



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Policing Authority publishes report on policing performance by the Garda Síochána during the COVID-19 crisis

16 September 2020

The Policing Authority has today published the seventh in a series of reports on its assessment of policing performance by the Garda Síochána during the COVID-19 crisis, which was submitted to the Minister for Justice, Ms. Helen McEntee last Friday.

The report focuses on four key themes which inform the Authority's ongoing oversight in relation to the policing performance by the Garda Síochána during the current health emergency. These are use of powers and use of force; community engagement and service to vulnerable groups; wellbeing of Garda Members and Staff; and policing to protect and respect Human Rights.

The Authority has sought feedback from organisations working in the area of domestic violence on Operation Faoiseamh, which was launched by the Garda Síochána in April with the aim of preventing loss of life and to ensure that victims of domestic abuse were supported and protected during the crisis. Organisations continue to be uniformly positive about Operation Faoiseamh not just in terms of the additional resources put into this area of policing but also the awareness and perceived improvements in practice within the Garda Síochána. A key issue raised by the organisations working in this area is whether the effort, attention and focus on the policing of domestic abuse will diminish as the pandemic abates or whether the current approach will be normalised as policing as usual.

Policing Authority Chairperson, Bob Collins commented:

"Recent months have seen a shift in tempo and focus in the management of the health emergency. That has been reflected in the nature and application of statutory regulations. The increased freedom of movement and the ending of the penal provisions, insofar as the great majority of people are concerned, marked a significant change. However, the reality of the COVID-19 threat has not diminished. And neither has the extent of the challenge for the Garda Síochána in its vital work of advising and assisting the public."

The next meeting in public between the Policing Authority and the Garda Commissioner will take place on Wednesday 30 September 2020. Due to public health restrictions, it will not be possible for the public to attend. However, the meeting will be live-streamed on the Authority's website.