reasonable travel and subsistence will be covered on the occasions where travel may be required.

Each of the virtual panels usually lasts approximately two to three hours. However, we recognise that time is required to prepare and to read case files, which usually takes a panel member 4-5 hours per panel. We therefore expect each panel, including the preparation, to take around seven hours in total. The frequency of panels is dependent upon the volumes of decisions. Panels sit regularly and panel members usually sit on a minimum of two panels per month, depending on the panels allocated to them. There is also a minimum time commitment to this role of between 12 -18 months.

We recognise the impact of a regular commitment on a panel members’ ‘day job’. We provide a financial contribution of £145 per virtual panel meeting to any organisation where their employee is recruited to become a panel member, to compensate the organisation. This contribution will not be made when staff are attending the training events detailed above. Payments will not be made to individuals or any organisation other than police/law enforcement, local authorities or NGOs.

**Application Process**

If you would like to apply to be a panel member, using the proforma below, please submit a short (max 400 words) statement explaining your suitability for the post detailed within the ‘Panel Requirements’ above; confirmation from your Line Manager to you undertaking the role; and a current CV, to SCAMAAP@homeoffice.gov.uk by **midnight 6 October.**

We expect to be able to inform the successful individuals within four weeks of the application closing date. Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications. If successful, due to the nature of the material being reviewed and assured, we would require individuals to undertake a security clearance process.

**Please note that you cannot apply if you do not represent one of the above organisations. In addition, to ensure complete independence in the assurance process you cannot apply if you currently work for the Home Office, including Border Force, Immigration Enforcement and UK Visas & Immigration.**

**Personal statement of interest in becoming a panel member for the Multi-Agency Assurance Panel**

Please provide 400 words (max) as to your suitability in becoming a panel member. Please provide previous experience that supports your suitability.

Name:

Employer:

Current role:

Contact number:

E-mail address:

Suitability:

Please advise which representation you seek to provide on the panels (specifying for adult or child – or both – if from a Local Authority or NGO):

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* Police/Law enforcement

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* Local Authority (adults)

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* Local Authority (child)

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* NGO (adult)

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* NGO (child)

Line Manager’s confirmation

I confirm that I agree to allow \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to undertake the role of panel member on the Multi-Agency Assurance Panel. I understand and authorise the time commitment (we anticipate a minimum of two panels a month for a minimum of 12 - 18 months) involved and will support them to undertake their responsibilities as a panel member.

Name of Manger:

Position:

E-mail address:

The Home Office will provide a financial contribution of £145 per virtual panel meeting to the panel member’s employing organisation to compensate for the regular time commitment undertaken.