



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

**Policing Authority publishes Assessment of Policing Performance**

06 August 2020

The Policing Authority has today published its half-year Assessment of Policing Performance, which sets out the performance of the Garda Síochána, relative to the 2020 Policing Plan. This process of reporting, which takes place twice yearly, is central to the Authority's statutory oversight work.

Overall, the report has found that the policing performance of the Garda Síochána during the first half of 2020 was very positive. The speed with which the Garda Síochána mobilised in response to COVID-19 was notable, and the response displayed agility in assessing risks, redeploying resources and setting up an infrastructure that would allow the organisation to respond on a daily basis. The early identification of risk around vulnerable individuals and groups, and the proactive approach adopted is to be commended. The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive in relation to the effort, the flexibility and the tone employed by the Garda Síochána in dealing with the public. Organisations that the Policing Authority has engaged with reported increased and more effective collaboration, with positive outcomes for victims. At a time of anxiety and disruption for many, the Garda Síochána played a pivotal role in providing constancy and confidence.

The Policing Plan for 2020 was revised in light of the additional work and activity that had to be undertaken as the Garda Síochána responded to the needs of the COVID-19 crisis. The revised Policing Plan 2020 has seen a significant increase in the number of initiatives to be delivered in the year, now numbering 138. The volume of initiatives contained in the revised plan will be challenging to achieve in their own right. This is before any consideration of the impact of the demands placed on the Garda Síochána by the health emergency, and how long those demands might remain. The pre-existing challenges of HR, ICT, accommodation and training remain and have to be tackled within circumstances where there are unforeseen and ill-defined draws on resources.

Commenting on the publication of the report, Policing Authority Chairperson, Bob Collins said:

*"The evidence of the first half of 2020 shows the resilience, the imaginative capacity and the speed of response of the Garda Síochána. There is a sense in which the Garda Síochána has, through its actions and as if by accident, designed a new way of valuing itself and the community it serves. There is immense potential for a better, firmer foundation for the essential relationship between Garda and community for the future. The Commissioner and his colleagues have set themselves a difficult challenge with the extent of the range of commitments made in the Policing Plan. Some will not be achievable however the Commissioner's ambition in retaining focus and attention on the detailed elements in the Plan is to be commended."*

A number of significant policing performance successes have been identified, including:

- The roll-out and implementation of Operation Fanacht in support of the implementation of the emergency Health Regulations, with a strong focus on community engagement.
- As a result of the increased engagement from Operation Faoiseamh, 82% of victims of domestic abuse have received contact from the Garda Síochána within 7 days of the reported incident, while 86.88% of victim assessments have been completed within 3 days of the reported incident.
- 12 of 39 recommendations contained in the Youth Referral Report have been completed, with the remaining recommendations progressing in line with timelines.
- Significant levels of success in special crime operations particularly in the seizures of firearms and drugs.

However, the report also highlights a number of concerns, including:

- The impact of the suspension of training across a number of projects, including on the roll-out of the domestic abuse risk assessment tool.
- Attempts to ensure sufficient resourcing and capacity of the Garda Síochána Analysis service to support assessment of performance and the operational planning and response are now under pressure
- The capacity to produce a costed policing plan, based on reliable data, is unlikely to be achieved in 2020.
- Absence of a strategic integrated Workforce Plan document covering the Garda Síochána staffing requirements across the whole organisation.

The next meeting in public between the Policing Authority and the Garda Commissioner will take place on 30 September 2020.