



***“Changing Policing in Ireland -
Delivering a visible, accessible and responsive service”***

Wednesday 9th December 2015

The Garda Inspectorate welcomes the publication today by the Minister for Justice and Equality of the Inspectorate’s eleventh report, *Changing Policing in Ireland*. This report arises from the Haddington Road Agreement 2013-2015 which provided for a review of the Garda Síochána. The Inspectorate was requested to examine all aspects of the administration and operation of the Garda Síochána including the structure, organisation, staffing and the deployment of members and civilian staff (garda staff) to appropriate roles.

The report makes 81 recommendations for change, many of which can be delivered at low or no cost. The core aim of the review is to modernise and restructure the Garda Síochána to ensure the greatest proportion of personnel is deployed to front-line policing services. Chief Inspector Robert K. Olson said: *“The Garda Síochána can no longer afford to let the past dictate the future. This review is about changing policing in Ireland to deliver a more visible, accessible and responsive service”*.

The Inspectorate has listened to the views and input of 2,500 garda personnel including garda management, employees, reserves and staff representative bodies. The Inspectorate conducted field visits to garda divisions, national units and headquarters sites, in addition to meeting with other stakeholders and local communities regarding their interaction with the Garda Síochána. A number of national and other police services in other jurisdictions were also consulted.

This report builds on the work of previous Inspectorate reports and refers to a number of recommendations made in those reports that are still applicable today. A large number of them have not yet been fully implemented and therefore the envisaged

outcomes have not been realised. The Inspectorate is of the opinion that many of the policing issues that resulted in inquiries, tribunals and government reports could have been minimised or avoided; if these recommendations had been implemented and some fundamental changes made.

The report identifies deficiencies in a number of systems and practices. These include:

- An ineffective organisational structure, struggling to cope with the demand for garda services.
- Deficiencies in governance, accountability, leadership and intrusive supervision.
- The current district structure generates inconsistencies and unnecessarily takes resources from patrol, investigation and community policing.
- People are not always on duty at the right times, in the right places and doing the right things.
- Members of all ranks are assigned to non-operational roles that do not require sworn powers.
- There is a very low proportion of civilian staff to gardaí, compared to other police services.
- Resources are not allocated according to policing demand.
- The current culture is inhibiting change. Many staff view the organisation as closed, defensive and having a blame culture.
- The current one-size-fits-all roster does not adequately support the varying demands on the Garda Síochána.

Mr Olson commented that *“the Garda Síochána is not alone in the need to implement a reform agenda. Every police service visited has completed or is currently engaged in a major organisational reform and transformation programme.”* Lessons learned from other police services have informed some of the recommendations made in this review.

Some of the key recommendations made in the report are:

- Change the organisational structure to one that is leaner at senior management level and provides more gardaí for front-line duties.
- Reduce the number of garda regions from six to three.
- Put civilian garda staff in roles that do not need sworn powers to release over 1,500 fully trained and experienced gardaí to front-line duties.

- A significant number of recommendations are made to improve governance, accountability, leadership and supervision.
- Develop a new divisional policing model that puts communities first with more gardaí on the front line, delivering consistent services countrywide.
- Amalgamate garda divisions to reduce administrative layers and release more gardaí to the front line.
- Develop new multi-disciplinary national units to investigate the most serious crimes and allow garda divisions to concentrate on local crimes.
- Elevate the role of superintendents to a divisional level, with responsibility for a specific function, rather than the current situation of having responsibilities for a very broad range of functions at district level.
- Develop multiple rosters to meet the various demands of units.
- Develop a performance management system for all personnel, to encourage good performance and to provide for an ultimate sanction of dismissal in cases of continued underperformance.

These recommendations aim to support and resource those members of the Garda Síochána who have daily contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep our communities safe. The Inspectorate is recommending a strong modern structure with reductions in the number of senior managers and the removal of layers of administration and duplication. This will significantly increase the visibility and operational footprint of the Garda Síochána, through the release of gardaí to patrol, investigation and community policing duties. To ensure change occurs, the Inspectorate is recommending the establishment of a strong implementation group to prioritise and drive this process of modernisation and reform.

“This review is about changing policing in Ireland to deliver a visible, accessible and responsive service,” said Chief Inspector Olson. *“The Inspectorate is confident that if implementation of the recommendations in this report begins now, and is properly sequenced, the pathway for change will keep the Garda Síochána on course to achieving a more efficient and effective police service in Ireland.”* **ENDS**

Copy of report available at <http://www.gsinsp.ie>

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Note for editors

The Garda Inspectorate is a three-member team established on 26 July 2006 in accordance with Part 5 of the Garda Síochána Act, 2005. Prior to his appointment as Chief Inspector in June 2012, Chief Olson served as a consultant for the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), working with the Chicago Police Department in facilitating an organisational study to assess the efficiency of their existing systems, policies and procedures. 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.

There are two Deputy Chief Inspector posts. One is held by Mark Toland, formerly of the London Metropolitan Police Service, who was appointed to the Inspectorate in June 2012.

Deputy Chief Inspector 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. For two years he was responsible for training all new student officers and managed in excess of 4,000 new members. 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. In addition, he had responsibility for security and policing of major events at Wembley Stadium, Lords Cricket Ground and Twickenham Rugby Stadium. Mr. Toland was awarded the Queen's Police Medal (QPM) in 2010.

Debra Kirby was appointed as Deputy Chief Inspector in January, 2014. Debra joined the Chicago Police Department in 1986 where she served for 27 years prior to retiring in 2014. Debra is a licensed attorney in the State of Illinois, holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana; a Juris Doctorate from the John Marshall Law School and a Master of Arts in Homeland Security from the Naval Post Graduate School. She is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and was the recipient of the Fulbright Police Fellowship in 2000-2001. Debra completed her contract with the Inspectorate in September 2015 and the second Deputy Chief Inspector post is currently vacant.