



An tÚdarás Rialála Limistéir Mhuiri
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority

Minutes of the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) Board Meeting

Date	24 March 2026
Venue	Ormond Meeting Rooms, Ormon Quay, Dublin 7
Time	10.30 – 14.00
Chair	Mark Mellett Vice Admiral DSM (Rtd), Phd (MM)
Board Members Present	Dr. Ruth Brennan (RB) Mr. Patrick Gibbons (PG) (online) Ms. Niamh Kenny (NK) Dr. James Massey (JM) Mr. Brendan McGrath (BMCG) (online) Mr. Patrick Moran (PM) (online) Mr. Paul O’Neill (PON) (online) Mr. Philip Daly (PD)
In attendance	MARA Executive – Ms. Laura Brien (CEO), Dr. Áine Louw (AL) (Secretariat), Ms. Aisling Murray (AM), Ms. Danielle O’Dowd (DOD), Mr. Padraic Dempsey (PD), Ms. Suzanne Wylde (SW) agenda 10.0, Ms. Yvonne Doris (YD) (online) agenda 6.0, Mr Frank Ronan (FR) (online) agenda 7.0, Ms Noelle Brett (NB) (online) agenda 7.0.

Agenda Items

1. Non-Executive and Board Evaluation Session

The Board discussed the letter received from the Department of Climate Energy and the Environment and prepared for the meeting scheduled for April 1st with the Department.

Following the non-executive session, the decision was made to address item 10 of the agenda first.

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed board members with apologies from Ms. Karen Banks and Ms. Alma Walsh.

The Chair welcomed and introduced Padraic Dempsey as the new Director of the Policy and External Affairs directorate.

Quorum in place.

3. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

10. Governance Matters

10.1 Performance Update

CEO spoke to the letter received from Minister Dooley and addressed the items raised in the letter. CEO responded to queries raised by the Board in relation to the timing of the letter. CEO brought the Board through the performance metrics and explained that MARA achieved its MAC and MUL targets for Q1. CEO provided clarity around the timeline of the application process and MARAs commitment to these timelines.

CEO presented stats that demonstrated the breakdown of applications on hand for MACS and MULS by the activity. The Board stressed the importance of delivery particularly in the first half of 2026.

It was agreed that MAC and MUL statistics to reflect the progress of processing applications is made available to the Board in preparation for its meeting with DCEE on 1st April.

The CEO updated the Board on MARAs attendance at the Accelerating infrastructure Taskforce.

Break

Meeting resumed at agenda item 4.

4. Minutes

4.1 Board Minutes – The Board approved the following resolution:

At its meeting on 24 March 2026, the Board adopted the minutes of the MARA board meeting of 10 February 2026 attached at agenda item 4.1.

4.2 ARC Minutes – Minutes were not presented as a quorum of the ARC was not achieved via Written Resolution prior to the Board meeting to approve the minutes.

Action: Minutes to be re-submitted for written resolution approval.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Action Log –

The Board reviewed outstanding actions from previous meetings noting that any outstanding actions are being progressed or will be discussed during the course of the meeting

The Chair informed the Board that the proposed away day scheduled in May will now take place in MARA HQ in Wexford. This was welcomed by the wider Board and executive.

6. Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue Update.

Yvonne Doris, Director of Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue provided the Board with an update of the work completed by the CER unit in 2025. Ms. Dorris highlighted the challenges and achievements of 2025 and set out the unit's plan for 2026.

The Board noted the update provided on Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue. The Board also took to acknowledge all the hard work of MARA staff and wished to have that communicated to staff. It was agreed that the CEO and Chair would draft a message to staff to capture these sentiments.

The Board noted the presentation of CER.

Action: Chair and CEO to issue a communication to the executive to on the work of MARA.

7. Corporate Affairs Matters.

7.1 Annual Financial Statements

Noelle Brett, Head of Finance presented to the Board the financial statements for 2025. The Board asked the executive to consider the breakdown of catering costs to demonstrate spending on Board meetings, this would be considered in consultation with the C&AG.

The ARC had reviewed the financial statements and SIC previously and recommended to the Board the release of the draft financial statements to the C&AG for audit.

The Board approved the release of the financial statements to the C&AG for audit

7.2 Statement of Internal Control

The Board has reviewed the Report to support the assertions in the Statement of Internal Controls included in the Annual Financial Statements and are satisfied that it provides required assurances to support the assertions in the Statement of Internal Controls included in the Annual Financial Statements to be released to the C&AG by the end of March. The ARC also made this recommendation to the Board.

7.3 Q4 2025 Management Accounts

Ms. Brett presented the 2025 Management Accounts to the Board.

The Board has noted the contents of the 2025 Management Accounts.

7.4 Credit Card Policy Amendments and Procurement 2025 in review.

7.4.1 Frank Ronan, Director of Corporate Affairs presented an overview of the Procurement 2025 review.

7.4.2 Minor amendments to the Credit Card Policy were presented to the Board for approval, these amendments are recommended following audit. The Board approved the following resolution:

At its meeting on 24 March 2026, the Board approved the proposed amendments to the MARA Credit Card Policy.

7.5 Project Completion Report – Office Fit out

Frank Ronan, Director of Corporate Affairs, presented a report on the Project Completion – Office Fit out Report. The Board noted the contents.

8. ARC Report

Niamh Kenny Chair of the ARC provided an update to the Board of the work currently being undertaken by the ARC. Evaluation of the tender for internal audit services is scheduled for end of April, 2 internal audit reports were presented to the ARC, each of them with satisfactory outcomes and a discussion regarding the treatment of risk ensued. .

9. Risk Management

. Frank Ronan, Director of Corporate Affairs, presented the Risk Register to the Board. A discussion regarding the wording and treatment of risk in response to perceived performance issues took place.

Action: Risk 9 to be reviewed with a view to amend working to include wording on risk of performance matter communication

11. CEO Report

CEO presented the CEO report and took questions from the Board. Much of the contents of the CEO report had already been covered in the body of the meeting.

Action: Executive to include more detail in relation to AIE and FOI in the CEO report.

11 PPC Report

Philip Daly, Chair of the PPC presented the short-term performance plan that has been developed by the PPC.

Following discussion with the Chair of the Board, ARC and PPC, a proposal to amalgamate the PPC duties into the duties of the ARC was put forward.

. This proposal was positively received by members of the PPC and the Board, noting further details would need to be worked out

Action: Workplan practicalities of the PPC and the ARC to be drafted by MARA and discussed with both Chairs of the committees.

12. AOB

The Board noted the IPA Governance Programme for 2026 and have been advised to take advantage of courses on offer.

The Board noted the paper: Ocean and Costal Management submitted by James Massey

Next meeting scheduled to take place in MARA HQ, Wexford 12 May 2026