



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Policing Authority appoints Mr. Derek Penman to provide independent strategic advice on the Garda Síochána review of the invalid and unwarranted closure of CAD incidents

The Policing Authority has appointed Mr. Derek Penman to conduct an independent, external preliminary examination of the adequacy of the review being undertaken by the Garda Síochána of the invalid and unwarranted closure of CAD incidents. These closures were colloquially referred to as *the cancellation of 999 calls*. The change in language better reflects the full scope of what is being examined but does not in any way diminish its serious nature.

The invalid or incorrect closure of CAD incidents is a serious matter because it can prevent a caller from receiving an appropriate service at that time and it effectively prevents both the proper recording of non-crime incidents and further mandatory steps in the investigation of crimes.

The work to be undertaken by Mr. Penman is a preliminary assessment. Its purpose is to give independent, expert assurance and advice to the Authority, to the Commissioner and most importantly to the public. The assurance sought is that the methodology being used by the Garda Síochána to examine incidents will deliver what is needed to understand what happened, the impact of what happened and how the organisation can prevent its reoccurrence. The other questions to be considered in this assessment are outlined in the terms of reference which are attached.

The provision of an appropriate response to people who call 999 or their local Garda Station in a time of need is a fundamental part of the performance of a policing service. This issue has been given the highest priority by the Authority since it began its engagement with the Garda Síochána on this matter in December 2020, as it gradually emerged that an appropriate service was not provided in some cases.

The requirement for close scrutiny and oversight of this issue by the Authority is likely to continue for some time since the work to be undertaken by the Garda Síochána is considerable. Its progress will convey the full extent and nature of the issues involved.

Mr. Penman's biography and the terms of reference for the work are included below. It is expected this phase of the review will be completed by the end of August.

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ENDS

Notes to Editor

Terms of Reference – Independent strategic advice regarding the Garda Síochána Review of the closure (including cancellation) of CAD incidents

Perform a preliminary examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure¹ (including cancellation) of Computer Aided Despatch² incidents, and assess and provide strategic advice to the Policing Authority on:

- 1) The adequacy of the scope, depth and scale of the methodology employed by the Garda Síochána in their on-going review;
- 2) The adequacy of the Garda Síochána assessment of adverse impact in terms of the potential risks arising (both immediate and long term) from the unwarranted closure (including cancellation) of incidents and whether the consequent risk assessments being performed by the Garda Síochána are consistent between the four regions. This will be based on a preliminary validation of the application of the definition of adverse impact through appropriate sampling of calls by the consultant.
- 3) The adequacy of any immediate actions taken by the Garda Síochána from a performance management perspective to resolve the quality issues already identified to date in terms of call-taking and appropriate engagement with the public;
- 4) The adequacy of the actions taken to address the failure to deliver a service to those victims of crime whose incidents were inappropriately closed or cancelled (unwarranted cancellation) to ensure public confidence in the CAD 999 service provided;
- 5) The approach and timescale for:
 - a) completion of the Garda Síochána review of the remaining Emergency and Priority 1 incidents; and
 - b) what strategy might be feasible for assurance about the Priority 2, and 3 incidents;
- 6) proposed options for the next phase of further external independent oversight by the Authority; and
- 7) the lessons emerging for the Garda Síochána from the closure / cancellation of incidents.

The expected timeframe for completion of this preliminary exercise is **30 August 2021**

¹ The invalid or incorrect closure of CAD incidents is a serious matter because it can prevent a caller from receiving an appropriate service at that time and it effectively prevents both the proper recording of non-crime incidents and further mandatory steps in the investigation of crimes

² The source of Computer Aided Despatch (CAD) incidents are from 999 calls, calls to Garda Stations or referrals from other emergency services

Bio: Mr. Derek Penman

Derek Penman is a former Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland (HMCICS) – a position he held for over 4 years – and a former Chief Constable within the United Kingdom with over 34 years policing experience. He now works as an independent consultant and senior international policing advisor. In his role as HMCICS, Mr Penman led and published over 30 expert reviews including a comprehensive independent assurance review of Police Scotland’s Contact, Command and Control Centres, (which included Computer Aided Despatch), following a critical service failure in 2015. Mr Penman is experienced in: development and implementation of inspection frameworks; undertaking comprehensive capability assessments of national policing institutions; and, reviewing EU and other internationally funded police reform programmes. He has successfully delivered and reviewed major organisational change.

Mr Penman is currently an honorary Professor with the University of Dundee and Chair of the International Advisory Committee of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research, promoting research and collaboration to inform policy and practice.