

# Independent Report for the Policing Authority

Review of An Garda Síochána's implementation of the recommendations of September 2022 report by Mr. Derek Penman to the Policing Authority on the Computer Aided Dispatch system and improvements to call handling arrangements.

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## Background

This report provides the Policing Authority (Authority) with an update on the progress of recommendations made in both the *Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of An Garda Síochána review of the closure, (including cancellation) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents*<sup>1</sup> published in November 2021 and the *Final Report*<sup>2</sup> published in September 2022. These reports were commissioned by the Authority, and examined An Garda Síochána's response to reviewing cancelled and other Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) incidents, victim engagement and implementing technical, procedural and behavioural mitigations.

Both reports highlighted a total of 36 key findings and made 16 recommendations to An Garda Síochána and the Policing Authority to drive improvements in call handling and mitigate risk.

An update report on additional call listening<sup>3</sup> was also published in June 2023.

## Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for this review were produced by the Authority to progress its ongoing oversight of An Garda Síochána and directed an evidence-based review to assess and make observations in relation to the status of implementation of the 16 recommendations in the Final Report, including:

- To examine the degree to which the recommendations arising from the review of the closure, (including cancellation) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents have been implemented and their efficacy, and
- To provide a report to the Authority outlining observations and findings of the evidence-based review and where required provide further recommendations therein.

The Review Team was led by Mr Derek Penman, supported by members of the Authority staff<sup>4</sup>. The review methodology is reproduced at Appendix 1. The Fieldwork was completed between 13 to 17 November and included visits to the NWRCC (Galway), SRCC (Cork), ERCC (Waterford) and DMRCC (Dublin). Visits were also made to local Garda stations at Oranmore, Mayfield, Kilkenny and Crumlin.

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<sup>1</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\]](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Final Report on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[September 2022\]](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Update on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents: Additional Call Listening \[June 2023\]](#)

<sup>4</sup> Derek Penman is an independent consultant in policing and former Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland. He was supported by Clare Kelly and James Kiernan, both senior managers in the Policing Authority.

## Access to Data

The terms of reference specified the need for the Review Team to listen into live calls being received at each of the Regional Control Centres (RCC) and to listen to call recordings linked to An Garda Síochána call handling quality audit processes. The Review Team also requested to observe Garda Síochána members and staff enter and retrieve data from live operational systems to offer assurance over the functionality of new technology. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the personal data contained in live calls, recordings and operational systems, the Terms of Reference stipulated that the Authority and An Garda Síochána should jointly agree safeguards and agree *Prescriptive Guidance on the processing of Personal Data and Special Category Data*.

An Garda Síochána considered that this review was substantially different in aims and scope from the original review, as it sought to benchmark An Garda Síochána's implementation of the recommendations from the original examination by Mr. Penman. An Garda Síochána determined that additional legal advice was required to ensure it fulfilled all of the obligations placed on data controllers by the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 in respect of safeguarding the rights of data subjects. As a consequence of this legal advice, An Garda Síochána did not agree the necessary prescriptive guidance with the Authority in advance of the fieldwork.

In practical terms, this prevented the Review Team from accessing the live Regional Control Rooms to observe staff taking calls from the public and using new technologies including GardaSAFE. In addition, the Review Team was unable to access call recordings, which prevented the Review Team from listening to historic calls selected by Regional Control Centre (RCC) supervisors as part of the new quality assurance processes. Mr Penman and the Authority had previously accessed historic call recordings in May 2022 under prescriptive guidance<sup>5</sup> and again in January 2023 and May 2023 under an addendum to this guidance. The legal position taken by An Garda Síochána in relation to accessing historic call recordings for this review therefore appears retrograde and risk-adverse.

This legal position placed restrictions on the Review Team to carry out their duties as set out in the agreed terms of reference, and limited their ability to provide definitive assurance to the Authority in terms of the progress made by An Garda Síochána against the Report recommendations. Notably, it prevented the Review Team from seeing many of the significant improvements in call handling that had been implemented by An Garda Síochána and seems a missed opportunity to provide reassurance to communities across Ireland on the progress made in implementing the report recommendations.

Transparency and independent scrutiny are essential for building public trust and confidence in policing, and the Final Report<sup>6</sup> made it explicit that the Authority and An Garda Síochána should agree an approach to call handling assurance, which is underpinned by regular internal and external call listening and incident audits. This recommended both organisations agreeing a framework to facilitate independent call listening and incident audits by the Policing Authority until the creation of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA). Having made this recommendation in September 2022, it is disappointing that it has not progressed.

The Final Report also recommended<sup>7</sup> that the Department of Justice include sufficient powers within the enabling legislation and functions of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA), to support call handling assurance. This should ensure access for staff and agents of the PCSA to live calls

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<sup>5</sup> [Prescriptive Guidance on the processing of Personal Data and Special Category Data \(May 22\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> Recommendation 15

<sup>7</sup> Recommendation 16

and call recordings and to relevant Garda Síochána information systems. Given the legal position taken by An Garda Síochána to this Review, it is essential that this enabling legislation is sufficiently robust and unequivocal to facilitate independent scrutiny by the PCSA.

## Assessment of Recommendations

This report provides a summary of the evidence obtained by the Review Team during the Review. This was drawn from the information requests, interviews with An Garda Síochána leadership, supervisors, members and staff, and included observations from visits to all four RCC and local Garda stations. Each recommendation was assessed against the available evidence.

**Of the sixteen recommendations made, 12 have been assessed as implemented, two assessed as partially implemented and two assessed as not implemented.**

A *Summary List of Recommendations & Assessment of Progress* has been provided at the end of this report.

### Recommendation 1

Key findings from the Interim Update Report<sup>8</sup> highlighted that policies and procedures were in place that should have identified unwarranted cancelled incidents. This suggested that supervision, quality assurance checks and procedures for the performance management of individuals within Regional Control Rooms and local stations were either not followed or not effective. This presented a serious ongoing risk to the Garda Síochána, and led to the following recommendation:

***#1 - An Garda Síochána should undertake an urgent review to ensure that effective supervision, quality assurance and robust performance management processes for individual members are in place for all regional control rooms and local call taking and dispatch arrangements.***

### Policy and Procedures

An Garda Síochána reviewed the *National Control Room policy and procedures (HQ Directive No: 42/2020)* to incorporate lessons learned from the CAD review and enable CAD2 and the new GardaSAFE system. The review identified (i) a lack of procedures to reconcile calls received at local stations with CAD incidents; (ii) a lack of clear and comprehensive roles and responsibilities for RCC personnel; (iii) insufficient guidance in respect of the cancellation, or resolution without deployment

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<sup>8</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 18 &19\)](#)

of calls for service; and (iv) the need for new policies and procedures to ensure effective quality assurance and performance management.

This led to the creation of the new *Call Handling and Incident Response policy and procedures*, which were rolled out in draft to each RCC in support of the CAD implementation. This approach provided helpful opportunities to test and refine the policies and procedures during the national rollout of CAD2 and GardaSAFE. The policies and procedures will be finalised early in Q1 of 2024.

The procedures are comprehensive, and they address policy gaps. They define roles and responsibilities, critical procedures and compliance. They include the THRIVE Risk Assessment Tool<sup>9</sup>, which supplements the Garda Decision Making Model (GDMM) and assist in identifying the appropriate prioritisation for calls based on the needs of the caller and the circumstances of the incident.

The new policy and procedures significantly strengthen supervision within all four RCCs, with detailed processes for call handling, managing duplicate incidents, closing incidents, managing intelligence and monitoring high-risk DVSA (Domestic Violence Sexual Assault) calls. Importantly, the new procedures provide clear instructions on what incidents must be escalated to supervisors. These processes are supported by GardaSAFE, with automated safeguards to ensure compliance, and only permits members of sergeant rank or above to resolve the low numbers of incidents currently closed without deployment<sup>10</sup>. This is based on system permissions and prevents call takers or dispatchers from inappropriately closing incidents.

The Review Team requested details of all escalated incidents between April and September 2023 from NWRCC (Galway), SRCC (Cork) and ERCC (Waterford), where GardaSAFE was being used. This highlighted that over 10,000 incidents are being escalated and scrutinised by supervisors each month across these three locations. It is likely that DMRCC will generate a similar volume of escalated calls now that GardaSAFE is operational. The escalated incidents included those where there is the greatest potential threat, harm or vulnerability<sup>11</sup>, and demonstrates active supervision within the RCC. Over 3,300 escalated incidents were marked as "Resolution without Deployment" in September 2023, which demonstrates the system functionality where only a supervisor can close such incidents.

Due to restrictions imposed by An Garda Síochána on accessing live data, the Review Team was unable to observe supervisors working within the live environment and using GardaSAFE to manage escalated incidents.

Another key technology that supports effective supervision is the ability to access call recordings linked to GardaSAFE incidents in the live environment.

An Garda Síochána has also introduced Kibana, a new management dashboard to support managers to assess call handling and incident response performance. This system extracts data from GardaSAFE and offers a powerful visual, search and analytical tool that monitors key performance indicators in real-time.

## **Supervision & Staffing Levels**

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<sup>9</sup> THRIVE Risk Assessment Tool – Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement.

<sup>10</sup> In the 90 days prior to 8<sup>th</sup> September there were a total of 804 incidents (0.1%) from a total of 776,027 incidents recorded on GardaSAFE in Galway, Cork and Waterford RCCs resolved without deployment.

<sup>11</sup> Analysis of Escalated Incidents included a range of call types, including DVSA, welfare, mental health, firearms, weapons, threats, intelligence, missing persons and hang-up calls.

It was recommended that An Garda Síochána conduct a review of the effectiveness and levels of supervision within the RCC. A comprehensive review of human resources was completed for each RCC to identify the supervision and staffing requirements needed to (i) sustain the operation of CAD1 and (ii) support delivery of the CAD2 Project and implementation of GardaSAFE. This resulted in a detailed staffing model and business case in May 2022, informed in part by analysis of historic call volumes by An Garda Síochána Analysis Service (GSAS).

The model established a national baseline of one Superintendent, seven inspectors, 22 supervisors and 255 dispatchers/call takers to sustain the national operation of CAD1. However, in May 2022, An Garda Síochána had a shortfall of 39 dispatchers/call takers against this baseline, although an additional five supervisors were in place to strengthen supervision in response to this recommendation.

The staffing model needed to support delivery of CAD2 and meet the Final Report recommendations was set at one Superintendent, seven inspectors, 36 supervisors and 296 dispatchers/call takers. A request for an additional 79 Garda staff positions for CAD was approved by the Policing Authority in November 2022, subject to a condition that the recruitment of 20 of the Clerical Officers would result in 20 Garda members returning to frontline duties and that all related costs would be met from within the existing pay allocation of Vote 20.

The phased national roll-out of CAD2 was delivered in NWRCC (Galway) in March 2023, SRCC (Cork) in May 2023, ERCC (Waterford) in June 2023 and culminated with the DMRCC (Dublin) in November 2023. This required an incremental build of staff at these locations, as well as training and the technology changeover including GardaSAFE. The national roll-out supported geographic divisional changes driven by the new Garda Síochána operating model, resulting in some redistribution of call taking demand and dispatching across the RCC.

Following an increase in calls from the implementation of new call transfer procedures<sup>12</sup> from local Garda stations (see Recommendation 2), An Garda Síochána reassessed its staffing model and identified that an additional 40 call takers/dispatchers were needed to support the final national roll-out of CAD2 and GardaSAFE by Q4 2023.

The current national CAD2 staffing model comprises one Superintendent, 10 inspectors, 39 supervisors, (including three executive officers) and 310 call takers/dispatchers. On 7 December 2023, An Garda Síochána had a shortfall of 13 dispatchers/call takers against the CAD2 national staffing model. Start dates had been agreed for 14 additional new staff. There were vacancies for three sergeants within the DMRCC at that time, which it was anticipated would be filled during December 2023.

The issue of additional training requirements was raised by staff during the focus groups. Call-takers receive three days training on GardaSAFE, which is sufficient to begin operating the live system. All Garda personnel complete mandatory Domestic Abuse Online Training, while all new Garda Staff must complete an online induction course. This training contains seven modules, one of which covers the Garda Code of Ethics and communications skills.

An understanding of policies, procedures and terminology is considered essential for all call takers. Some staff indicated that this aspect of the training appears to be lacking for some new staff. Given staff turnover and issues around the recruitment of call takers, some new staff are starting work in

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<sup>12</sup> Initial estimates by An Garda Síochána were that call volumes within the RCC would increase by 20% as a consequence of local station call transfers.

control rooms prior to receiving their GardaSAFE training. These staff are not answering calls but are shadowing experienced call takers. Staff from all RCCs identified the need for additional training in dealing with challenging calls, such as calls from those contemplating suicide. Garda personnel also identified a need for more emphasis on customer service training.

An Garda Síochána has invested heavily in the national roll-out of CAD2 and provided evidence that staffing levels were modelled against available call data, albeit with caveats over the limitations of the legacy CAD1 and Avaya CMS systems. However, GardaSAFE and the Kibana dashboard should provide the Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group with a comprehensive suite of call handling performance data on an ongoing basis and keep supervision and staffing levels within each RCC under review. This is an area over which the Policing Authority should provide ongoing scrutiny.

The Garda Síochána Senior Leadership Team has worked hard in building capacity across each of the RCCs and in recruiting staff against a backdrop of logistical challenges and competing demands. The recruitment of additional inspectors and sergeants strengthens supervision at these locations. The agreed CAD2 staffing model of two sergeants per-shift in the NWRCC (Galway), SRCC (Cork) and ERCC (Waterford) and three sergeants per shifts in DMRCC (Dublin) increases operational resilience and creates essential new capacity for supervision and quality assurance. However, for this to be effective, An Garda Síochána should treat this as a *minimum* supervision level when rostering staff, and should monitor ongoing compliance accordingly.

Information requested from An Garda Síochána shows that there were numerous occasions between 1 April and 20 September 2023, when only one supervisor was on duty per shift at each RCC. This is potentially of greatest concern in the DMRCC (Dublin), which in addition to providing a national oversight function, currently handles approximately 45% of all calls received by An Garda Síochána and has the greatest number of staff.

Garda members and staff within NWRCC (Galway), SRCC (Cork) and ERCC (Waterford) welcomed the additional supervisors and commented that two supervisors per unit was now generally becoming the norm, with some backfilling of absences on overtime. However, supervisors, members and staff at the DMRCC (Dublin) expressed concerns over the current ability to provide three trained supervisors per shift.

An Garda Síochána has medium-term plans to strengthen the senior leadership across the RCC with the creation of three new Superintendent posts at NWRCC (Galway), SRCC (Cork) and ERCC (Waterford). This will require an increase in the approved number of Superintendents in the organisation and will have to be approved by the Department of Justice and the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan and Reform (DPENDPR). These plans are to be welcomed and An Garda Síochána may at some point wish to consider the advantages of bringing all four RCCs and their personnel under a single national Contact, Command and Control Division, potentially with a single Chief Superintendent in command.

### **Quality Assurance**

An Garda Síochána has reviewed the *National Control Room policy and procedures (HQ Directive No: 42/2020)* and introduced a new *Governance, Accountability and Performance Management Framework*. This comprehensive document provides more realistic, proportionate and accountable quality assurance and dip sampling processes within the RCCs and is designed to operate on a tiered basis to ensure absolute clarity of the requirements of all members in this area.



An Garda Síochána has now decided that this framework will be incorporated into the final version of the *Call Handling and Incident Response Procedures* to ensure absolute clarity for all members. This will involve further consultation with representative bodies and approval of the Senior Leadership Team. It is anticipated that the policies and procedures will be finalised and published early in Q1 of 2024.

### **Tier One: Supervisor – Staff Daily Dip Sampling**

This involves daily operational supervision and quality assurance at each RCC. Where two supervisors are on duty their roles are aligned to (i) service delivery and (ii) dip sample performance.

Service delivery performance relates to operation of the RCC and involves the live monitoring of calls for service, ensuring data quality standards and policing response is achieved. This supervisor will ensure that escalated incidents are quality managed and where required, ensure a strong rationale is recorded on GardaSAFE. Monitoring will be undertaken through the review of Contact Records and incidents, assessment of escalated incidents which are mandatory for a sergeant to review; and evaluation of RCC governance and performance data available from Kibana dashboard.

Dip sample performance is the responsibility of the second supervisor who will identify and listen to the playback of at least one call for each call operative within four tours of duty, reviewing it against the associated GardaSAFE incident. It also requires the supervisor to identify and monitor a dispatch group for each dispatcher for a minimum 10-minute period within the four tours of duty, again reviewing it against the associated GardaSAFE incident. In addition, this supervisor will review 10% of all Contact Records entered during the tour of duty to ensure that the record has been categorised and closed correctly.

Tier One requires the supervisor to engage with members of staff subject to dip sampling, with confidential one-to-one meetings to provide feedback over individual performance. Where a performance or service issue is identified, the supervisor must escalate this to the RCC Manager. The new arrangements provide for Staff Corrective Action Plans to manage individual performance improvement over a three-month period. In addition, supervisors are asked to ensure that best practice or lessons learned are identified, documented and submitted to Regional Control Centre Management for consideration.

Due to restrictions imposed by An Garda Síochána, the Review Team was unable to observe supervisors working within the live environment and using new technologies to support the Tier One quality assurance processes. The Review Team was also unable to listen to live or recorded calls, which prevented an independent assessment to be made on the quality of dip sampling or accuracy of the records linked to GardaSAFE incidents.

The Review Team requested and received documentation from all four RCCs, which evidenced the Tier One processes. These processes are relatively new, and supervisors have limited experience in their use. There was no formal training for supervisors in respect of the quality assurance processes and from the sample documents provided, it seems that supervisory comments are mainly generic. This has been identified by RCC managers and therefore supervisors have been requested to record more specific feedback on the forms.

Most of the Garda members and staff at the RCC focus groups confirmed that they had been subject to at least one round of dip sampling. All staff welcomed the process and the opportunity to receive feedback on their performance. However, supervisors and staff at all locations identified the lack of any breakout areas or private space to receive feedback.

Whilst there may previously have been an over-emphasis on finding fault and applying discipline when quality issues have arisen, there was a growing perception amongst RCC staff that the current RCC leadership and management were creating a more positive culture, using the quality assurance process to develop and support call takers and dispatchers in their roles. This changing culture is to be encouraged across all centres and will be essential in creating the environment needed for openness, transparency and continuous improvement.

### **Tier Two: Regional Control Centre Management, Monthly Dip Sampling**

An Garda Síochána identified that the previous policy was silent in requiring the RCC Manager to review incidents. The new arrangements introduced a monthly dip sampling process for the RCC managers<sup>13</sup>. This requires sampling by RCC management on incidents which occurred in the preceding month, informed by the Kibana Dashboards. This incorporates both (i) Supervisor Dip Sampling; and (ii) review of specific area as identified by the Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group. Each process has been documented in detail, and the RCC managers are supported by clerical support in the administration office.

Supervisor Dip Sampling requires RCC management to review 25% of Supervisor Dip Sampling from Tier One, plus an additional percentage determined by the Regional Control Centre. The associated recording and GardaSAFE incidents will be reviewed and the output from the dip sampling documented. Where RCC management identify poor performance or non-compliance with policy and procedure, they will engage with staff and the supervisor documenting the process.

The review of Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group Selection is where a specific topic is identified for review and RCC management conduct a critical analysis of data relative to their region. This requires a sample of 25% to be selected for review and includes a review of GardaSAFE and audio data as part of each call reviewed. Where relevant, corrective action will be implemented and sampled again in the following period to confirm improvement. Lessons learned and best practice will be documented and form part of the RCC reporting process. There have been no reviews prompted by Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group Selection, although the first review of INTEL incidents will be completed in December 2023. All RCC managers interviewed by the Review Team were clear in their quality assurance responsibilities and supportive of the new arrangements.

### **Tier Three: Regional Control Centre Management, Supervisor Review**

This process seeks to provide quality assurance over supervisory performance and requires RCC Management to review a minimum of two incident records resolved without deployment by each RCC supervisor, and a minimum of two incident records escalated/restricted by each RCC supervisor. All actions, decisions and rationale recorded by supervisors will be reviewed in line with customer service standards, policy and procedures. The associated GardaSAFE incidents and audio will also be reviewed, downloaded and documented. Following review, the RCC Manager will complete an evaluation sheet identifying corrective action or good performance.

Tier Three requires that the RCC Management provide feedback to each supervisor through confidential one-to-one meetings, with all discussions and outcomes documented. The new

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<sup>13</sup> RCC managers are defined in the policy as the person responsible for managing the RCC and for ensuring compliance with this organisational policy and procedures within the RCC. This is a superintendent in the DMRCC and inspectors in Galway, Cork and Waterford.

arrangements also provide for Staff Corrective Action Plans to manage individual performance improvement for supervisors over a three-month period.

Again, due to the restrictions imposed by An Garda Síochána, the Review Team was unable to offer an independent assessment on the quality of the Tier Two or Tier Three dip sampling process or accuracy of the records linked to GardaSAFE incidents. However, the Review Team requested and received documentation which evidenced these processes. These processes are relatively new and therefore RCC managers have had limited opportunity to complete supervisory dip sampling. This will improve as the new processes are embedded across the RCC. All RCC managers interviewed by the Review Team were clear in their quality assurance responsibilities and supportive of the new arrangements.

### **Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group**

The new arrangements create a national co-ordination role for the Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group. This group is chaired by the DMRCC Superintendent and includes all RCC managers. It is responsible for governance and accountability procedures to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and organisational objectives. This includes compliance with Health and Safety, and the identification and management of risk. A central risk register is maintained and reviewed regularly.

The group provides an important role in examining the outcomes of performance assurance measures. This includes the results of all reviews and inspections to ensure identified issues are addressed appropriately on a national basis, and that lessons learned, and good practice are captured, reviewed and disseminated. The group also has responsibility for reviewing the training of staff involved in call handling and incident response.

Crucially, the group has responsibility for reviewing the number of operatives and supervisors attached to each RCC, and ensuring that there is sufficient capacity, including supervisory capacity, to maintain service standards, governance, accountability and performance management.

The Review Team requested and received documentation which evidenced these additional processes.

### **Performance Assurance**

An Garda Síochána identified a need for additional measures to supplement RCC supervision and assurance. The new arrangements provide for assurance processes to be carried out internally by the RCC Management, as well as other external oversight measures:

- RCC Management are required to undertake additional performance assurance and governance processes to promote confidence in the emergency call taking and dispatch service. This involves the review of incidents associated with resolution without deployment, intelligence, information, victim's categories or other identified categories, and requires sampling a percentage of incidents and associated audios.
- Internal inspection and reviews are conducted across An Garda Síochána in accordance with HQ Directive No: 59/2014, and RCC Management are required as part of their quarterly inspection and review process, to document their findings from the tiered quality assurance processes and forward to their Senior Manager, Superintendent Performance Assurance and Garda Professional Standards for external review.
- RCC Managers are also required to include performance review on the agenda of their RCC monthly performance assurance meetings (PAF) and monthly Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group meetings.

- The Review Team requested and received documentation which evidenced these additional processes, including the operation of the RCC PAF meetings.

### **Internal Inspection**

An additional layer of oversight is provided by the Garda Internal Audit Unit and the Garda Professional Standards Unit. External oversight is undertaken by the Superintendent with responsibility for the Performance Assurance Functional Area in their Division as part of their Inspections and Reviews process. This Superintendent is functionally separate from the RCC and is required to conduct a quarterly inspection and audit. The audit samples are independent of those selected by the Regional Control Centre and include GardaSAFE audio and data. The Superintendent may also choose to sample a specific category of calls, (e.g., DVSA or calls resolved without deployment). The review of the data and audio is assessed against customer service and organisational policy and procedures. Where it is identified that there has been a failure in service standards, adverse impact to victims / customers or issues with performance standards, the Superintendent will escalate the matter to the Regional Chief Superintendent and where required, refer the matter to the local Divisional Officer for victim engagement.

Within two weeks of the completion, the Superintendent, Performance Assurance will forward the findings of the review to Regional Chief Superintendent. Following consideration and review of findings, the Regional Chief Superintendent may make further recommendations. Within two weeks, the Regional Chief Superintendent will provide an electronic form of the Inspection and Review Report to the Chief Superintendent, Garda Professional Standards Unit, the Head of Internal Audit and the Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group.

The Review Team requested and received documentation which evidenced the quarterly audits by the Superintendent, Performance Assurance in all four regions. There have been four audits in the NWRCC (Galway), and one in each of the other regions. These include substantial audits, which are detailed, well evidenced and have been conducted professionally by Garda staff who are independent from the RCC. These staff listened to a sample of call recordings, TETRA radio communications and linked CAD incidents. The audit reports contain findings and where necessary, recommendations for improvement. The Review Team met with one of the Superintendents responsible for these audits and were impressed by the level of professionalism, objectivity and focus on continuous improvement.

Having considered the evidence, it is clear that An Garda Síochána has made significant progress in terms of implementing the new policy and procedures, increased staffing levels, improved supervision and robust processes for quality assurance and governance. However, in terms of the current staffing and supervision levels, these need to be fully in place and further reviewed against the call handling demands once GardaSAFE is fully embedded.

In terms of the quality assurance and governance processes, these have only recently been introduced and need to be fully embedded and refined. An Garda Síochána will want to review the suite of quality assurance process and ensure that they are both achievable and sustainable within the current staffing model and demand. The requirement remains for independent access to the live control room environment to listen to calls and observe staff using the new technologies in order to provide the full level of independent assurance required by the Policing Authority.

**This recommendation is assessed as PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED**

## Recommendations 2 & 12

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>14</sup> was that the absence of call recording at local stations is a serious vulnerability. This is made more acute by the lack of sufficient technical or procedural safeguards to ensure that all incidents are recorded and appropriately managed. This led to the following two recommendations:

***#2 - An Garda Síochána should review its approach to recording calls for service at local stations and develop a call recording strategy that meets operational needs and provides safeguards to the public.***

***#12 - An Garda Síochána should consider whether the current model of call taking within regional control rooms and local stations is sustainable. This will include consideration of whether the potential to reduce risk, increase operational effectiveness and improve customer service through increased centralisation can offset the disadvantages of reduced local access and visibility.***

Notwithstanding the risks associated with the absence of call recording, An Garda Síochána identified a critical dependency between call taking at local stations and the national roll out of GardaSAFE. Due to financial, infrastructure and significant training costs, An Garda Síochána decided that the GardaSAFE application would not be installed in local stations. Given the decommissioning of the legacy CAD system, this meant that calls for service received at local stations could no longer be recorded or dispatched directly by local officers. Garda members and staff at local stations now have read-only access through a web version of GardaSAFE, providing visibility over live incidents in their areas. GardaSAFE integration also enables access from the impressive new state of the art Mobility App being rolled out to operational Garda Members, including a responder view of incidents and the ability to make themselves available at the scene.

The inability for local staff to dispatch and manage calls directly on GardaSAFE means that all live or unallocated incidents are managed entirely in the RCC by a dispatcher. Whilst this works optimally for priority incidents that require a Garda response, there is a risk that more routine incidents can remain on the GardaSAFE stack for many days without being resolved. These incidents are visible to local policing supervisors through the web version of GardaSAFE. It is suggested that more ownership could be taken by some supervisors to resolve these calls locally by telephoning callers, allocating community policing resources or otherwise disposing of the incidents without deployment. This would require some engagement between the local supervisor and the RCC to update and close the incident in accordance with current policies and procedures.

An Garda Síochána introduced an initial call transfer pilot project from local stations in January 2022, which involved one division in each region. This enabled the processes, training materials and governance to be refined and has led to the development of national *Call Transfer Procedures* in June

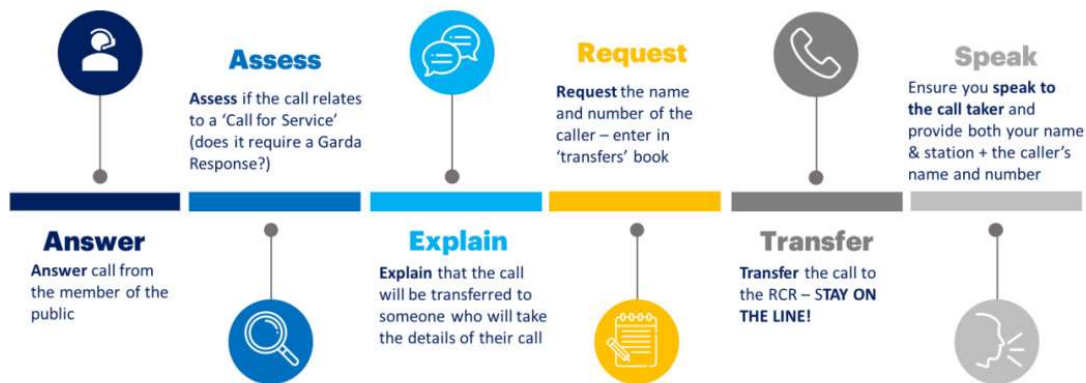
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<sup>14</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 20\)](#)

2022. The Call Transfer procedures are now fully implemented and operational nationwide across An Garda Síochána.

The call transfer solution requires all calls for service received at local stations that need a Garda response to be transferred to the relevant RCC. The local Garda member or Public Officer has an initial conversation with the caller to obtain their contact details and quickly assess the nature of the call. If they determine that Garda members need to be dispatched, they will transfer the live call to a call taker within the RCC, explaining to the caller that their call is being transferred. The RCC call taker then speaks directly to the caller, raises a contact card, assesses vulnerability and creates an incident on GardaSAFE. This allows for the call to be prioritised and dispatched in the same way as all emergency calls received at the RCC. Although the call received at the local station is not recorded, the subsequent transferred call to the RCC is recorded in its entirety and linked to the relevant GardaSAFE incident in the same manner as an emergency call. This makes the call recording instantly available for playback purposes and to support quality assurance. The call transfer process for the local Garda member or Public Officer is illustrated below:

Figure 1 – Call Transfer Process<sup>15</sup>



A paper-based Transfer Book is kept at local stations and used to manually log every call transferred from the local station. This contains details of the caller including their contact telephone number, which provides an additional safeguard to re-establish contact with the caller if the transferred call is dropped. For stations that are unable to transfer calls for service or where a member of the public attends in person at a station, requiring a call for service, incident details are captured on a GardaSAFE Incident Report Form by the local Garda member or Public Officer, who then calls the RCC themselves to pass on the details.

There is an option for the Garda stations serviced by the DMRCC to use an eForm to pass incident details to the RCC. This forwards an email to a dedicated DMRCC inbox that is monitored on a 24/7 basis. Garda Personnel using this form must also ensure that any call requiring an immediate response is communicated to the DMRCC via the Divisional TETRA radio channel.

An Garda Síochána recognised the importance of clear and regular communication to the management and Garda members and staff at local divisions during the call transfer roll out, and are to be commended for their approach. Comprehensive briefing packs for managers and members were produced, which in addition to detailing the processes, explained why the transfer process was needed and the alternatives that had been considered. These briefings highlighted the inability to record calls at a station level, acknowledged the risks identified in the Interim Update Report and

<sup>15</sup> Graphic reproduced from An Garda Síochána Call Transfer Procedures Briefing Pack



emphasised the value of recordings for emergency playback and evidence. They clearly communicated the intended benefits of the RCC and GardaSAFE, focusing on a quality service to the public, increased consistency from specialist call takers, and improved service from dispatchers. The need to retain community contact was recognised, and common misunderstandings or issues from the call transfer pilot were also covered. The briefing documents referenced the importance of obtaining call transfer data to enable An Garda Síochána to gauge the resourcing requirements in the RCC to take all calls for service, as well as inform new processes at station level.

In addition to briefing packs, the roll out was supported by online training, internal communications and workshops for all Divisions in each Region. A briefing tracker was maintained to record the dates and locations of all management briefings and workshops, and the completion rates and trends for online training were closely monitored.

During the fieldwork visits, the Review Team met with senior managers, supervisors and Garda members at local stations and observed the call transfer processes. Staff confirmed that they had been briefed and had either completed or were planning to complete the online training. They were confident in working with the new process. RCC staff who participated in the focus groups were also confident in working with the new process. Both local and RCC staff highlighted that some callers could be frustrated in having to speak to both a local officer and then a call taker and being asked to repeat the same information. There was also some feedback from RCC staff that some local calls were being transferred unnecessarily, as they did not merit a call for service. These and other issues are mitigated to some extent through regular engagement between the nominated local inspector acting as CAD Liaison Officer and the RCC Management, Strategic Transformation Office and the CAD2 Project Team.

An Garda Síochána acknowledges that the Call Transfer Procedures are a short to medium term solution to the vulnerability around no call recording at local stations. An option for the longer-term is the introduction of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephony system. This would mean that a call to a local Garda station would be automatically connected to an automated IVR system, and the caller would be asked to select from a menu of options to route their call. Calls for service would be routed directly to a call taker at the RCC and remove the overhead and potential duplication of the current call transfer procedures. The system would likely provide An Garda Síochána with the ability to record calls to local stations from the commencement of the call. The IVR Telephony Project is currently at the scoping stage.

Although there is a residual risk that calls received at local stations are not recorded or actioned, the call transfer processes, briefings and training of officers provides technical and procedural safeguards. An Garda Síochána has fully embraced these recommendations and implemented a national solution that integrates well with GardaSAFE and the improvements in call handling.

**Both recommendations 2 and 12 are assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

### Recommendation 3

It was noted in the Interim Update Report<sup>16</sup> that the CAD Review created a substantial dataset and offered valuable insights into the effectiveness of critical processes. This includes insights into the protocols and responses provided to victims of very high risk DVSA incidents. Given the level of risk in managing these incidents, the following recommendation was made:

**#3 - An Garda Síochána should review the very high-risk Domestic Violence Sexual Assault (DVSA) incidents included in the CAD Review and assess the effectiveness of current protocols and the consistency of response.**

The Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) has conducted a review of the very high risk DVSA incidents which were identified during the CAD Review. Experienced staff from the Domestic Abuse Intervention & Policy Unit (DAIPU) reviewed each call and identified six incidents warranting further contact with the caller due to an apparent lack of engagement on the date of the call, or limited information recorded on the original CAD incident. Victim engagement took place in each of these incidents, which confirmed that the original call had been dealt with and that there had been no adverse impact or detriment to the victim.

The new *Call Handling and Incident Response policy and procedures*, have been updated and specifically include very high risk DVSA calls. New processes, workflows and decision support have all been added to the GardaSAFE application. There is now a requirement for dispatchers to alert a supervisor for each very high risk DVSA call, who will then monitor the incident until it has been closed. The new system provides views of previous caller history, (both telephone number and location) and helps call takers identify vulnerable callers. A risk assessment proforma for Domestic Violence incidents, which was developed by the Garda National Protective Services Unit Bureau (GNPSB), is also included in GardaSAFE.

In addition to the new call handling procedures, the DAIPU is currently updating its national *Domestic Abuse Intervention Policy*. The Garda Síochána Inspectorate is also concluding its inspection into the effectiveness and efficiency of the Garda Síochána's response to domestic abuse.

Although the Review Team was unable to observe staff using the GardaSAFE application in the live RCC environment, the Review Team was given a demonstration of the training system and the technical integration to manage very high risk DVSA calls. RCC staff who participated in focus groups were well aware of the procedures and confident in their application. The Review Team was briefed by the Head of GNPSUB in relation to the six incidents that were identified as part of the CAD review.

An Garda Síochána has fully embraced this recommendation and has firmly embedded its national processes for handling very high risk DVSA calls into the CAD2 roll out and GardaSAFE.

**This recommendation is assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

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<sup>16</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 21\)](#)



## Recommendation 4

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>17</sup> was that there was limited early engagement with individual members and staff to identify CAD vulnerabilities, workarounds or understand the drivers for cancelling incidents. This led to the following recommendation:

***#4 - An Garda Síochána should engage with members involved in call taking and dispatching within all regional control rooms and at a station level, to identify potential CAD vulnerabilities, workarounds, and the drivers for cancelling incidents. This should emphasise the positive behaviours expected from all members and reinforce the importance of providing a quality response to the public.***

In terms of identifying and addressing CAD vulnerabilities, the GardaSAFE Project Team examined the key findings and recommendations of the Interim Update Report and documented how these have been addressed in the new GardaSAFE application through new functionality, improved data validation and automated workflow. This detailed response has been reproduced at Appendix 2 for information.

An Garda Síochána has undertaken considerable engagement with Garda supervisors, members and staff involved in call taking and dispatch. The GardaSAFE Project Team visited each RCC to engage with personnel and identify any vulnerabilities with the new system, and personnel from across each of the RCCs formed part of a working group to review the existing policy framework. The Project Team also developed an online survey to gauge staff perceptions of the system (positives and negatives) and received 39 responses. This highlighted several areas including the use of GardaSAFE proformas, integration with THRIVE, limitations with automated PULSE searching, issues with mapping and Eircodes and issues with the ring tone for call takers. These issues are being actively managed, and during the fieldwork visits, the Review Team was made aware of system updates and improvements to mapping and Eircode searching and the management escalation of the ring tone issue.

It is reassuring that the specific issues captured by the GardaSAFE Project Team are the same as those raised by Garda members and staff who participated in the fieldwork focus groups across all four RCC. These members and staff confirmed engagement with the GardaSAFE Project Team and were complimentary in terms of their responsiveness and feedback on issues.

However, as the Review Team was unable to observe staff using the GardaSAFE application in the live environment, they were unable to assess the functionality of the new technology. The live environment is particularly relevant in terms of assessing the automated PULSE searches, decision support, alerts and the use of proforma to inform vulnerability assessments.

Most members and staff confirmed that they are encouraged by RCC management and supervisors to offer feedback on their experience of using of GardaSAFE and some had taken the time to send emails, which had been forwarded to the Project Team. All members and staff were supportive of the new

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<sup>17</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 22\)](#)

GardaSAFE system and recognised the operational benefits and safeguards over the legacy CAD1 system. Apart from system and training issues which are in the process of being resolved, there were no further vulnerabilities or workarounds highlighted by RCC personnel. They also confirmed that only supervisors can close calls that are categorised as “resolution without deployment”.

Feedback from some members and staff indicated that the fallout from cancelled calls in the CAD Review has resulted in a reluctance by supervisors to close calls which are appropriate for closure, and this can result in too many open calls on the system. If this is an issue, it should be identified by RCC management as part of their quality assurance checks.

There was consensus from the members and staff who participated in the focus groups that each shift handover would benefit from a structured briefing by their supervisors. Although RCC staff are paid to facilitate a handover between shifts, this tends to be done informally on a 1-2-1 basis with the specific colleague they are relieving, but not consistently done, and is not typically done as a Unit briefing. Members and staff believe that these briefings could be used both for operational briefings and an opportunity for them to provide feedback on systems and work practices.

The Governance, Accountability and Performance Management Oversight Group has responsibility to identify and share good practice, although there may also be value in creating opportunities for visits and ongoing engagement between RCC staff to support this and promote greater national consistency in work practices.

Members and staff across each of the RCC focus groups identified some specific challenges around the volume of nuisance and vexatious calls that frequently tied up valuable call handling resources. They highlighted that a system requirement to raise a GardaSAFE call card for every call means it now takes longer to deal with these calls. These delays impact on call waiting times for genuine callers. Members and staff acknowledged that the RCC Management is aware of this issue, and there have been multi-agency interventions to tackle repeat and nuisance callers within communities, particularly where callers are experiencing mental health issues. There has also been action to identify and prosecute individuals who are deliberately wasting Garda time. One innovative example was using cybercrime legislation to deal with a nuisance caller on the basis that the sheer volume of calls amounted to a denial of service that adversely impacted on the availability of the emergency services.

Staff also commented on an increasing level of verbal abuse from members of the public phoning into the RCC. Control room staff and members accept they are often dealing with vulnerable callers at a time of crisis and generally have a high level of acceptance and tolerance for abusive calls. However, these calls can have a negative impact on staff over time and there is a level of abuse from callers that should not be tolerated by An Garda Síochána, particularly where calls contain threatening or sexual comments directed to the call taker. It is hoped that the new supervision and quality assurance arrangements will provide increased opportunities for RCC managers to listen to calls, assess the levels of abuse directed towards staff and consider whether there is a need for a national approach to tackle this issue.

In summary, An Garda Síochána has fully embraced this recommendation to engage with members and staff involved in call taking and dispatching within all Regional Control Rooms. There is substantial evidence of staff engagement and communication with staff in both RCCs and Garda stations during the GardaSAFE rollout and call transfer procedures. (See recommendation 2).

**This recommendation is assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

## Recommendations 5, 6 and 14

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>18</sup> recognised that the CAD Review process was a reasonable and proportionate response to the challenges identified from the cancellation of CAD incidents, but given the high volume of incidents, any further review should be proportionate and remain focused on vulnerability. It was emphasised that the financial and opportunity costs for any further reviews should be commensurate with the risks being mitigated. This led to the following two recommendations:

***#5 - An Garda Síochána should consider a proportionate approach to assess the extent to which cancelled incidents with the potential for harm and vulnerability might still exist in Priority 1. It should proceed with its plan to include relevant key word searching across the CAD data store and apply some statistically significant random sampling of incidents to inform wider decisions on a way forward.***

***#6 - An Garda Síochána should complete its current review of Priority 1 incidents and analyse the data and learnings to assess any residual risks around harm and vulnerability in the Priority 2 and 3 incidents. It should provide the Policing Authority with evidenced-based proposals on how best to proceed, weighing the significant financial and opportunity costs of further reviews with the anticipated benefits to victims.***

A key finding from the Final Report<sup>19</sup> was that Call Recording Sampling Phase offered assurance over the accuracy and robustness of the CAD Review process undertaken by An Garda Síochána. This led to the following recommendation:

***#14 - An Garda Síochána should conclude the CAD Review and cease any further retrospective analysis of E, P1, P2 or P3 incidents. This should be agreed by the Policing Authority and Garda Síochána on the understanding that given the learning identified from An Garda Síochána and Policing Authority CAD Reviews, the financial costs and impact of diverting resources away from other priorities are unlikely to identify harm or offer meaningful service recovery to potential victims. An Garda Síochána should concentrate its resources on improving the current call handling arrangements and allow the Policing Authority to focus its scrutiny on these improvements.***

<sup>18</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 2 & 9\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Final Report on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[September 2022\]](#)

In response to Recommendation 5, An Garda Síochána completed its risk based CAD Review of Priority 1 Incidents for DVSA and MISPER (Missing Person). Subsequent analysis revealed that the two CAD Incident types that contain the highest proportion of the remaining P1 cancelled incidents were TFCHAZ (Traffic Hazards) which contains 31.8% of the remainder and PALRM (Panic Alarms) which contains 18.8% of the remainder. These two CAD types account for 11,444 of the P1 cancelled incidents. A methodological approach was agreed for a detailed examination of a randomly generated sample of cancelled Priority 1 TFCHAZ and PALRM incidents from the DMRCC. The randomly selected samples of each incident type were generated by GSAS and provided to the DMRCC.

The DMRCC sought some further support from GSAS to enable them to complete the review in February 2023. This related to the matching of the randomly selected CAD incidents to records from the very early stages of the CAD Review. This matching exercise was completed on 11 May 2023 and data has been provided to GSAS. This needs to be examined further to determine which incidents were correctly cancelled and if there are any which were deemed incorrectly cancelled as a first step. Out of the 200 randomly selected incidents, 195 were found to have been part of the initial DMRCC review process so details are available. Work is ongoing to conclude this analysis but has been delayed by the need to support other work for the Garda Síochána Inspectorate.

However, it should be noted that both recommendations 5 and 6 were superseded by recommendation 14 from the Final Update Report<sup>20</sup> published in September 2022. This recommended that An Garda Síochána conclude the CAD Review and cease any further retrospective analysis of E, P1, P2 or P3 incidents. All the recommendations were publicly accepted by the Commissioner at the public meeting of the Policing Authority on 29 September 2023, when the Final Report was published.

In terms of recommendation 5, the P1 analysis has not yet concluded, and it is a decision of An Garda Síochána to determine whether the ongoing analysis of Priority 1 incidents should be completed. In terms of recommendation 6, there has been no retrospective analysis of the Priority 2 or 3 incidents by An Garda Síochána, however this is no longer considered necessary on the basis of recommendation 14.

**It is assessed that Recommendations 5, 6 and 14 are IMPLEMENTED.**

### Recommendation 7

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>21</sup> was that there was a nationally coordinated approach to victim engagement, delivered through divisional protective services teams or domestic abuse coordinators. This was good practice and ensured that victim engagement was conducted by experienced staff and integrated with local support arrangements. Given the importance of victim engagement in the CAD Review process, the following recommendation was made:

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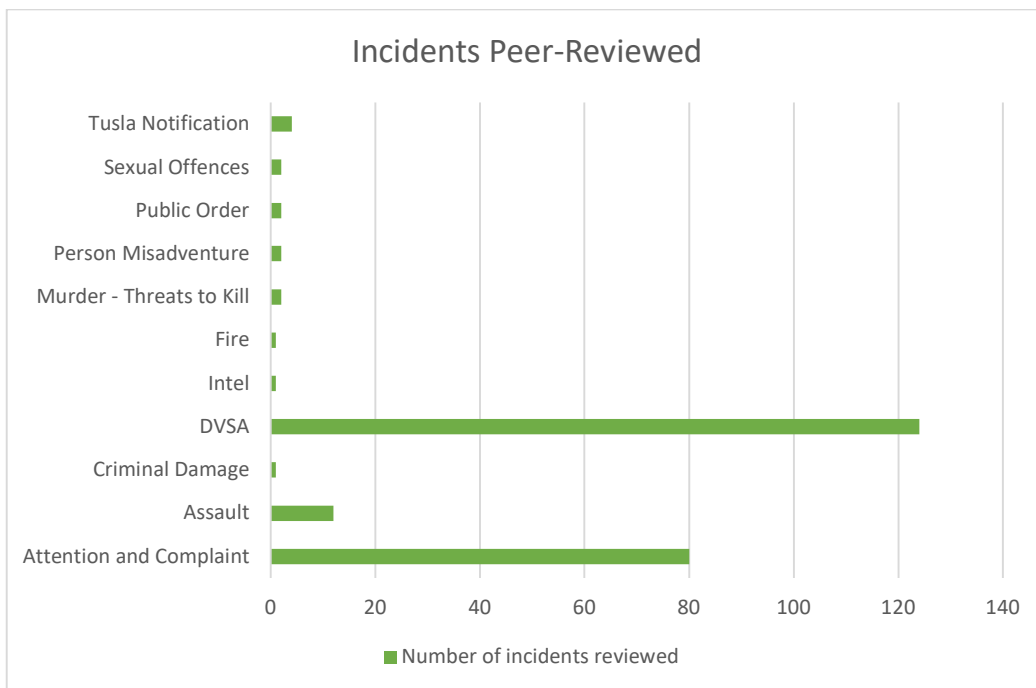
<sup>20</sup> [Final Report on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[September 2022\]](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 7\)](#)

**#7 - An Garda Síochána should progress an internal peer review of the victim engagement phase to provide assurances over quality, consistency and identify all learnings. This should be led by the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) and conducted by a small team drawn from victim engagement teams across all regions.**

The Garda Victim Liaison Office (GVLO) conducted a comprehensive Peer Review, which involved dip sampling 10 CAD Review files from each Division that included Victim Engagement. A total of 241 incidents were reviewed as part of the dip sampling from all 27 Divisions, and related to the following PULSE categories:

**Figure 2 – Peer Review Incidents broken down by PULSE category<sup>22</sup>**



The Peer Review confirmed that 100% of the incidents had a CAD Review file and Victim Engagement Report completed, with specific details of the Victim Engagement carried out. GVLO reviewed these files in terms of quality and consistency and identified no issues. It highlighted that where An Garda Síochána is required to carry out a national review, it has the ability to coordinate and provide a consistent approach across all Divisions. It also highlighted that the Divisional victim engagement teams were essential to ensure consistency and that the engagement was carried out predominantly by members of the Divisional DPSU units who have specialised training in relation to domestic abuse.

It identified a need for additional training on PULSE data quality and recording victim engagement on PULSE. There is currently an updated Victims Policy before An Garda Síochána Senior Leadership

<sup>22</sup> Graphic reproduced from An Garda Síochána Peer Review Presentation (November 2023)

Team, which will lead to an online training package for all members to inform them of their obligations to victims of crime and the recording of all engagement on PULSE.

**This recommendation is assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

## Recommendation 8

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>23</sup> was that there was no shared understanding of what constitutes “adverse impact” to victims because of cancelled incidents. While An Garda Síochána provided assurances around no physical harm, some victims will have experienced detriment. There were also incidents where a victim could not be identified and the extent of any harm or detriment is unknown. This led to the following recommendation:

***#8 - An Garda Síochána should engage with the Policing Authority and agree on approaches to define adverse impact. This should be followed by an assessment report to articulate the nature and extent of the risks, harms and detriment experienced by victims whose incidents were cancelled.***

In terms of progressing a draft definition for adverse impact, a definition was developed by An Garda Síochána and raised at the CAD Strategic Oversight Meeting on 13 June 2022. It was agreed that the Assistant Commissioner, Eastern Region would engage with the Policing Authority about the definition and its ability to be measured. On 7 December 2022, the oversight meeting was advised that a report had been prepared for Assistant Commissioner Eastern Region and a further report was to be forwarded to Deputy Commissioner, Policing and Security. On 12 June 2023, the oversight meeting was updated that an adverse impact definition had been sent to the Chief Superintendent Crime Legal for views and on 29 August 2023, the meeting was advised that the definition had been sent to the Executive Director Legal for views. On 31 October 2023, the minutes of the meeting confirmed that the definition had been agreed in principle by An Garda Síochána and would be forwarded to the Authority for consideration.

The draft definition was received by the Authority on 7 November 2023, although it has not yet had the opportunity to respond.

The definition currently being proposed by An Garda Síochána is: *“An adverse impact from a policing perspective may occur, as a result of action or inaction taken by An Garda Síochána, where there is harm to a person as a direct result of a criminal offence”.*

During the assessment of Adverse Impact, An Garda Síochána considered it necessary to define harm, and align this to a statutory framework. It has drawn on the *Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997*<sup>24</sup>, which defines harm as *“harm to body or mind and includes pain and unconsciousness”* and defines serious harm as *“injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes serious*

<sup>23</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 24\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997 – Section1 \(interpretation\)](#)

*disfigurement or substantial loss or impairment of the mobility of the body as a whole or of the function of any particular bodily member or organ.”*

Whilst the recommendation leaves it open for the Authority to agree this definition, it seems unduly narrow and focussed on harm and serious harm. It fails to embrace any wider detriment to an individual that could result from an action or inaction by An Garda Síochána.

The Interim Update Report<sup>25</sup> highlighted an opportunity to categorise the types of detriment that victims had experienced and suggested that the CAD Review and victim engagement phase could provide both quantitative and qualitative data to inform this process. It was considered feasible to identify victims who, despite making a call, did not receive a service and either suffered actual harm or experienced a reduced intervention on a subsequent incident due to the initial call not being logged. The report also noted that there will be some incidents within the CAD Review where victims were unable to report a crime, and have it investigated to the extent that perpetrators could have been arrested and prosecuted. In DVSA cases, this could have delayed or deprived a victim of the opportunity to obtain a barring order against an abusive partner.

In terms of progressing an assessment report, the Final Report<sup>26</sup> published in September 2022 noted that An Garda Síochána was currently assessing the CAD Review files to identify incidents where the lack of service provided to victims had resulted in actual harm and would report to the Policing Authority in due course.

The Authority has discussed harm, detriment and adverse impact in its public scrutiny over the CAD Review and on 28 October 2021, the Deputy Commissioner, Policing and Security provided a public assurance at the Policing Authority meeting that no victim had suffered physical harm because of a cancelled incident. This assurance was included in the Interim Update Report<sup>27</sup> with a caveat that it had not yet been independently validated, and that there was still a need for An Garda Síochána to articulate the potential risks that the failures in call handling presented to victims.

At the September 2022 meeting of the Authority, the then Deputy Commissioner, Policing and Security provided an update on harm. She advised that of the 141 crime incidents from the CAD Review that had not been recorded at the time, there were 37 incidents where harm had been indicated during the initial call. An Garda Síochána were able to identify and engage with the callers from 32 of these incidents and provided an opportunity for the callers to provide a statement. In the remaining five incidents, An Garda Síochána identified that these involved accidental injury or self-harm, and was unable to contact the callers or offer victim engagement. The Deputy Commissioner advised that in the 32 incidents where the caller was identified, there was no evidence to suggest that the cancellation of the CAD incident caused harm or resulted in harm.

An Adverse Impact Assessment Report dated 7 December 2023 was provided by An Garda Síochána as part of the information request for this review. The report identifies there were 37 cases where physical harm occurred and demonstrates missed opportunities for An Garda Síochána to deliver its commitment to “keep people safe”. The investigative outcome of the 37 Incidents is as follows:

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<sup>25</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] – Page 21](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Final Report on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[September 2022\] \(Page 7\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Page 21\)](#)



<b>Investigative Outcome</b>	<b>No. of Incidents</b>
Closed (No recollection of incident)	1
Closed (No statement of complaint forthcoming)	26
Closed (Statute of Limitations)	2
No Criminal Offence Disclosed	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

Of the 37 CAD Incidents where either the victim had indicated that physical harm occurred or where on the balance of probabilities it had been determined that such harm occurred, the victim engagement phase resulted in a description of the injuries being apparent or partially apparent in 32 cases. In the remaining five cases, a description of the injuries is not available due to a lack of cooperation. In eight incidents, the injuries were either accidental or self-inflicted. The nature of the injuries ranges from minor lacerations or bruising to bone fractures. Disciplinary matters which may have arisen from the inappropriate cancellation of incidents were considered by the Divisional Officer in whose division the relevant incident occurred. Oversight in respect of disciplinary matters was overseen by Assistant Commissioner, Governance and Accountability.

An Garda Síochána noted that none of the apparent injuries identified from this assessment would fall within the definition of “serious harm” under the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997. However, some of the apparent injuries would fall under the statutory definition of harm and come within scope of the draft definition of adverse impact.

The Interim Update Report<sup>28</sup> highlighted that the scale of An Garda Síochána's CAD Review should not be underestimated, with over 1.4 million incidents recorded nationally on the CAD system between 1 January 2019 and 31 October 2020. This included almost 203,000 cancelled incidents and required An Garda Síochána to adopt a risk-based approach to the review. From the 203,000 cancelled incidents, it is helpful context to note that An Garda Síochána identified only 37 CAD Incidents where either the victim had indicated that physical harm occurred or where on the balance of probabilities it had been determined that such harm had occurred. Eight of these incidents are recorded as either accidental or self-harm.

Although the verbal update provided by the the Deputy Commissioner to the September 2022 Authority meeting is consistent with the information provided in the Adverse Impact Report, there seems to have been no mention at the meeting of the nature of injuries indicated by callers at the time of their initial call. This information may have prompted further questioning by members around physical harm, especially where injured victims did not receive a Garda response to their initial call, and whether delays in subsequent victim engagement may have resulted in lost evidential opportunities or limited prosecution. An Garda Síochána has committed to sharing a copy of the Adverse Impact Assessment Report with the Authority, which should allow further scrutiny by members.

However, in terms of this specific recommendation, An Garda Síochána was asked to engage with the Authority and agree on approaches to define adverse impact. Once the definition was agreed, it was anticipated that An Garda Síochána would undertake an assessment of the incidents using this definition, and that a report would be produced to articulate the nature and extent of the risks, harms and detriment experienced by victims whose incidents were cancelled. As a definition has not yet

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<sup>28</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] – Page 14](#)



been agreed between An Garda Síochána and the Authority, it has not been possible to undertake an assessment based on this definition.

**This recommendation is assessed as NOT IMPLEMENTED.**

### Recommendation 9

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>29</sup> was that the group established by An Garda Síochána to provide strategic oversight recognised that some cancelled incidents may have resulted in serious risk or harm to individuals. Processes were put in place at the start of the review to identify any “high risk” incidents. These were collated and escalated to Divisions for urgent review. This led to the following recommendation.

***#9 - The Policing Authority should request an independent review of all incidents that were identified as “high risk” by An Garda Síochána during the CAD Review. This should include an assessment of the adequacy of follow up actions by Divisions.***

In response to this recommendation, the Policing Authority commissioned Derek Penman to complete independent Call Recording Sampling. This was completed in May 2022 and the findings were incorporated into Final Report<sup>30</sup> published in September 2022. Part of the call sampling included the “serious cohort” of calls identified as “high risk” by An Garda Síochána during the CAD Review and relevant to this recommendation. The “serious cohort” initially comprised a total of 83 incidents, which were all selected for call listening and review. Following a reconciliation exercise, a further 12 incidents were identified and subject to call listening and review in January 2023 and May 2023. These additional incidents were included in the Update Report on Additional Call Listening report<sup>31</sup> published in June 2023.

Assurances were accepted from An Garda Síochána that it had provided details of all “high risk” CAD incidents that were subject to early escalation. The review of these 95 incidents informed the Final Report’s following key findings:

- #26 - Calls included in the “Serious Cohort” sample are accurately captured in CAD Review files, and there is consistent evidence that An Garda Síochána actively sought to recover service failures through the victim engagement process.
- #27 – The “Serious Cohort” includes incidents with substantial shortcomings in call handling, and although there was the potential for serious harm, none was directly identified from the sample

<sup>29</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 7\)](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Final Report on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[September 2022\]](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Update on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents: Additional Call Listening \[June 2023\]](#)

examined in the call listening phase. It is not possible to determine whether serious harm occurred in incidents where callers or potential victims were not identified.

- #28 - The Call Recording Sampling Phase offers assurance over the accuracy and robustness of the CAD Review process undertaken by An Garda Síochána.

**This recommendation is assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

## Recommendation 10

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>32</sup> was a risk that call takers may have used INTEL R to record "intelligence" on the CAD system, which had not been followed-up or assessed through other business processes. Given the absence of guidance on the use of INTEL R, there is also a risk that some call takers may have recorded CAD incidents in a manner that is not compliant with Garda Síochána intelligence protocols. This led to the following recommendation:

***#10 - An Garda Síochána should extend its review of INTEL R incidents to address the risk that call takers may have used INTEL R to record "intelligence" on the CAD system, which has not been followed up or assessed through other business processes. It should also address the risk where incidents may not have been recorded in compliance with Garda Síochána intelligence protocols.***

INTEL R was a new incident type created in response to the CAD Review in December 2020.

In October 2021, An Garda Síochána identified that INTEL R may have been used by control room personnel to close incidents inappropriately and advised the Policing Authority. This issue extended to 19,709 incidents across all four Regional Control Rooms, albeit An Garda Síochána believed that only a relatively few of these were potentially used to incorrectly cancel incidents.

An Garda Síochána committed to review these incidents in line with the existing CAD Review processes and produced an INTEL R Review Terms of Reference. It was identified that the greatest risk existed with CAD incidents that had the final incident type changed to INTEL R. These incidents varied and included initial incident types of DDRIVE (dangerous driving), HEALTH, MISP, COMP, TRAF, SUSP, and PUBORD. It was noted that in certain circumstances the re-categorisation of these types of incidents is a normal operating process. It was established that a total of 1,305 incidents had their final incident type changed to INTEL R and these were extracted for detailed examination using a RAG review methodology. The following rationale was used for the RAG Review:

- GREEN: A resource was dispatched and no loss of An Garda Síochána service
- RED: Loss of An Garda Síochána service, breach of crime counting rules/possible crime identified and incident deliberately being hidden in the INTEL R category.

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<sup>32</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 13\)](#)

Files were completed for submission to Divisional Officers for review in line with previous CAD Review processes, and returned the following results:

Region	Total RAG Rated	Stage 6 (Red RAG)
Dublin Metropolitan	233	38
Southern	522	58
Eastern	453	25
North Western	97	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>130</b>

The RAG review identified that very few INTEL incidents had been used to record intelligence but had instead been used to dispose of calls in the same manner as the previous INFO disposal code. The 130 INTEL incidents assessed as red were each subject to management scrutiny and remedial action taken where necessary.

In addition to conducting the INTEL review, An Garda Síochána identified there was a lack of defined processes for the handling of intelligence within the RCC and developed new processes with the support of the Detective Chief Superintendent, NCIU. These were incorporated into the *Call Handling and Incident Response policy and procedures* for CAD2 and supported by GardaSAFE in each RCC. Information received at the RCC is initially being recorded by the Call Taker as either (i) Intelligence Actionable (INTELA): intelligence which requires immediate action; or (ii) Intelligence Non-actionable (INTELN): intelligence which requires follow-up by the local Division. In either event, the Incident Record will be treated as live and escalated to the RCC Supervisor for review and action.

The use of INTEL markers has been selected by the Regional Control Centre Performance and Quality Assurance Group as its first specific area for national review and should report in December 2023.

**This recommendation is assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

### Recommendation 11

***#11 - The Policing Authority and Garda Síochána should explore options for more proactive engagement in the strategic oversight of CAD Review, ensuring that all learnings are identified and implemented into future communication, command and control arrangements. This should include officers of the Policing Authority being invited as observers in An Garda Síochána strategic oversight meetings.***

The Chief Executive and a senior staff member of the Policing Authority attended the review meetings in an observer status. The meetings were held regularly, initially monthly and then quarterly. The meetings covered the progress being made in the implementation of the recommendations as well as updating on any disciplinary action being taken.

While the opportunity was given to ask questions and seek clarification, observer status meant that the Authority staff did not provide any directional or evaluative commentary. The value of such

attendance was in observing that the review process was underway, that the full breadth of recommendations were being dealt with and observing the level of seniority of those engaged with this work within An Garda Síochána.

In terms of oversight of the work, it was always envisaged by the Authority that this would be undertaken separately in a manner that allows for independent verification of that reported at the review meetings.

**This recommendation is assessed as IMPLEMENTED.**

### Recommendation 13

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>33</sup> was that the ageing CAD system and other legacy technologies in use across Regional Control Rooms indicate a chronic lack of investment. Significant future investment will be required to support any national Communication, Command and Control Strategy and its integration with the Garda Síochána Information and Security Vision (2020-2023). Decisions over call handling structures and economies of scale will be important. This led to the following recommendation:

***#13 - An Garda Síochána should build on the learnings from the CAD Review and develop a comprehensive strategy and roadmap for national Communication, Command and Control (C3).***

An Garda Síochána has included the GardaSAFE project in the National Policing Plan 2023, as well as the Digital Strategy, and it is not proposed that a standalone strategy be developed. Following the rollout of GardaSAFE, it is envisaged that a review will take place to identify the strategic direction of An Garda Síochána in respect of the call handling and incident response service. While no standalone strategy has been developed, there has been considerable progress by An Garda Síochána in successfully embedding CAD2 and GardaSAFE into its policing model and wider strategic change programmes.

**It is assessed that this recommendation is IMPLEMENTED.**

### Recommendation 15

A key finding from the Interim Update Report<sup>34</sup> was that access to call recordings is essential to provide the required level of assurance to the Policing Authority, both for the CAD Review and ongoing quality assurance. This led to the following recommendation:

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<sup>33</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 25\)](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Interim Update on the Preliminary Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, \(including cancellation\) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents \[November 2021\] \(Finding # 6\)](#)

***#15 - The Policing Authority and An Garda Síochána should agree an approach to call handling assurance, which is underpinned by regular internal and external call listening and incident audits. This should include an agreed framework to facilitate independent call listening and incident audits by the Policing Authority until the creation of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA).***

In terms of internal call handling assurance, the comprehensive approach being taken by An Garda Síochána is detailed in the commentary for recommendation 1.

However, in terms of the Authority and An Garda Síochána agreeing a framework to facilitate independent call listening and incident audits, the position has arguably deteriorated since the publication of the Final Report in September 2022 and the update report on additional call listening in June 2023. The background to this deterioration has been detailed in the *Access to Data* section earlier in this report, noting that the prescriptive guidance necessary to facilitate the fieldwork phase was not agreed by An Garda Síochána following legal advice.

The Authority and An Garda Síochána are currently in the process of agreeing a Joint Submission for Consultation with the Data Protection Commission (DPC).

**This recommendation is assessed as NOT IMPLEMENTED.**

## Recommendation 16

Although external to the terms of reference for the Final Report, the following recommendation to the Department of Justice was considered necessary:

***#16 - The Department of Justice should include sufficient powers within the enabling legislation and functions of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA), to support call handling assurance. This should include access for staff and agents of the PCSA to call recordings and relevant Garda Síochána information systems.***

Transparency and independent scrutiny of critical services such as emergency call handling are essential for building public trust and confidence in policing. Given the legal position currently adopted by An Garda Síochána and the lack of agreement between the two organisations over the Prescriptive Guidance on the processing of personal data and special category data for recorded call sampling and document reviews, it is essential that this enabling legislation is sufficiently robust and unequivocal to enable independent scrutiny over An Garda Síochána by the PCSA.

The Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill 2023<sup>35</sup> is sponsored by the Minister for Justice and is currently progressing through the legislative process. Chapter 4 of the Bill sets out the legal provisions for inspections by the Authority, including the specific powers of the Inspector of Policing Services.

There is a requirement for the Authority and the Garda Commissioner to agree a memorandum of understanding concerning the conduct of inspections, including the way the powers of an inspector of policing services may be exercised. This includes (i) the manner in which visits, including unannounced visits, may be conducted at relevant locations, (ii) the members of staff of the Authority or persons under contract with, or engaged by, the Authority who may assist inspectors (iii) the manner in which information and documents that are required for the purposes of the inspection may be provided, produced or otherwise made available, and (iv) the manner in which the removal or the taking possession of documents may be facilitated.

Whilst the legislation and powers of inspection seem comprehensive, the memorandum of understanding will be critical in facilitating future inspection activities by the Authority. This document requires agreement between the Authority and the Commissioner. To be effective, it will require a risk aware and enabling mindset within both organisations that embraces openness, transparency and the independent scrutiny of An Garda Síochána. This approach will be essential to build public confidence in policing across Ireland.

The Policing Authority should engage with the Department of Justice and seek legal advice on whether the primary legislation and dependency on the memorandum of understanding are sufficient as drafted. The experience and circumstances surrounding this review may be a helpful case study against which to test these, seeking legal reassurance that the proposed powers allow the new inspectors of policing service access to operational control rooms, to listen to live calls for service, access call recordings and observe staff enter and retrieve data from live operational systems.

In the meantime, the Policing Authority and An Garda Síochána should continue to work together to finalise an agreed Prescriptive Guidance to enable the necessary control room access to be facilitated.

**This recommendation is assessed as PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED.**

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<sup>35</sup> [The Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill 2023](#)

## Summary List of Recommendations & Assessment of Progress

No.	Recommendation	Assessment of Progress
1	An Garda Síochána should undertake an urgent review to ensure that effective supervision, quality assurance and robust performance management processes for individual members are in place for all regional control rooms and local call taking and dispatch arrangements.	Partially Implemented
2	An Garda Síochána should review its approach to recording calls for service at local stations and develop a call recording strategy that meets operational needs and provides safeguards to the public.	Implemented
3	An Garda Síochána should review the very high-risk Domestic Violence Sexual Assault (DVSA) incidents included in the CAD Review and assess the effectiveness of current protocols and the consistency of response.	Implemented
4	An Garda Síochána should engage with members involved in call taking and dispatching within all regional control rooms and at a station level, to identify potential CAD vulnerabilities, workarounds, and the drivers for cancelling incidents. This should emphasise the positive behaviours expected from all members and reinforce the importance of providing a quality response to the public.	Implemented
5	An Garda Síochána should consider a proportionate approach to assess the extent to which cancelled incidents with the potential for harm and vulnerability might still exist in Priority 1. It should proceed with its plan to include relevant key word searching across the CAD data store and apply some statistically significant random sampling of incidents to inform wider decisions on a way forward.	Implemented
6	An Garda Síochána should complete its current review of Priority 1 incidents and analyse the data and learnings to assess any residual risks around harm and vulnerability in the Priority 2 and 3 incidents. It should provide the Policing Authority with evidenced-based proposals on how best to proceed, weighing the significant financial and opportunity costs of further reviews with the anticipated benefits to victims.	Implemented
7	An Garda Síochána should progress an internal peer review of the victim engagement phase to provide assurances over quality, consistency and identify all learnings. This should be led by the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) and conducted by a small team drawn from victim engagement teams across all regions.	Implemented
8	An Garda Síochána should engage with the Policing Authority and agree on approaches to define adverse impact. This should be followed by an assessment report to articulate the nature and extent of the risks, harms and detriment experienced by victims whose incidents were cancelled.	Not Implemented
9	The Policing Authority should request an independent review of all incidents that were identified as "high risk" by An Garda Síochána during the CAD Review. This should include an assessment of the adequacy of follow up actions by Divisions.	Implemented

No.	Recommendation	Assessment of Progress
10	An Garda Síochána should extend its review of INTELIR incidents to address the risk that call takers may have used INTELIR to record “intelligence” on the CAD system, which has not been followed up or assessed through other business processes. It should also address the risk where incidents may not have been recorded in compliance with Garda Síochána intelligence protocols.	Implemented
11	The Policing Authority and Garda Síochána should explore options for more proactive engagement in the strategic oversight of CAD Review, ensuring that all learnings are identified and implemented into future communication, command and control arrangements. This should include officers of the Policing Authority being invited as observers in An Garda Síochána strategic oversight meetings.	Implemented
12	An Garda Síochána should consider whether the current model of call taking within regional control rooms and local stations is sustainable. This will include consideration of whether the potential to reduce risk, increase operational effectiveness and improve customer service through increased centralisation can offset the disadvantages of reduced local access and visibility.	Implemented
13	An Garda Síochána should build on the learnings from the CAD Review and develop a comprehensive strategy and roadmap for national Communication, Command and Control (C3).	Implemented
14	An Garda Síochána should conclude the CAD Review and cease any further retrospective analysis of E, P1, P2 or P3 incidents. This should be agreed by the Policing Authority and Garda Síochána on the understanding that given the learning identified from An Garda Síochána and Policing Authority CAD Reviews, the financial costs and impact of diverting resources away from other priorities are unlikely to identify harm or offer meaningful service recovery to potential victims. An Garda Síochána should concentrate its resources on improving the current call handling arrangements and allow the Policing Authority to focus its scrutiny on these improvements.	Implemented
15	The Policing Authority and An Garda Síochána should agree an approach to call handling assurance, which is underpinned by regular internal and external call listening and incident audits. This should include an agreed framework to facilitate independent call listening and incident audits by the Policing Authority until the creation of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA).	Not Implemented
16	The Department of Justice should include sufficient powers within the enabling legislation and functions of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA), to support call handling assurance. This should include access for staff and agents of the PCSA to call recordings and relevant Garda Síochána information systems.	Partially Implemented



## Appendix 1 – Review Methodology

The methodology was detailed in the Terms of Reference as follows:

**Information Request:** An Garda Síochána will provide information and relevant documents including copies of implementation plans, strategies, project documents, policies, procedures, training materials, meeting agendas, minutes, audit and compliance records and other relevant material that provides evidence of its response to the Report recommendations. The information request will be focussed on the information needed to meet the Terms of Reference for the Review.

**Desktop Review:** The information and relevant documentation provided by An Garda Síochána will be reviewed by the Team to build an initial evidence base to support an assessment of progress against the Report recommendations. This phase will highlight potential information gaps and specific areas for review during the fieldwork phase, including opportunities to highlight good practice.

**Strategic Engagement:** This will provide an opportunity for the Team to engage with An Garda Síochána executive leadership responsible for call handling. This will facilitate feedback on the initial document review phase, address potential information gaps, clarify understanding and seek relevant additional evidence, before and during the fieldwork phase.

**Fieldwork Phase:** This will involve the Team visiting each of the four Regional Control Centres and observing call handling operations. This will include initial call taking, dispatch, updating and the closure of incidents in line with An Garda Síochána policy, procedures and training. The Team will observe supervision arrangements and view records maintained as part of An Garda Síochána internal quality assurance audits. The Team will seek opportunities to listen in real time to calls being received and recorded within each of the Regional Control Rooms and observe members and staff entering and retrieving data from live operational systems. The Team will require access to managers, supervisors, members and staff working within the four Regional Control Centres, either individually or through small focus groups. The Team will visit a sample of four operational stations (one in each region), which will be selected in advance. The Team will observe the operational interface between local officers and the Regional Control Rooms including members and staff entering and retrieving data to live operational systems. The Team will require access to relevant managers, supervisors, members and staff at each these operational stations, either individually or through small focus groups. Every effort will be made to minimise the impact on operations at each of the regional call centres and local stations.

**Assessment & Report Writing Phase** – The Team will assess the information obtained during the previous phases and use this as an evidence base upon which to assess and make observations in relation to the status of implementation of the sixteen recommendations in the Report. Mr Penman will thereafter author a report, ('Summary Report') for the Authority, which will be shared ahead of final submission with An Garda Síochána for factual accuracy checking.

**Report Submission and Publication** – The final version of the Summary Report will be submitted to the Authority by Friday 19 January 2024 in time for consideration at the Authority meeting on 25 January 2024 and tabled at a meeting for discussion by the Chair and Authority Members. The summary report will be published by the Authority on its website.

## Appendix 2 – GardaSAFE Response to System Vulnerabilities

This information was provided by the GardaSAFE Project Team and details the system related key findings from the Final Report<sup>36</sup> with the corresponding An Garda Síochána response on how these have been addressed within GardaSAFE.

Extract of Final Report Key Findings	An Garda Síochána Response
<p>14 There are incidents where the information provided by callers was not accurately recorded. This meant that Garda Síochána members were dispatched to the wrong locations, and callers could not be re-contacted. Although not quantified, there were occasions where the Garda Síochána was unable to provide a service, and in terms of the CAD Review, some callers remain unidentified.</p>	<p>On the new GardaSAFE system for 999 calls, the telephone number will automatically populate in the Contact Record, eliminating manual data entry and thus reducing the potential for human error. In addition, the new system heavily leverages Eircodes with every Eircode for Ireland pre-loaded in the system. This further reduces manual data entry and the risk of misspellings or similar inaccuracies in recorded data. The ability to use &amp; view Eircodes has also been improved through the provision of a map layer showing every building and its associated Eircode on the GardaSAFE map. Visibility of the caller location on the map for 999 calls is provided from ECAS data and the availability of Advanced Mobile Location data (AML) will further reduce the likelihood of being unable to identify a victim and their location. The introduction of the CAD Incident app which the Garda Mobility Team has developed provides the responders with a seamless means of getting navigation directions to the location of the Incident.</p>
<p>15 There are cancelled incidents where Garda Síochána members responded and provided a service to victims. However, in some cases, members requested dispatchers to cancel incidents and avoided initiating follow up activities.</p>	<p>Dispatchers can no longer cancel/close incidents without deploying a unit and assigning a member. Only Supervisors in the RCC's can close incidents in GardaSAFE using 'resolution without deployment' along with a rationale commentary. The supervisor can also refuse a request to close an incident as 'resolution without deployment' if they deem it appropriate. In these instances, the incident will revert to the Dispatcher to deploy a responder. Supervisor training was developed with guidance on this point and has been rolled out. It introduces an additional layer of governance compared to the old system.</p>
<p>16 Training in call taking and dispatch has been extensive, and members should have understood the limited circumstances when incidents could be cancelled. There is nothing to indicate that training was inadequate or has been</p>	<p>Only staff members who have successfully completed system training are provided access to the main GardaSAFE Dispatch system. The system is now only available in the RCCs where all users have been properly trained. This access can only be provided by the GardaSAFE Application Administration Team, thus adding governance to this access control.</p>

<sup>36</sup> Final Report on the Examination of the Garda Síochána review of the closure, (including cancellation) of Computer Aided Dispatch incidents [September 2022]

Extract of Final Report Key Findings	An Garda Síochána Response
<p>21 Despite limitations with the ageing CAD system, the need for explicit text commands means that users must consciously decide what to enter. This reduces the likelihood of accidental cancellations. The service failures arising from cancelled incidents and other workarounds by members cannot be attributed to failures in the CAD System</p>	<p>The additional governance introduced with the new system as described above mitigates the risk of accidental closures without deployment (akin to cancellations in the old system) without proper consideration. Kibana dashboards have been provisioned to support further governance in the RCCs, for example by providing a view of how many Contact Records each user has created, where mandatory fields have been marked as 'refused information' etc. Additional dashboards may be developed to provide views and comparisons of other trends across the RCCs. Approximately 30% of the incident types can only be closed by a Supervisor within GardaSAFE, mitigating the risk of the more serious types not being dealt with rigorously and satisfactorily.</p>
<p>23 Given that the Garda Síochána recognised that sergeants and supervisors have insufficient capacity to check all incidents, it is difficult to understand why the organisation relied on the close supervision of incidents to manage compliance and the ongoing risk with CAD incidents. It would have been reasonable to expect that additional checks and balances would have been put in place to supplement supervision and provide some level of assurance that the mitigations and ongoing service delivery were effective.</p>	<p>The new GardaSAFE system provides enhanced visibility through dashboards to real-time data on performance and compliance. This will significantly enhance supervisors' ability to quickly identify and address issues as well as escalations within the system. There are a number of system auto escalations to support governance such as: - an incomplete incident after 5 minutes (no incident type or location) - Priority 1 incident not dispatched after 5 minutes.</p>
<p>24 The ageing CAD system and other legacy technologies in use across Regional Control Rooms indicate a chronic lack of investment. Significant future investment will be required to support any national Communication, Command and Control Strategy and its integration with the Garda Síochána Information and Security Vision (2020-2023). Decisions over call handling structures and economies of scale will be important.</p>	<p>There has been significant investment in not just the new GardaSAFE system but also the associated programme of work. This includes enhances integration with PULSE, new integrations with SIS and RDMS, a new enterprise mapping solution, new mobile app for responders, new telephony and TETRA radio control systems, new data networks for each of the RCCs. The new GardaSAFE system provides enhanced visibility through dashboards to real-time data on performance and compliance which will significantly enhance Supervisors ability to quickly identify and address issues. The new integrations with PULSE &amp; SIS support and enhance our response to victims as well responder safety. A mobility application has been released to support responders - providing them with details of the assigned incident and supports such as an integration with Google</p>

Extract of Final Report Key Findings	An Garda Síochána Response
	<p>maps for navigation (using Eircode) and ability to mark themselves at scene (when within 100 metres of scene). Enhancements have been identified for future releases including a range of data entry capabilities, automated capture of GPS coordinates for improved data quality. The medium-term roadmap for the system includes integration with Garda CCTV systems, with Body Worn Cameras when available, with text messaging systems, and digital data sharing with other agencies such as PSNI, Ambulance, Fire etc.</p>