



GARDA INSPECTORATE

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

Press Release - GARDA SÍOCHÁNA INSPECTORATE **Front - Line Supervision**

The Garda Síochána Inspectorate welcomes the release today by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence of the Inspectorate's eighth report entitled "*Front-Line Supervision*".

The report, presented to the Minister for Justice and Equality in April 2012 by the then Chief Inspector Kathleen O'Toole, examines the level and quality of supervision of front-line staff with particular focus on the role of uniformed sergeants and the way in which front line services are overseen and supervised. There are eleven recommendations in the report which address the existing barriers that undermine the effectiveness of front-line services and highlight the fact that deployment of front-line supervision is paramount, particularly in these times of economic constraint.

As part of the review into front-line supervision the Inspectorate benchmarked the Garda Síochána against best international standards of comparable police services. In addition, the Inspectorate held focus group meetings in several Garda districts to hear the perspectives of both urban and rural front-line gardaí.

Operational data on available resources and deployment was examined to gauge front-line policing strength and assess the breadth of supervision within the organisation. As noted in the Inspectorate's sixth report '*Resource Allocation*' there are deficiencies in basic information both in terms of processes and IT systems relating to demand and deployment. The absence of timely, accurate data is a serious gap in supervision and management that the Inspectorate suggests needs to be addressed as a matter of priority.

The report also points out that there is a need to develop a clear strategy for a more effective and efficient delivery of policing services which takes account of the roles, locations and status of all personnel within the Garda Síochána. This should specifically focus on how all personnel support service delivery to local communities across Ireland. The Inspectorate found that many front-line supervisors at sergeant level are not available to supervise and oversee front-line policing services because they are burdened with administrative duties and overly bureaucratic processes. It

was also apparent that those at inspector and superintendent ranks were similarly burdened.

The report identifies the significant amount of time spent by front-line gardaí, inspectors and superintendents at Court. Several recommendations are contained in the report to improve the effectiveness of case preparation and presentation of those cases at Court; some of which will require the support of other partners within the Criminal Justice process.

Commenting on this Front-Line Supervision report, the current Chief Inspector of the Garda Inspectorate, Robert Olson stated:

“Overall, the report makes clear recommendations, some of which are achievable with little or no cost, while others must be addressed over time and will require working in cooperation with other partner organisations.”

Chief Inspector Olson added:

“The Inspectorate is pleased that the Garda Commissioner has chosen to respond by submitting to the Minister an Implementation Plan, which will accelerate the Inspectorate’s role in determining and monitoring those recommendations that have not been rejected.”

It is the Inspectorate’s view that implementation of these recommendations will further enhance policing in Ireland.

A copy of this report is available on the Inspectorate website at www.gsinsp.ie.

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Note for editors

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Inspectorate makes the following eleven recommendations to prioritise and strengthen front-line supervision in the Garda Síochána.

Recommendation 1

The Inspectorate recommends that, in conjunction with the Deputy Commissioner Operations development of a new strategy for a more effective and efficient delivery of police services, the Garda Síochána conduct an immediate review of the roles, locations and status of all personnel in the organisation. This process should determine how each member contributes to service delivery. The review should also inform Garda management as to the levels of supervision required.

Recommendation 2

The Inspectorate recommends an immediate review of each sergeant's current role to determine how support staff and improved business processes can ease administrative burdens and release sergeants for front-line deployment. The Inspectorate also recommends a fundamental review of duty patterns to ensure greater sergeant coverage at night.

Recommendation 3

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána assign a sergeant for outdoor supervisory duty of front-line staff to each station operating a 24/7 front-line patrol service.

Recommendation 4

The Inspectorate recommends that sergeants be responsible for all processes relating to detained persons. Stations designated for detentions greater than six hours should be rationalised. These stations should be staffed by sergeants on a 24/7 basis. Processing of detainees who are likely to be released in a speedy manner may continue to occur at local stations, but a sergeant should still oversee initial processing.

Recommendation 5

The Inspectorate recommends that the decision making process on prosecuting straightforward offences that exists in the DMR be replicated in other regions to the greatest extent possible.

Recommendation 6

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop a system which authorises experienced gardaí to assist more junior members with case management of certain prosecution files. The system would address high volume, straightforward offences, and would ease administrative burdens on sergeants, freeing them to perform front-line supervisory duties.

Recommendation 7

The Inspectorate recommends that the procedures for court presentation, prosecution and attendance that exist in the DMR be replicated in other regions to the greatest extent possible.

Recommendation 8

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop an effective system for supervision of court attendance, thereby reducing unnecessary overtime and time spent away from critical front-line activity.

Recommendation 9

The Inspectorate recommends that training be provided to new sergeants immediately following promotion. Refresher supervisory courses should be provided as part of the Continuous Professional Development programme.

Recommendation 10

The Inspectorate recommends that divisional control rooms become a focal log-in point for all front-line gardaí. Front-line staff should inform the control room of their presence when going on and off duty, and should regularly provide updated availability status. Systems and practices for signing on and off duty should be improved and applied uniformly at all levels of the organisation.

Recommendation 11

The Inspectorate recommends that the subject of resource allocation, availability and visibility be given the highest priority. The effective

supervision and deployment of resources should be a standing agenda item at all accountability meetings throughout the organisation.

NEW GARDA SÍOCHÁNA INSPECTORATE TEAM

In June 2012, a new Garda Inspectorate team was appointed by the Government after six years of leadership by Kathleen O'Toole, who has left a solid foundation for the Inspectorate moving forward.

Robert K. Olson was appointed Chief Inspector of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate in June, 2012. Chief Olson previously served three years in the organisation as Deputy Chief Inspector on the establishment of the Garda Inspectorate in 2006. During his 38 year policing career, he served as Chief of Police in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Police Commissioner in Yonkers, New York, Chief of Police in Corpus Christi, Texas and 20 years coming up through the ranks to Deputy Chief of Police in Omaha, Nebraska.

In addition to Mr. Olson, the Inspectorate also comprises two Deputy Chief Inspectors and support staff. The two Deputy Chief Inspectors Mark Toland and Heather Baily were appointed in June and September 2012 respectively.

Mark Toland joined the London Metropolitan Police Service in 1980, serving nine years as a frontline officer and eleven years as a sergeant and inspector. As a Chief Superintendent he led three busy, diverse and challenging London boroughs. Whilst at Brent in North West London he ran a number of major undercover operations to tackle organised gangs, involved in shootings and drug dealing.

Heather Baily joined the London Metropolitan Police Service in 1979 and served in a variety of uniform and detective posts up to the rank of Detective Superintendent. She was appointed as Assistant Chief Constable with Hertfordshire Constabulary in July 2007.

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