



Press Release

The Garda Inspectorate welcomes the announcement today by the Garda Commissioner of a new operating model for the Garda Síochána.

Welcoming the restructuring that will result in fewer regions and divisions, **Chief Inspector Mark Toland said, “rationalising the number of divisions will create significant benefits including an increase in the number of front line resources and a more responsive and consistent approach to the delivery of policing services. It provides an opportunity to reduce the number of people working in back office support functions as well as reducing management and administrative overheads”.**

He continued, **“the type of structural change announced today was recommended by the Inspectorate in its 2015 report *Changing Policing in Ireland*. This report made a number of recommendations to make management structures leaner at Headquarters, regional and local policing levels. Ultimately, the recommendations were intended to improve policing services in urban and rural communities.”**

The Inspectorate believes there are significant benefits to rationalising the number of regions and divisions including:

- Placing more resources on the front line.
- Creating more equitable divisions in terms of size and levels of responsibilities.
- Providing far more operational flexibility in terms of resource allocation and deployment.
- Providing significant opportunities to reduce management and administrative overheads.
- Reducing back-office support and releasing resources for front-line policing.
- Removing many geographical constraints to operational deployment.
- Providing a more consistent approach to policing through a reduced number of divisions.
- Delivering a less costly, more efficient and uniform service to the community.

In addition, to improve the quality of local policing services, the Inspectorate also recommended a new divisional policing model. This model will release large numbers of gardaí, sergeants and inspectors from non-operational roles back to front-line duties in patrol, investigation and community policing.

The reforms announced today by the Garda Commissioner are a significant step towards creating a police service that is leaner at management level and which delivers improved policing services for local communities.

22 August 2019
Ends

Notes for editors:

The objective of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate as an independent statutory body is:

"To ensure the resources available to the Garda Síochána are used to achieve and maintain the highest levels of efficiency and effectiveness in its operation and administration, as measured by reference to the best standards of comparable police services" (s. 117, Garda Síochána Act, 2005)

We carry out our functions by:

- Undertaking inspections or inquiries in relation to any particular aspects of the operation and administration of the Garda Síochána, either on our own initiative or as requested to do so by the Policing Authority or the Minister for Justice and Equality,
- Submitting a report on those inspections or inquiries.
- Providing advice to the Policing Authority or the Minister for Justice and Equality with regard to best international policing practices as required

The Garda Commissioner is responsible for making all operational policing decisions.

The Garda Inspectorate has published the following three reports that are relevant to the announcement today.

- Crime Investigation (2014);
- Changing Policing in Ireland (2015) and;
- Policing with Local Communities (2018).

All of our reports are available on our website.

If you wish to contact the Garda Inspectorate in relation to this media statement phone: Paul Mc Donnell Head of Corporate Affairs – 0879975985