



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

## **Policing Authority publishes full-year Assessment of 2018 Policing Performance**

25 April 2019

The Policing Authority today publishes its full-year Assessment of the Garda Síochána's performance in the implementation of the Policing Plan for 2018. The annual policing plan sets out the Garda Síochána's commitments to the community regarding the policing service it will deliver in that year. The Authority regards it as important that there is then an independent, external assessment, for the community, that sets out the degree to which the Authority believes, and has evidenced, that those commitments were fulfilled.

Commenting on the publication, Policing Authority Chief Executive, Helen Hall said:

*"Today's report provides transparency on the Garda Síochána's policing performance. It provides an external assessment of the commitments made to the community and outlines the degree to which the Authority believes those commitments were fulfilled. While the report reveals many challenges, the Authority, in its oversight work during the last three years has observed considerable improvements and it will be important that the momentum behind these positive changes continues."*

The Authority has found that significant progress has been made in 2018 in the area of services to vulnerable victims, with ten Divisional Protective Services Units rolled out across the country. Targets for identifying suspects and victims of online child sexual exploitation were exceeded. There was a decrease in the incidents of burglary, and 2018 was the lowest year on record for road fatalities. A number of measures targeting organised crime groups improved, including firearms seizures, money laundering investigations and executions of European Arrest Warrants. A number of key ICT projects designed to deliver important capability to the organisation were also progressed, including the Investigation Management System and the Rosters and Duty Management System.

These areas of progress are to be welcomed. However, the Authority has significant concerns around the lack of progress with key projects and strategies and the failure to meet the majority of incident and detection targets. Detections, in particular, are an area of concern for the Authority with little sense of progress being made to improve detection levels. In terms of the expansion of the Garda workforce, recruitment of Garda Staff and Garda Reserves fell significantly short of target. Important strategies, critical for the organisation, were not finalised and this impacted on the development of areas such as Community Policing, Hate Crime, Diversity and the Garda Reserve. The failure to deliver a HR Strategy and a Training and Development Strategy at a time of significant recruitment and increased training demands is of particular note. The development of

regional services for Cyber Crime and Economic Crime continues to be under-resourced and this indicates a more generalised point, that planning has to consider the full breadth of the resources required to bring these commitments to fruition, including accommodation and finance.

Over half of the commitments in the 2018 Policing Plan were not achieved. Most of those were off target by June 2018 while many were off as early as March. This raises questions for the Authority about the development of the plan and whether or not it was realistically achievable. The planning process and culture within the Garda Síochána needs to mature. The Authority has observed improvements over the past three years, and it will be important for this trend to continue. The development of future plans, and the flow of resources and organisational effort, must be underpinned by a more rigorous approach to decision making and project approval that is supported by evidence and driven through effective leadership.