

Status Report as of 8 November, 2013 on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Seventh Report of the Garda Inspectorate – “Responding to Child Sexual Abuse”

	Recommendation	Recommendation: Accepted (A); Accepted with Modification (AM); Rejected (R)	Comment and Current Status	Original Target Date for Implementation	Revised Target Date for Implementation	Responsibility
7.1	The Garda Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána take every opportunity to stress that there is no place for deferential treatment in modern Irish policing.	A	<p>An Garda Síochána demonstrates at every opportunity, in practice and in policy ,that positive action must be taken and that every incident will be fully investigated (Sections 1.6 to 1.11, 5.4, 20.1, and Part III of policy on the investigation of sexual crime, crimes against children and child welfare refer. This policy is set out in HQ Directive 54/2010 & reinforced in the revised 2nd Edition of this policy set out in HQ Directive 48/2013).</p> <p>See also Recommendation 7.9</p>	3 rd Quarter, 2012	4 th Quarter, 2013 (for completion of national media campaign and launch of dedicated phone line).	AC NSS & Director of Communications

7.2	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána assign responsibility for all aspects of development of child protection arrangements to a member of assistant commissioner rank. The assistant commissioner should provide visible leadership and direction in the development of new organisational policies and structures, and in monitoring and evaluating the Garda contribution to the operation of national child protection guidelines.</p>	A	<p>Assistant Commissioner, National Support Service (NSS) has overall responsibility for all aspects of child protection arrangements.</p> <p>The Assistant Commissioner is joint chair of a "Strategic Liaison Committee - An Garda Síochána and Children & Family Services, HSE" along with the National Director of the HSE's Children & Family Services.</p> <p>Within NSS, which the Assistant Commissioner has overall responsibility for, is the Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit at the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation. That unit monitors the Garda response to such incidents throughout the State employing the newly developed PULSE Key Performance Indicators for sexual and child welfare incidents.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.3	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána include the promotion of inter-agency working with the HSE and the development of child protection policies, practices and procedures as a priority in the organisation's business plans. The Garda Síochána should track and publish progress made in implementing change.</p>	A	<p>The Garda Síochána Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children and Child Welfare (HQ.54/10 & revised 2nd Edition of this policy set out in HQ Directive 48/2013) clearly promotes inter-agency working with the HSE. Indeed, inter-agency working has been promoted since the introduction of the first Children First Guidelines in 1999. An Garda Síochána is at an advanced stage in providing Children First training to Gardaí throughout the State, including inter-agency training with HSE personnel. The Detective Superintendent and Detective Inspector at the Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Investigation Unit represent Assistant Commissioner, National Support Services as active participants on the HSE's National Children First Implementation Group. The Garda Síochána Policing Plan for 2012 specifically mentions pro-active co-operation with other agencies to promote child safety.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.4	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána, in co-operation with the assistant national director with responsibility for child protection in the HSE, prioritise and provide supports for inter-agency working between Gardaí, social workers and staff in child assessment units.</p>	A	<p>As already mentioned, Assistant Commissioner, NSS is joint chair of a Strategic Liaison Committee along with the National Director of the HSE's Children & Family Services with a view to promoting inter-agency working.</p> <p>The Children First Implementation sub-committee of the Strategic Liaison Committee mentioned with regard to Recommendation 7.2 meet regularly to resolve issues that arise around inter-agency working. Detective Superintendent and Detective Inspector, Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit represent An Garda Síochána on that sub-committee.</p> <p>The lack of co-terminus boundaries is one issue that impacts on such joint working. The sub-committee are currently involved in the development of an interactive digital map that will allow a user to click on any part of the country and receive contact information for the local Garda Superintendent and Principal Social Worker, for example.</p> <p>The sub-committee is also considering the nature of the notification form, which is the single method available to Gardaí of making referrals to the HSE in accordance with Children First. The HSE have stated that a sizeable minority of the notifications made by An Garda Síochána should be welfare referrals rather than notifications relating to child abuse investigations being conducted by An Garda Síochána. The sub-committee is currently considering whether this could be addressed by introducing a new referral form/letter.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.5	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána work with the HSE in addressing the barriers to joint working identified in reviews of the Children First guidelines and ensure, as far as possible, the use of shared systems and agreed records.</p>	A	<p>As already mentioned, Assistant Commissioner, NSS is joint chair of a Strategic Liaison Committee along with the National Director of the HSE's Children & Family Services with a view to promoting inter-agency working.</p> <p>The Children First Implementation sub-committee of the Strategic Liaison Committee mentioned with regard to Recommendation 7.2 meet regularly to resolve issues and address barriers that arise around inter-agency working. Detective Superintendent and Detective Inspector, Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit represent An Garda Síochána on that sub-committee.</p> <p>Although systems are not yet linked the Garda Síochána has supplied information and statistics to the HSE to assist in gathering data regarding child protection and welfare.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
7.6	<p>The Inspectorate recommends the establishment, on a pilot basis, of at least two child advocacy centres in Dublin involving participation by the Garda Síochána, the HSE, and St Louise's and St Clare's assessment and therapy units. The centres should work closely with the Director of Public Prosecutions. The pilots should be monitored on an ongoing basis and evaluated within a defined time period.</p>	A	<p>This recommendation is currently being considered as part of the Ferns 4 working group. However, its full implementation is dependant on meaningful engagement and co-operation of other agencies. There are also legislative difficulties in sharing information with agencies other than the HSE.</p> <p>See also Recommendation 7.7.</p>	2 nd Quarter, 2014		AC NSS

7.7	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that Gardaí assigned to the proposed child advocacy centres should be detectives. They should be trained specialist victim interviewers and have specialist training for child sexual abuse investigations, including training for inter-agency working. They should be engaged full-time on child protection cases.</p>	AM	<p>An Garda Síochána agrees that the members attached to any such centre should have training in inter-agency working. It is a prerequisite that Gardaí accepted onto the Specialist Interviewers training course have already received inter-agency Children first training. The Specialist Interviewers course itself is conducted on an inter-agency basis, as each joint training course is also delivered to HSE social workers. It is contrary to good practice, however, that personnel engaged in specialist child interviewing should also conduct the criminal investigations.</p> <p>Specialist Interviewers will remain allocated to Garda Stations and will liaise with the Liaison Garda Inspector assigned to each regional centre mentioned in Appendix D (at Recommendation 7.6). They will of course attend meetings and case conferences at the regional centres and will be in regular contact with the other professionals at the centres. As mentioned in Appendix D, this matter will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness in the context of prudent Garda resource management.</p> <p>As already stated this process is reliant on other organisations that are outside the control of An Garda Síochána.</p>	2 nd Quarter, 2014		AC NSS
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7.8	The Inspectorate recommends that counselling support be provided for (i) all Gardaí working full-time in the area of sexual offences and (ii) Gardaí who investigate particularly difficult cases involving grievous sexual offences.	AM	The provision of counselling support services is available upon request to all Gardaí through the Garda Employee Assistance Service (GEAS). The GEAS has also established a peer supporter system throughout the Garda organisation, where colleagues in local Garda stations are available for support. The commencement of further support structures mentioned in the Garda Inspectorate's report for members attached to the DVSAIU is at an advanced stage. Correspondence recommending a model of counselling for members attached to the Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit was previously forwarded by the Employee Assistance Programme for financial sanction.	4 th Quarter, 2013		AC HRM
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7.9	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána publish information for complainants on how, where and when they can make a complaint about child sexual abuse. This should reassure victims that it is right to report child sexual abuse, confirm that child protection is a top priority for the Garda Síochána and outline how complainants will be treated in their dealings with the Garda Síochána. It is a daunting prospect for a victim of child sexual abuse to approach the counter in a public office at a Garda station to report an offence of this kind. The Garda Síochána should devise victim- friendly options to encourage reporting of child sexual abuse. Most importantly, the information should emphasise that complainants will be believed and that their complaints will be acted upon.</p>	A	<p>The public are already aware that complaints can be made at any Garda Station throughout the State. The Garda Síochána Victims Charter, available on the Garda Website, provides information to victims of all forms of crime regarding what they should expect from An Garda Síochána. While victims of sexual crime are mentioned in the Victims Charter, a section relating to sexual crime and child abuse will be developed for the Garda website to explain the issues raised by the Garda Inspectorate. See also 7.1</p> <p>This DVSAIU is in the process of preparing a submission for inclusion on the Garda Website and Garda Portal regarding this recommendation and Recommendation 7.1. Links on the Garda website homepage will direct users to web pages dedicated to sexual crime and child abuse investigation, These web pages will include information on how to make a complaint and the investigative and court procedures that follow the making of a complaint.</p> <p>Consideration is also being given to development of posters and pamphlets for display in the public offices of Garda stations.</p> <p>Garda Síochána calling cards are being developed containing the numbers of certain support services for women and children who are the victims of domestic or sexual violence.</p> <p>Planning for a comprehensive publicity campaign is continuing. The object of the campaign will be to highlight how, where and when victim's can make a complaint about child sexual abuse and to reassure victims that it is right to report child sexual abuse. The publicity is intended to reaffirm that child protection is a top priority for the</p>	4 th Quarter, 2012	4 th Quarter, 2013 (for completion of national media campaign and launch of dedicated phone line).	AC NSS & Director of Communications
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			<p>Garda Síochána and will outline how complainants will be treated and it will emphasise that complainants will be believed and that their complaints will be fully investigated.</p> <p>It is intended to examine the feasibility of using the media, both traditional and social along with the Garda website, in the campaign. It is also intended that this publicity will coincide with the launch of the 24 hour help line which is set out in recommendation 7.12.</p>			
7.10	The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána specially train a cadre of front-line Gardaí in each Garda district to take reports alleging child sexual abuse.	R	<p>It is not proposed that any extra specific training will be given to frontline Gardaí as all Gardaí are trained to take the initial report of child sexual abuse. In addition, each District already has available a cadre of specialist interviewers. All Gardaí are aware of the existence of specialist interviewers. Garda policy directs that only the more experienced members should investigate such crimes and that the District officer must ensure that adequate resources are assigned to such investigations. See also Recommendation 7.15</p> <p>Taking the initial report does not entail taking the initial complaint (i.e. written statement or Specialist Interviewer's DVD recording of the interview). Once a report is made, it is Garda policy that an experienced member is appointed to investigate the offence and that a Specialist Interviewer is assigned, where appropriate, to interview the child. It is anticipated that Level III Advanced Interviewers will be deployed to conduct all victim/suspect interviews in relation to all investigations that require the submission of a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions for directions as to the charges to be preferred. All sexual offence investigations are included in that category.</p>	Rejected		AC NSS & AC Each Region

In relation to the current training programme, students received comprehensive instruction in relation to the taking of a complaint/recording of an incident from a member of the public. In addition to this, whilst undergoing Phase II training, students would have observed the taking and recording of initial reports at the public office and elsewhere.

A new Student /Probationer programme is being designed. The philosophy and methodology of the new programme is based on problem-based learning, where students learn how to manage policing scenarios through engagement with realistic scenarios delivered in the college environment. The thematic structure of the new programme scaffolds learning such that students progress from dealing with less complex incidents through to complex incidents.

The programme is organised around thematic modules reflecting operational roles and responsibilities. A module titled 'Crime and Incident Policing' on Phase I aims to ensure a logical progression of knowledge and practical skills which enable a student to manage a wide range of volume crime and policing incidents.

The knowledge and skills will be delivered across a range of scenarios, which will build incrementally, starting with criminal damage and progressing in complexity to serious assaults, including physical and sexual.

Key learning outcomes include

- Selectively utilise appropriate communication strategies to effectively interview cooperative and non-cooperative victims, witnesses and suspects of crime.

- Identify effective support interventions for victims of crime and demonstrate the procedural knowledge and communication strategies to apply them.
- Critically evaluate the evidence gathered in a simulated investigation, report in a detailed, coherent and accurate case file and make recommendations in respect of prosecutions in accordance with legal requirements.

Unit 8 of this module, 'Complex Assaults' will focus on incidents of sexual assault and rape. This content of this unit is to be developed but it will include the procedures for taking a report of child abuse including historical cases and their subsequent investigation. Areas covered include understanding sexual crimes (including stereotyping of victims), vicarious trauma, advanced and specialised victim support, early evidence kit and proofs and powers. As a result of completing this unit, students will be able to respond to and investigate an incident of sexual assault/rape and deal with victims in a professional, caring and competent manner.

In another module, 'Policing With Communities', Unit 7, includes the full 'Children's First' training programme. The role of the Specialist Child Interviewer is outlined as part of this unit as well the procedures for interviewing the victims of alleged cases of child abuse.

7.11	The Inspectorate recommends that only specially trained Gardaí take statements from child and adult victims of child sexual abuse.	AM	<p>Garda policy directs that only Specialist Interviewers will interview child victims of child sexual abuse. That policy also directs that that Specialist Interviewers should interview adult victims, but child victims must take priority. An Garda Síochána is also in the process of training Level III (Advanced) Interviewers throughout the State regarding the interviewing of victims, witnesses and suspects of serious crime. The training and Garda policy makes it clear that all sexual crime is serious crime. Indeed a considerable part of that training is dedicated to interviewing victims/witnesses/suspects in relation to sexual crime. Level IV Interview Coordinators/Advisers are also being trained to manage the interview process in the more complicated investigation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that policy in relation to the deployment of Level III interviewers will be published when sufficient numbers have been trained.</p>	Implemented for Specialist Interviewers.	1 st Quarter,2014	AC NSS & AC Each Region
7.12	The Inspectorate recommends that Garda help lines for reporting of allegations of child sexual abuse be staffed on a 24/7 basis and that use of automated answer lines be discontinued. (Chapter 4)	A	An Garda Síochána already maintains help lines (i.e. Crime stoppers, Garda Confidential Helpline and the emergency 999/112 system) whereby any person may report any crime. An Garda Síochána will install, by 4 th Quarter 2013, a dedicated national telephone line at the Garda Command & Control Centre, Harcourt Square to specifically deal with the reporting of allegations of child sexual abuse cases. The dedicated telephone line, which will initially operate on a trial basis, will be publicised on the Garda website for the information of the general public. The number will be advertised internally for Garda members by way of the Garda Portal.	4 th Quarter,2013		AC NSS AC DMR

7.13	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána continue to develop and maintain close working relationships with non-statutory organisations that provide support and services for victims of child sexual abuse. Informal relationships with non-statutory organisations should be underpinned by formal protocols on matters such as sharing of information and referral processes. (Chapter 4)</p>	AM	<p>The Sexual Crime management Unit at the DVSAIU is constantly enhancing relationships with non-statutory organisations and is the Single point of Contact for such organisations.</p> <p>Current legislation does not allow for the sharing of information with organisations other than the HSE, except where there is an imminent serious risk of harm to a person or persons. Even then the non-statutory organisation will only be told for the purpose of preventing that harm.</p> <p>It is respectfully submitted that the regional sexual abuse centres outlined above with regard to Recommendation 7.6 will aid in achieving that aim. The proposed co-located SORAM office at the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation would also be of assistance in this regard.</p> <p>In accordance with Chapter 14 of the Garda Síochána Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children and Child Welfare, a member of Inspector rank is appointed in each division and a member of Sergeant or Garda rank is appointed in each District or Station to liaise with local non-governmental organisations and to make available to all members in their respective stations information regarding the services provided by those organisations. Gardaí are instructed to offer to contact/make referrals to NGO's on behalf of victims, with their consent.</p> <p>As already mentioned at 7.9, An Garda Síochána has developed Garda calling cards with the details of certain NGO's on the reverse side.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.14	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána continue to deter the small minority of people who make false complaints of child sexual abuse by gathering sufficient evidence in such cases to prosecute them.</p>	A	<p>It is already Garda policy that evidence is gathered with a view to prosecuting the small minority of people who make false complaints of child sexual abuse.</p> <p>The Garda Síochána Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children and Child Welfare states the following:</p> <p>False allegations of sexual crime are not common. Where members are concerned as to the veracity of any complaint, or any element of the complaint, the complaint will be fully investigated but any such concerns will form part of the investigation and will be outlined in the investigation file submitted to the Law Officers.</p> <p>Members must not display any concerns regarding veracity to the victim unless evidence is available which shows that the complaint is false.</p> <p>Where evidence is available that a complaint is false, members will consider forwarding a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions regarding any disclosed breach of Section 12 of the Criminal Law Act 1976. Section 5 of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 (HQ Directive 15/1999) also applies in respect of false reports of child abuse.</p> <p>At section 6.4 of the policy document, Gardaí are again reminded that it “may be necessary to submit a file to the Law Officers where breaches of Section 12 of the Criminal Law Act 1976 or Section 5 of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 are disclosed” in the context of persons withdrawing complaints of sexual crime.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS & AC Each Region
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7.15	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop further specialisation in the area of child sexual abuse and, in particular, move away from the current practice whereby the Garda who takes the initial report is the investigating Garda.</p>	AM	<p>The proposed regional sexual abuse centres mentioned above in Recommendation 7.6, represent a development that also impacts on Recommendation 7.15. All Gardaí are competent to take the initial report of child sexual abuse. In addition, each District already has available a cadre of specialist interviewers. All Gardaí are aware of the existence of specialist interviewers. Garda policy directs that only the more experienced members should investigate such crimes and that the District officer must ensure that adequate resources are assigned to such investigations. See 7.10.</p> <p>While there is clearly a case for specialisation in some areas, it is not sustainable to develop a one-size-fits-all type of child protection unit in each division or district. However, a number of District/ Divisional child protection units have been established throughout the country according to local need and available resources.</p> <p>When there is a large scale Child Sexual Abuse investigation and there are no specialist units in an area, the DVSAIU provides specialist support and either assists in co-ordinating the investigation or takes direct control of the investigation.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.16	The Inspectorate recommends that every reported case of child abuse be the subject of a formal risk assessment.	AM	<p>An Garda Síochána recognises its responsibilities and extremely important role in child protection and welfare. Every reported case of child abuse is notified to the HSE Children & Family Services, who then conduct a child protection risk assessment. An Garda Síochána supply all relevant information to the HSE in order that an appropriate child protection risk-assessment may be carried out, including DVD interviews performed by Specialist Interviewers and any written statements containing relevant information.</p> <p>In accordance with the reviewed Garda Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children and Child Welfare (due to be published) and Children First National Guidance, members of An Garda Síochána, attend Strategy Meetings and Child Protection Conferences when notified of same to provide all relevant information to the HSE in order that an appropriate child protection risk assessment may be carried out.</p> <p>For example, Garda policy outlines to members the matters to be considered when deciding whether or not to remove a child to safety pursuant to section 12 of the Child Care Act 1991.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the regional sexual abuse centres outlined above with regard to Recommendation 7.6 will assist in achieving that aim. The proposed co-located SORAM office at the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation would also be of assistance in this regard as it involves the risk assessment and management of convicted sexual offenders.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.17	The Inspectorate recommends that the Office of the Minister for Children be asked to consider revision of the child protection notification forms used by the Garda Síochána and the HSE to provide for recording of the date of the initial report of child abuse.	A	<p>A review has already been conducted of all elements of Children First resulting in the publication of new Guidance and associated forms in 2011.</p> <p>The Children First Notification form is again being examined and the amendments recommended by the Garda Inspectorate will be recommended to the HSE by An Garda Síochána.</p>	4 th Quarter, 2013		AC NSS
7.18	The Inspectorate recommends that the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs be asked to consider a revision to Children First such that the guidelines state explicitly that prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare/protection.	A	<p>See 7.17 above. Further it is Garda Síochána policy that all forms of child abuse are fully investigated and that files are forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions in all cases of sexual offending. It is a matter for the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider whether or not a prosecution will be instituted. An Garda Síochána will raise this issue through the National Strategic Committee chaired jointly by Assistant Commissioner National Support Services and the Director of Children and Family Services</p>	4 th Quarter, 2013		AC NSS

7.19	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána review the timeliness of child sexual abuse investigations with a view to having all but complex and difficult investigations completed within three months.</p>	AM	<p>HQ.161/1998 directs that all but the most complex or time consuming investigations should be submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions within three months. However, it is the experience of An Garda Síochána that sexual crime investigations tend to be among those cases that are complex and time consuming.</p> <p>The Sexual Crime Management Unit is tasked with selecting and following the progress of selected reports of sexual crime and child abuse for quality assurance purposes to ensure that they are professionally investigated and that the investigations are expedited.</p> <p>In addition HQ.25/12 introduced sexual and child welfare incident Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the Garda PULSE system to inform local and national Garda management on a weekly basis regarding the progress of such investigations. The Sexual Crime Management Unit utilise these KPIs in their quality assurance assessments.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.20	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that, from the outset, Garda investigative strategies take account of the likelihood that a victim of child sexual abuse may refuse to make a formal statement or, having made one, may withdraw it at a later date. Investigative strategies should aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve corroborating evidence without delay. • Take the victim statement as soon as possible after the initial report is made so as to minimise the time available for the victim to be influenced to withdraw cooperation. • Adopt any and all safeguarding options open to the Gardaí and social workers if there is any continuing risk, high or low, to the well being of the victim or other person. • Review cold cases periodically taking account of any changed circumstances that may prompt new criminal justice options. 	A	<p>It is already the policy of An Garda Síochána to fully investigate all complaints of child sexual abuse, even where the complaint has been withdrawn. Furthermore the KPIs mentioned above allow District Officers to follow the progress of all investigations and ensure they are completed.</p> <p>It has always been Garda policy to take the complainant’s statement as soon as possible. It is also policy to notify the HSE Children & Family Services of all such investigations, whether or not a formal complaint has been made. Gardaí are instructed to use the appropriate powers in relation to the protection of children.</p> <p>Specialist Interviewers are available throughout the country to interview children under the age of 14 years and persons with intellectual disability. Level III (Advanced) Interviewers are currently being trained throughout the country and are competent to interview all other vulnerable witnesses.</p> <p>The Sexual Crime Management Unit is tasked with evaluating and monitoring, in conjunction with the investigating member and senior management, selected investigations of clerical child abuse, child neglect and certain sexual offences. This is designed to ensure that such investigations are receiving the appropriate attention and being brought to a prompt conclusion in accordance with best practice in investigation methodology, Garda Síochána Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children and Child Welfare.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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7.21	The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána consider the option of seeking a search warrant in any case where difficulties are encountered, or are likely to be encountered, in obtaining, by voluntary means, church or other documentation that is believed to contain evidence for the purpose of a prosecution.	A	It is Garda Síochána policy to consider application for search warrants in all cases where difficulties are expected or encountered in obtaining any evidence of any crime. Indeed, it would often be Garda practice to make application for warrants to search premises where no difficulties are expected to reduce any difficulties later in court where there may be a challenge regarding the issue of consent.	Implemented		AC NSS
7.22	The Inspectorate recommends two categories of positive outcomes of Garda investigations into child sexual abuse as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and proportion of cases in which prosecutions were directed by the Director of Public Prosecutions. • Number and proportion of cases not prosecuted in the interest of the welfare of the child victim and where concerns for the welfare of other children were met. 	A	An Garda Síochána agree to take into account the Inspectorate’s recommendation of two categories of positive outcomes of Garda investigations into child sexual abuse in addition to any other factors encountered that might impact on successful outcomes in the detection, investigation and prosecution of child sexual abuse cases. This requirement will be communicated to all Superintendents. A briefing document is being prepared outlining the requirements of the recommendation for the Information Technology Section, in order that the appropriate additions can be considered for the PULSE system.	3 rd Quarter, 2013	1 st Quarter, 2014 for update on progress.	AC NSS
7.23	The Inspectorate recommends that when it is established that a complaint of child sexual abuse is false, the Garda Síochána should immediately inform the person against whom the complaint was made.	A	This is already the practice of An Garda Síochána.	Implemented		AC NSS & AC Each Region
7.24	The Garda Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána put arrangements in place to ensure that a person who is the subject of an allegation of child sexual abuse is informed without delay of a decision by the Director of Public Prosecutions not to prosecute.	A	This is already the practice of An Garda Síochána.	Implemented		AC NSS & AC Each Region

7.25	The Garda Síochána should, as required by policy, “immediately” create an offence record on PULSE of each complaint of child sexual abuse. Ideally, the policy should set a specific time limit.	A	<p>Gardaí are required to create an offence record on PULSE immediately after taking that report. There is no time limit because the incident should be recorded on PULSE <u>immediately</u> after the Garda takes the report of the incident.</p> <p>All operational Superintendents’ are required as a matter of policy to examine and monitor progress of all reported incidents of this nature in a timely fashion. To assist in this process weekly KPI reports are available to local Garda management. The reason matters of this nature are required to be entered on PULSE immediately is to ensure there is no slippage in the reporting and recording area on such an important matter.</p> <p>District Officers at their daily Performance and Accountability meetings, and weekly Management meetings, have visibility of the pertinent management information, by means of the Garda KPI System, concerning the reporting and recording of complaints of child sexual abuse. Issues of delay in recording are considered and addressed as a matter of urgency. This important monitoring function will again be emphasised by way of correspondence to District Officers.</p>	3 rd Quarter,2013	1 st Quarter, 2014 for update on progress.	AC NSS
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7.26	<p>The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána Professional Standards Unit have a role in ensuring adherence to crime counting rules and other Garda directives on crime recording. The Unit should be in a position to provide quality assurance on PULSE records to the Central Statistics Office, the body with responsibility for publication of crime statistics.</p>	A	<p>The Garda Síochána professional Standards Unit conducts audits of Garda Districts, Divisions Regions and other sections to identify gaps between policy and practice (HQ.123/2007). Part of those audits now includes ensuring adherence to crime counting rules and other Garda directives on crime recording, thereby providing quality assurance regarding PULSE records to the Central Statistics Office.</p> <p>The Garda Professional Standards Unit will in future pay particular attention, in the course of their audits, to this matter of child sexual abuse and welfare of children reports. Revised instructions in this regard to issue by 4th Quarter, 2013.</p> <p>It should also be noted that District and Divisional Officers utilise the “Sexual Incident and Child Welfare (HSE) KPI’s Reports” introduced by HQ Directive 25/2012 to ensure that all allegations of child sexual abuse are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner to ensure the best possible service is provided to victims and their families. District and Divisional Officers receive weekly reports on Sexual Crime and Child Welfare incidents, highlighting where investigations require attention. Although it is a matter for local management how the information provided in these reports should be managed, section 5.4 of the newly revised Garda Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children & Child Welfare requires quarterly returns of KPI’s to Detective Superintendent DVSAIU in order that the Sexual Crime Management Unit may examine the KPI Reports & ensure that appropriate action is being taken in respect of the incidents recorded thereon.</p>	4 th Quarter, 2013		AC Strategy, Training & Professional Standards
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7.27	The Inspectorate recommends that, in the interest of quality assurance, the services of the Garda Síochána Information Centre (GSIC) at Castlebar be used to enter records of sexual offences on PULSE.	A	HQ.116/2011 provides for the utilisation of the Garda Information Service Centre (GISC) in entering records of all sexual offences on the Garda PULSE system. GISC is also tasked with reviewing all sexual incidents recorded on PULSE.	Implemented		AC Strategy, Training & Professional Standards
7.28	The Inspectorate recommends that Garda efforts in tracing unaccompanied minors who go missing from State care be at least sustained, and if possible increased, in the interest of the young people concerned, and as a demonstration of the State's commitment to countering any possible means of human trafficking. The Garda Síochána should collate information on the circumstances in which those who go missing are traced.	A	<p>An Garda Síochána is always seeking to improve its methods of investigation, including the tracing of all minors who go missing from State care.</p> <p>The CRI Alert system was introduced in May 2012 and is activated where a child has been abducted and there is a reasonable belief that there is an immediate and serious risk to the health or welfare of a child (HQ.43/12).</p> <p>With a view to improving the Garda response to the issue of unaccompanied minors, the missing children sub-committee of the Strategic Liaison Committee (Recommendation 7.2) works to resolve issues relating to the recording of missing children and assist in policy development relating to actions to be taken by An Garda Síochána and the HSE regarding children missing from care and/or unaccompanied minors.</p> <p>In addition, the Garda National Immigration Bureau is actively addressing this issue in conjunction with other State Agencies. See Appendix I</p>	Implemented		AC NSS

7.29	<p>The Inspectorate recommends further investments of staff and resources in the countering of child sexual abuse offences on the internet. Law enforcement efforts should be complemented by preventive measures, including education of children about safe surfing on the internet.</p>	AM	<p>An Garda Síochána is always seeking to improve its response to the sexual abuse of children through the use of the internet or any other technology. Currently, An Garda Síochána has adequate resources allocated to this very important area. This resourcing issue is kept under constant review.</p> <p>The Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit has recently been the subject of an article in the Sunday Independent where the online abuse of children was highlighted. Any similar opportunities will be taken to raise awareness on this very important issue.</p> <p>Members attached to the DVSAIU provide presentations to many children's organisations in relation to child abuse and the use of technology. Organisations include the Irish Sports Council and the National Youth Council of Ireland (and their affiliate organisations), along with child and adolescent mental health services, such as St Patrick's Hospital.</p> <p>Members from DVSAIU aided in the development of the GET WITH IT! series of booklets developed by the Office for Internet Safety.</p> <p>Members of the DVSAIU provide training to Crime Prevention Officers in Community Relations Section relating to internet safety in order that the Crime Prevention Officers can disseminate advice to the community.</p> <p>FAQ's on the Garda website explain where to go for information on internet safety.</p>	Implemented		AC NSS
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