



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Report on Policing Performance by the Garda Síochána during the COVID-19 Health Crisis

19 July 2021

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Chairperson's Foreword

The foreword to the fourteenth report on the policing of the COVID health emergency observed that it was too early to adopt a retrospective view of the pandemic. How unfortunately true that has turned out to have been. It had been the hope that by now no further COVID reports would be necessary from the Policing Authority or that a concluding review of all that had engaged policing might have been the next and final step. But it was not to be.

The uncertainty and the unpredictability of the COVID-19 virus and its variants have been revealed once again as disrupters of plans and policies across the world. And with that comes the added complication of adjusting once more to further limitation or to delayed reopening.

The initial lockdown almost seventeen months ago had something of simplicity about it. Almost unambiguously clear, easily understood and supported by a virtually universal sense of anxiety, we all knew more or less where we stood - and there we remained. The increasingly complex regulatory framework that subsequently developed blurred that clarity somewhat but did not displace it. And the prospect of returning as fully as possible to what had previously been available sustained people.

The process of lifting restrictions while being alive to the very real dangers of the virus is filled with complications. Not least of these is what we hope may happen. The prospect of new, or rather old, freedoms increases expectations. Possibilities are imagined. And reality, constrained by circumstance, can disappoint.

These are not just theoretical reflections. They have real impact on how the Garda Síochána approaches the policing of remaining emergency regulations. And they have real impact also on how the work of policing is perceived, as well as on how it may be felt, by the population or by sections of it.

Perceptions are formed in a wide variety of ways. Our own experiences, those of our friends and acquaintances, rumour, speculation all play their part. Social media, too, play a powerful influence in generating perceptions and, it often seems, infrequently based on the full facts. There is a discernible tendency, certainly the risk exists, to regard circumstances which are quite different as if they were comparable and to draw inappropriate conclusions based on whether Garda engagement was evident or not.

There is, too, a tendency to have exaggerated expectations of what Gardaí can do - an assumption that they have powers of intervention well beyond what the law, even in the emergency provisions, allows. There may also be a sense among some who have a part in the shaping of public policy in these times that policing can be the ultimate guarantor, everywhere and always, of full compliance. But neither of these perceptions is realistic. Therein lies a challenge for the most appropriate policing response to be adopted as the welcome but tortuous easing out of restrictions is given practical effect.

Almost all in this series of reports have recited the range and quality of the commitment of the Garda Síochána to those who are at risk of domestic violence and of the appreciation that has been forthcoming for that work. It cannot be repeated too often because it reminds us of the extent to which this is an enduring reality in the lives of so many people, almost always women or children, and because, at this time in particular, it offers an altogether more encouraging context against the very serious issues that have arisen with the cancellation of emergency calls to the gardaí.

This report underlines the quality of the work that is being done in Operation Faoiseamh and records the views of some of the organisations who work with vulnerable people about the way in which a structural change seems to have taken place in the approach of the policing service to vulnerable individuals and to those who support them. That is exactly what the Authority has advocated and what it has hoped would happen - that the remarkable work evoked by the pandemic would become the standard for the future. We will continue to encourage and support the Commissioner and his colleagues in ensuring that this will be the case permanently into the future and that the full potential of the Divisional Protective Services units can be realised throughout the country wherever the need arises.

The reality of mental illness in society is much more fully appreciated now than in the past and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental wellbeing is increasingly recognised. That latter truth has particular relevance for the Garda Síochána for it is the case that very often the first people to encounter and engage with someone in mental distress will be a Garda. In the nature of things, the training of gardaí is not intended to equip them to be the primary responders in these circumstances, although the training does, indeed, offer some preparation and some awareness. Equally, Garda stations are not the ideal settings in which such engagements should take place. The fact is, however, that although a number of public services operate on a 24 hour basis, few have the nature of the presence that the Garda Síochána does. They are on the streets, on patrols, moving about the country when the great majority of the population are asleep. This report reflects the Authority's outreach to those with a special interest and experience in the area of mental health and raises important questions for consideration.

There has been considerable reference to Garda discretion in recent times and that theme also arises in this report. The Authority has always recognised that the exercise of discretion is an essential part of policing. The Code of Ethics which the Authority established for the Garda Síochána specifically acknowledged this when it said 'Many working in the Garda Síochána have significant autonomy in their daily duties. They are required to exercise considerable discretion in fulfilling their responsibilities. They are on the spot. They respond to given situations; they make instant decisions.' It went on to say that this need for discretion means that ethical behaviour is an essential part of the work of everyone in the organisation.

But this exercise of discretion is entirely different from any tendency to show preference. There has been some conflation of these two concepts in public commentary and it is necessary that the important distinction be emphasised. The law binds us all equally, and while there is a proper place for the exercise of discretion in determining the best course of action where an immediate decision is required, being well known or knowing a guard, of whatever rank, is not a pathway to more favourable treatment.

In one of his poems, John F Deane writes of 'the awe of small things wonderful'. That idea is reflected in some of the outreach engagements that are reported in this report. It is an important reminder of the significance of the apparently small gesture whose immediate significance may not be appreciated but whose long term impact on the quality of the relationship between people and gardaí can be transformative. It is a thought that repays reflection.

Bob Collins
Chairperson

1 Introduction

This is the 15th Report to the Minister for Justice on the Authority's oversight and assessment of the policing performance of the Garda Síochána through the COVID-19 emergency. Since the last report, in line with restrictions easing, the level of enforcement activity has continued to fall and the policing focus is shifting to contributing towards managing the safe reopening of society.

Section 2 of this report outlines recent developments in the Government's response to COVID-19 and its implications for the Garda Síochána. Section 3 provides a brief assessment of the use of powers by the Garda Síochána during the public health emergency and summarises related data provided by the Garda Síochána. Section 4 presents findings from the Authority's ongoing engagement with stakeholders to assess the nature and consistency of Garda Síochána interactions during the period. The final section presents an overview of the key oversight issues on which the Authority is engaging with the Commissioner, the Garda organisation as a whole and with relevant stakeholders.

2 Key Developments in Response to COVID-19

Prior to the last report to the Minister, COVID related restrictions had been eased with the introduction of S.I. 217 of 2021 and revocation of previous statutory instruments. Since then, S.I. 217 of 2021 has been subject to a significant number of amendments, which have represented a further opening up of society, increasing the numbers of people who may meet and the scenarios and places where they may meet. This in turn has greatly reduced the number of situations where Fixed Charge Notices (FCNs) may be issued or garda powers may be used.

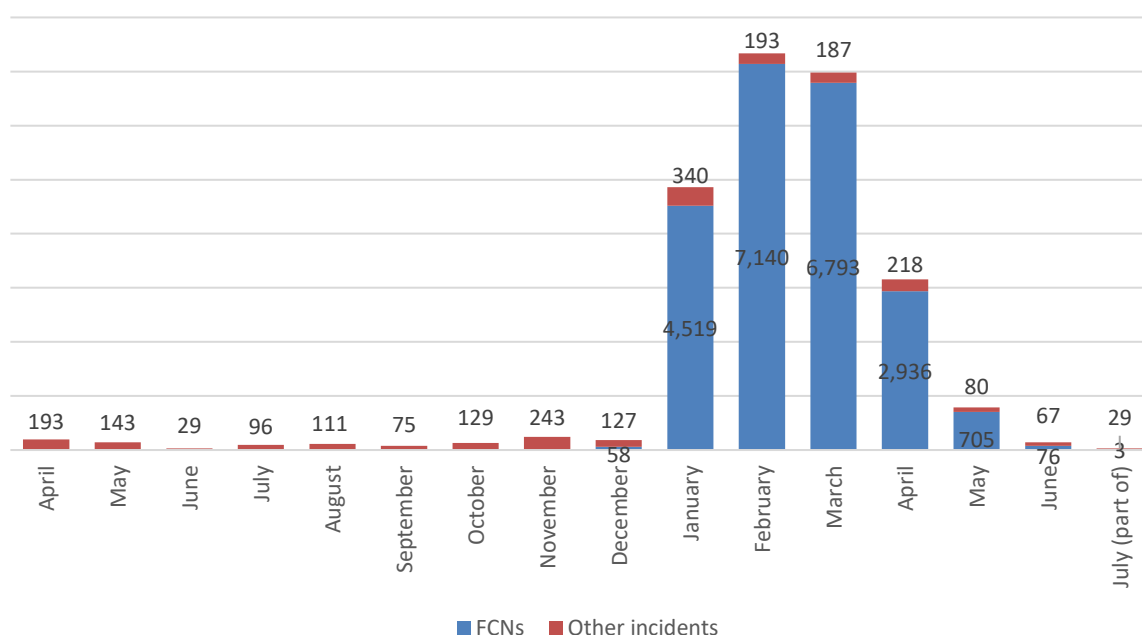
A key development is the introduction EU Digital COVID Certificates. Contained in the regulations concerning these certificates are penalties for issuing certificates where criteria are not met, forging certificates, or using forgeries. Penalties include fines of up to €4,000, or one months imprisonment. It is not clear at this point how this will be enforced.

Another development on the horizon is the opening up of indoor dining and drinking, but only for those who can produce verifiable evidence of being vaccinated or having immunity. It is unknown at this point if this will result in a new enforcement role for the Garda Síochána, though it is speculated that this will be largely subject to self-regulation.

3 Policing COVID-19 in Numbers

Up to 8 July, 22,230 FCNs had been issued to individuals for breaches of COVID regulations, with only 76 issued in June and only three issued the first week of July. These figures are presented in greater depth in Section 3.1. In addition to this, there were 2,260 incidents where COVID related powers were used by the Garda Síochána that did not involve FCNs, but may result in charges and/or summonses for individuals. These are outlined in Section 3.2, along with other data relating to policing during the public health emergency.

Figure 1: Number of incidents where powers under the COVID-19 Regulations were used or fines were issued, 8 April 2020 to 10 July 2021



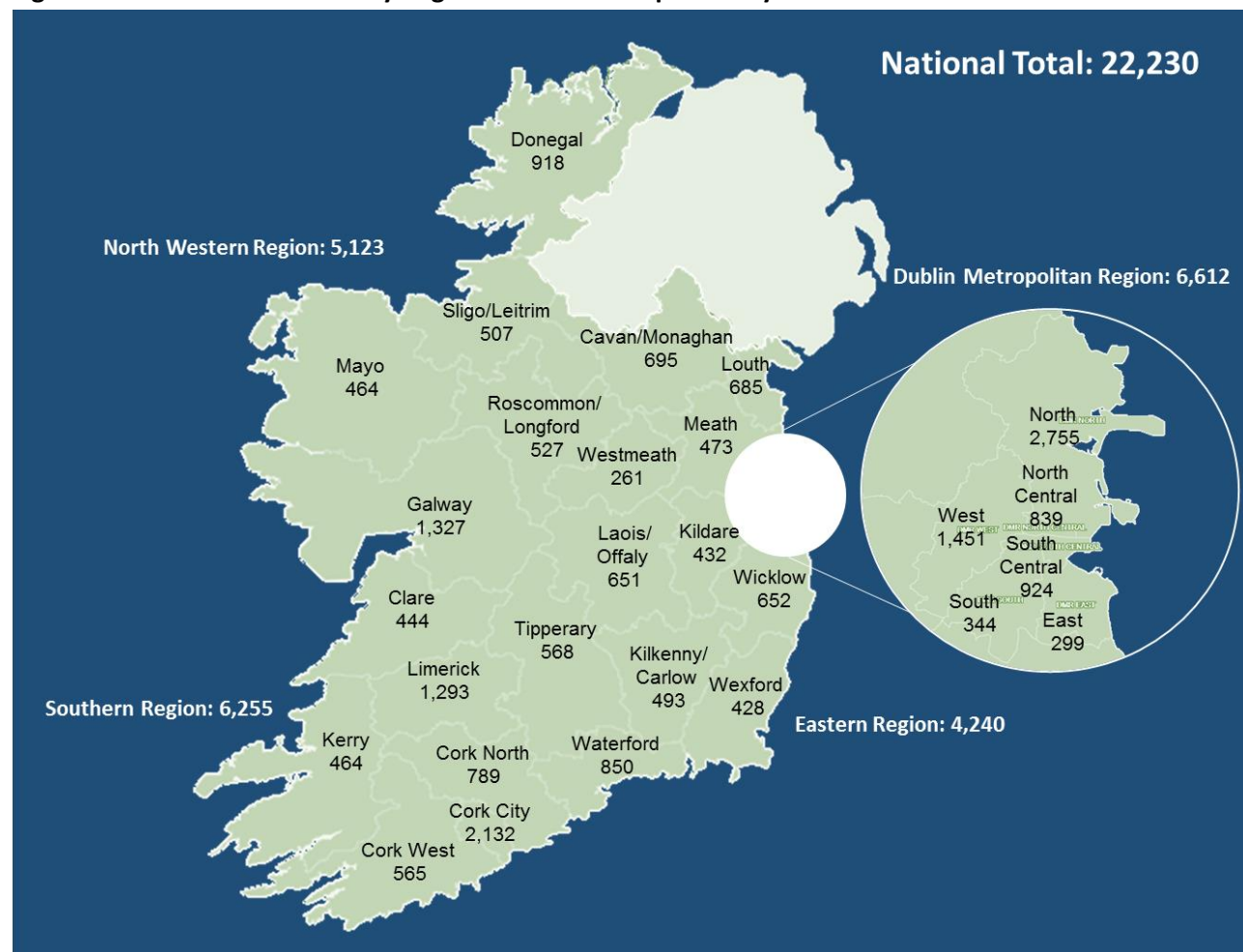
3.1 COVID Related Fines

Since the last report to the Minister (covering up to 9 May) an additional 813 FCNs have been reported bringing total FCNs issued up to 8 July to 22,230. The majority of these were issued in May with enforcement continuing to fall as restrictions ease. The breakdown of offences for issuing FCNs since their introduction is as follows:

- Movement of Persons: 343 (1.5% of the total)
- Leaving home without reasonable excuse: 14,882 (66.9%)
- International Travel Airports and Ports: 1,863 (8.4%)
- Persons not ordinarily resident travelling into the state: 443 (2%)
- Event Organisers (Dwellings and Non-dwellings): 1,018 (4.6%)
- Attending events in dwellings: 3,249 (14.6%)
- Non-wearing of face coverings: 432 (1.9%)

The revocation of domestic travel restrictions has meant that no FCNs have been issued for movement of persons/leaving home without reasonable excuse since May. The only FCNs issued in June or July have related to international travel, events and non-wearing of face coverings. The total value of FCNs issued equates to approximately €4.6 million. Approximately 48% of FCNs issued have been paid to date, while 51% remain unpaid and either have or will result in court proceedings.

Figure 2: COVID Related Fines by Region and Division up to 9 July 2021



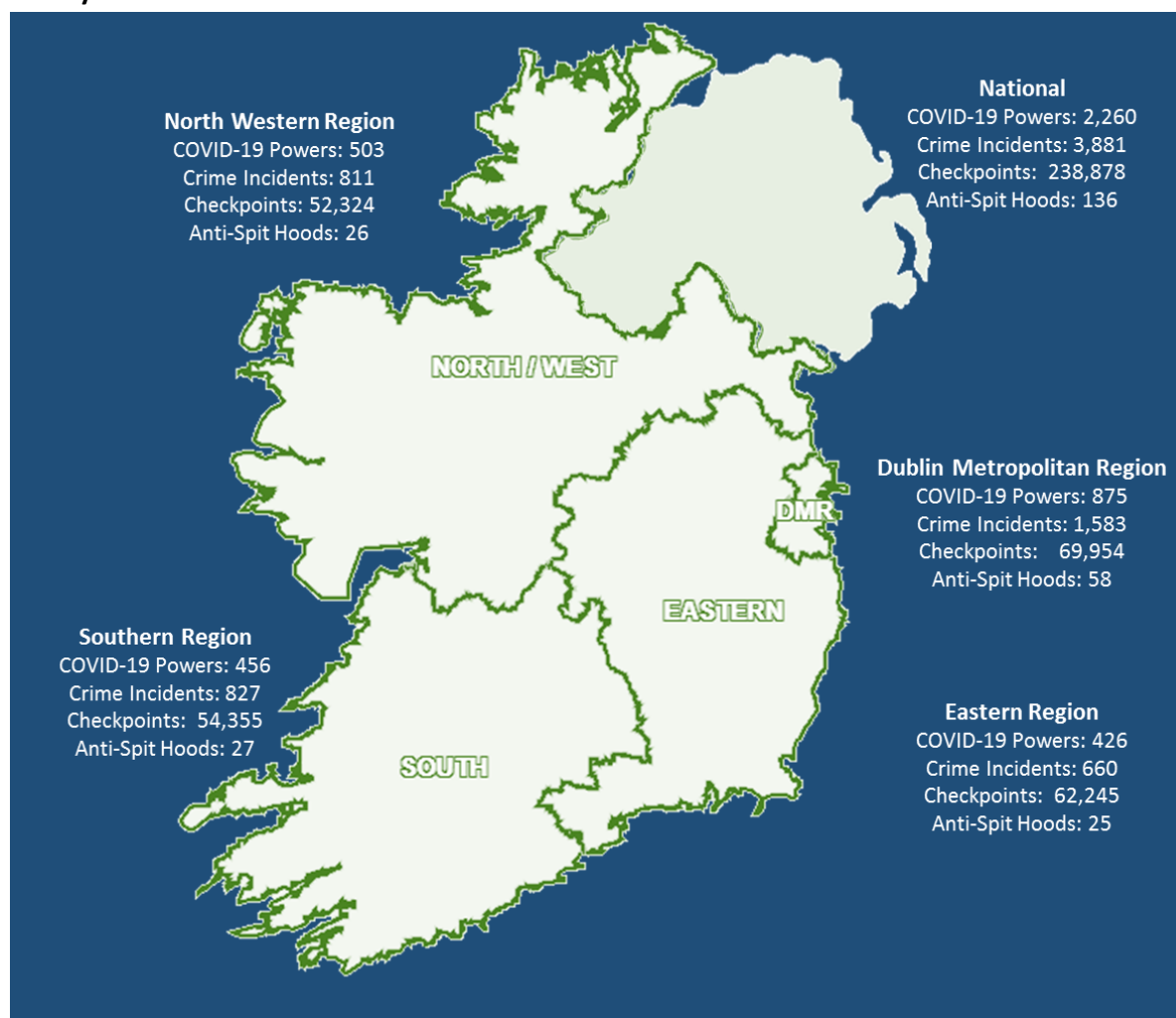
The region with the highest number of FCNs has changed to Dublin Metropolitan Region, accounting for approximately 29.7% of the national total. DMR North, Cork City and DMR West remain the Divisions with the highest number of fines issued, standing at 2,755, 2,132 and 1,451 respectively. In many counties no FCNs have been issued since the last report.

In terms of the age and gender breakdown, there has been little change since the last report. Those aged 18 to 25 received the highest number of fines, accounting for 52% of all fines issued, while 74% of the total fines were issued to males.

3.2 Non Fine Related COVID Policing Activity and Enforcement

In addition to issuing FCNs, members of the Garda Síochána have reported using their COVID enforcement powers 2,260 times between 8 April 2020 and 10 July 2021. This is an increase of 322 on the figure provided in the Authority's last report to the Minister, which covered the period up to 8 May 2021.

Figure 3: Non Fine Related COVID-19 Policing in numbers - summary by region for 8 April 2020 to 10 July 2021¹



Since the beginning of January this year, there have been 1,114 incidents where members have used powers under the COVID-19 regulations. Incidents related to international travel accounted for 557 of these. This included, 389 incidents relating to a failure to produce a negative PCR test on arrival into the country, 132 concerning breaches in mandatory hotel quarantine, 35 related to breaches on mandatory quarantine outside of designated facilities, and one additional incident related to non-essential travel

¹ Use of COVID powers, crime data and anti-spit hoods refers to 8 April to 10 July 2021. Checkpoints refer to periods 11 May to 2 August 2020 and 10 August 2020 to 11 July 2021. Data is indicative only.

Operation Navigation, which polices licensed premises, resulted in 32 breaches since January, while Operation Treoraím, which polices retailers, resulted in 29 breaches discovered. The remaining 449 incidents from this year relate to other breaches by individuals including 41 incidents which relate to face coverings and which are in addition to the FCN figures.

In terms of more recent enforcement activity, since the last report to the Minister covering up to 9 May 2021, there have been 144 incidents of which 129 involved breaches related to international travel.

In terms of the geographic distribution of incidents, the highest number of incidents since enforcement commenced are DMR North with 446 incidents and DMR North Central with 172 incidents. The vast majority of new incidents in DMR North in particular have been related to international travel through Dublin airport. Outside of Dublin the divisions with the highest number of incidents are Galway, Cork City and Donegal with 142, 132 and 96 incidents respectively.

From 8 April 2020 to 10 July 2021 there have been 3,881 crime incidents which were disclosed as a result of COVID-19 policing activities, representing a modest increase of 78 incidents since the last report. There has been no significant change to the crime types associated with these incidents with offences relating to roads, public order and drugs offences being the most frequently occurring.

Checkpoint activity has decreased significantly since restrictions have eased with fewer than 1,000 checkpoints being carried out per week nationally.

4 Stakeholder Engagement

4.1 Outreach

The Authority's outreach has continued, and in the period prior to this most recent report, it has engaged with a number of community organisations, organisations representing commercial interests, groups working in the area of domestic abuse and those working in the area of mental health. While on the face of it this might appear a disparate selection of organisations, there were strong commonalities in the themes emerging in these conversations. These was a recognition of the complexity of the job the Garda Síochána is called on to perform; the degree to which keeping people safe and helping them to feel safe requires the police service to work well with other organisations; and finally a strong sense of the value that communities place on policing which contributes to their immediate sense of safety as they go about their daily lives.

4.2 Important 'small' things

One community spoke to the impact of the pandemic on families in their area who because of job losses had gone *'from struggling to desperately struggling'* and the increasing need for more mental health services. Within this context, they spoke of the need for people to feel safe in the community which for them meant *'a visible policing presence, respectful engagement and the Gardaí to deal with the important small things, before they escalated into big things'*. Both this and another community engaged with expressed frustration with what they saw as repeated exercises by officialdom to conduct yet another needs analysis, consultation or assessment of what are the problems in their community when they believe that knowledge and understanding exists – they *'know what the problems are'* and why they do not feel safe. They spoke to the hold criminality has over the area - sometimes the result of actions by a small number of families and individuals. Their sense is that the Gardaí are *'overwhelmed'* and *'have lost control of anti-social behaviour'* in their area. When they see no action being taken that breaks that 'hold' it dents their confidence in the Gardaí and this is further exacerbated by a perception that more affluent areas receive a better policing response and resources. This confidence is further eroded if the Gardaí can't *'fix the small things'* like anti-social behaviour that significantly impacts on the ability for someone to live in the community, go about their daily work and feel safe. Relations with individual community Gardaí were described as positive but both before and during the pandemic there is a sense that young people in the area are being *'tarred with the same brush'* contributing to perceptions of the Garda organisation which were described as poor.

4.3 The need for enforcement

A number of organisations representing commercial businesses spoke to a similar theme of the need for people to feel safe in order to participate in everyday activities - in this instance going to shop or socialise in cities. There was concern expressed, particularly in relation to the perception of how safe the capital city is, and the degree to which that perception is now potentially deterring people from coming to town. These fears are not necessarily centred on a fear of crime, but a fear of anti-social behaviour. There was significant conversation about the recent reopening of hospitality

businesses in early June and how successfully or not that had been managed - not just by the Garda Síochána. Reference was made to examples where this was managed well with significant and early Garda engagement with businesses. The sense was communicated however that there was insufficient engagement with the business community and insufficient planning by the key actors. The view was expressed that in the case of Dublin *'the trouble that erupted had been brewing for weeks'*. Those spoken to were supportive of the Garda Síochána and at pains to emphasise that their expertise is not in policing. However they wondered whether more collaborative planning and earlier enforcement of restrictions on those businesses that were not operating in compliance might have averted what happened in early June. They believed that the fact of the events but also the image of the city and some of the images of policing caused reputational damage for the city and contributed to people's unease at *'coming to town'*. They believe that images of Gardaí wearing public order policing equipment was *'damaging for business, tourism, investment and the confidence and sense of safety of people to come in and enjoy the city'*.

In terms of the changes in the restrictions, it was remarked that many businesses are frustrated with what they perceive as a reluctance to move to enforcement in the case of businesses in their community that, in their view, are clearly flouting the rules. While there have been a number of high profile cases of action taken against businesses, in the main, there is a perceived reluctance to tackle non-compliance. This was described as an issue relevant across the country especially in smaller towns where examples were given of hospitality related businesses that are quite openly contravening the restrictions with no apparent action being taken by Gardaí.

Looking to further opening of hospitality, the view was expressed that businesses will need to be able to rely on the state either through inspection authorities or the Garda Síochána to support them if there is an introduction of 'COVID passports' for accessing hospitality. There was some concern voiced that the type of activity experienced by the retail sector in relation to deliberate non-compliance by the public may move to the area of hospitality.

4.4 The burden of discretion

A strong view was expressed by organisations representing businesses that the call for Gardaí to use discretion as a key approach during this time was unfair on Gardaí and likely to result in inconsistent policing. Examples were given of instances where Gardaí had been observed engaged in a 'robust enforcement of the rules' around on-street drinking, while hours later the same behaviours by members of the public drew no response from Gardaí. The question was asked as to whether the exigencies of a pandemic is the time to rely on something as nebulous as discretion?

There was significant sympathy expressed for the difficulty of the position of the Gardaí during the pandemic and the degree to which they have had to respond to changing restrictions and find ways to operationalise them. The view was emphasised however that as restrictions change, there needs to be considerable guidance issued to Gardaí as to how the restrictions are to be policed to ensure that, insofar as possible, the need for, and burden of, discretion, is removed. It was believed that this would give confidence that there is consistency in the manner in which restrictions are being policed.

4.5 First responders

The dual themes of the difficulty of the job performed by Gardaí during the pandemic and their need for collaboration with other organisations and agencies continued in relation to discussions on policing and mental health. While the impact of the pandemic on mental health has received considerable media attention, it was emphasised that its prevalence and the inadequacies of the system to respond to that prevalence is not new. The pandemic has ‘accelerated’ matters and exposed those weaknesses.

The position of the Garda Síochána as first responders in many instances places the person suffering a mental health event in an inappropriate justice context rather than a health one. It was emphasised that a Garda station is not the optimum environment for someone in this situation and can add stress and trauma for the individual whose experience can now be further perceived as their having done something wrong. It also places the Gardaí in a difficult situation of having to deal with matters outside their training or competence in the absence of there being access to other services at that time. There was concern expressed that this can lead to the criminalisation of mental illness if an arrest is the route by which the person is dealt with. It was emphasised that mental health policy doesn’t envisage Gardaí having the extent of the role that they are currently called on to play in decision making around what happens to a person experiencing a mental health episode - during the pandemic in 2020, a third of involuntary mental health detentions were undertaken by the Garda Síochána.

4.6 Operation Faoiseamh

The response from organisations working with those suffering domestic abuse continues to be overwhelmingly positive. The commitment and focus of the Garda Síochána on this area of crime has endured and reference was made to those suffering from domestic abuse being *‘increasingly at the centre of the conversation and being listened to’*. One local organisation spoke to the positive change that had occurred in the relationship between their organisation and local Gardaí in the last few years, accelerated by the experience of the pandemic. When asked to describe that change, reference was made to *‘the removal of barriers, increased compassion and understanding for the difficulty of the job that each of their organisations were trying to do and a sense that they and the Gardaí were a team in this together’*.

On a practical level this involved more informal contact, a readiness to ask each other for advice and *‘to admit that they didn’t always have the answers’*. The pandemic created circumstances that increasingly allowed for the *‘Gardaí to be human in their job, us to be human in our job and the survivors of domestic abuse to be human’*. Faoiseamh was credited as providing a context in which there was *‘a leap forward in relations’* which was *‘massive’* and this sense of transformed relations was echoed in conversations with other organisations who support those suffering domestic abuse.

Coercive Control was discussed as being particularly challenging for both Gardaí and support organisations but that there was an increased Garda awareness now as to how domestic violence services can support the victim through what can be a complex process, to everyone’s benefit. The comment was made that Gardaí are more alert now to the need to move the process at the victim’s

pace and examples were given of Gardaí meeting victims on site in the support services and the difference that can make in terms of how supported that person feels to make a statement.

The positive impact of the Divisional Protective Services Units (DPSU) was also referenced, as a resource to which support services can turn sometimes with questions but also with information as to what the Gardaí *'might be heading into'*. The comment was made that instead of *'having to annoy ten Guards to find the right one'*, the DPSU allowed for a single and expedient point of engagement with the organisation. There were references made to examples of excellent policing carried out by *'regular'* Gardaí and how important the consistency of the Garda message that people fleeing domestic abuse could travel beyond 5km of home had been.

Where there are *'pockets'* of poor performance it relates to inconsistency, the nature of the interaction with the survivor and inadequate understanding of the legislation, in particular around breaches of orders. In what were described as *'the remnants of an old culture'* reference was made to reported comments by Gardaí to survivors that showed a lack of empathy and understanding of the impact of trauma on the person suffering abuse. *'You do know now we will have to go and talk to him'* was interpreted by the person reporting as meaning they were presenting as *'an inconvenience'* that was *'putting work'* on the Gardaí or that those who call for assistance but don't proceed further felt they were sometimes regarded as *'serial complainers rather than survivors of substantial repeated abuse'*.

There were also instances reported where there wasn't always a clear understanding of what constituted a breach of an order or which saw a Garda give his or her view on actions which were clearly not permitted under the order – *'children should be able to see their father'*. If the breach is not recognised, there is a concern that it may not make it onto the PULSE system. While there has been significant progress made in recognising coercive control as a crime, those spoken to also believe further work is needed to ensure that there is an understanding of the need to consider and recognise patterns of behaviour rather than look at single episodes of behaviour, which in themselves do not tell the story.

These issues and examples were put forward as *'pockets'* of poor performance. This type of performance is more noticeable and exposed now precisely because it is seen to be occurring in a context in which policing performance in relation to domestic abuse has *'transformed'* in recent years.

5 Key Oversight Issues

5.1 Mental Health

During its engagements with all levels of the Garda Síochána, a recurring theme in relation to policing during COVID-19 has been the increase in the number of incidents involving mental health. This has ranged from more minor incidents to critical hostage-barricade-suicide scenarios. This upward trend was reflected in the recently published annual report of the Mental Health Commission which highlighted an increase in involuntary mental health detentions by the Garda Síochána in 2020. Additional data from the Garda Síochána reveal that mental health incidents have continued to rise during 2021. While this had been attributed by many to COVID-19, this appears to be a longer term trend which predates COVID-19 and is as much, if not more, of a societal issue rather than one solely influenced by the pandemic and restrictions placed on people's daily lives.

Regardless of the drivers for these issues, members of the Garda Síochána have found themselves as the default "*out of service provider*" for handling incidents involving those with mental health problems. Throughout the Authority's engagement with garda personnel, it has been frequently stated that garda members are not sufficiently trained to deal with these issues and are not best placed to provide the help needed by those suffering from mental illness.

A key development in this regard is the introduction of Crisis Intervention Teams. This concept involves 24/7 multiagency teams including the Garda Síochána, mental health professionals and other key service providers, which are established to respond to mental health incidents. The Authority had previously welcomed this concept and welcomed the renewed focus on developing these through the recommendations of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland. A pilot project is now underway in Limerick division which builds on the concept and has been rebranded as "Community Access Support Teams (CAST)". The Authority has recently received a progress report on the early stages of the development of this pilot project and will continue to monitor it as part of its ongoing oversight of policing performance.

5.2 The Reopening of Society

As restrictions ease and society reopens, the policing context is changing and there has been a shift from enforcing restrictions to managing social, and sometimes anti-social, behaviour. This was witnessed in the run up to the June bank holiday with significant public order incidents in areas of Dublin.

Through its meetings and committees, the Authority has questioned the Commissioner and senior team on how the Garda Síochána plans, responds to and learns from public order incidents such as those experienced in Dublin. The Garda Síochána stressed that planning involves a graduated response with an initial emphasis on high visibility policing by regular units. The capacity to use public order units is incorporated into the plans based on engagement with stakeholders, anticipated crowds and intelligence on areas such as protest. Where there is an escalation or hostilities, tactical decisions are made to use public order units.

The Authority have sought, and received, assurances that the graduated response to policing and the four Es are still in place since the removal of many of the enforceable COVID regulations. The Authority also queried the area of discretion, which has come under the spotlight particularly during

garda interactions with the public during the past two months. The Commissioner stated that discretion is difficult to define and is for minor incidents. He further stated that use of discretion is guided by the Garda Decision Making Model and that members are required to be accountable for their interactions. Overall, there is a view that it is difficult to prescribe how it is used and is largely guided by the situation in which members find themselves.

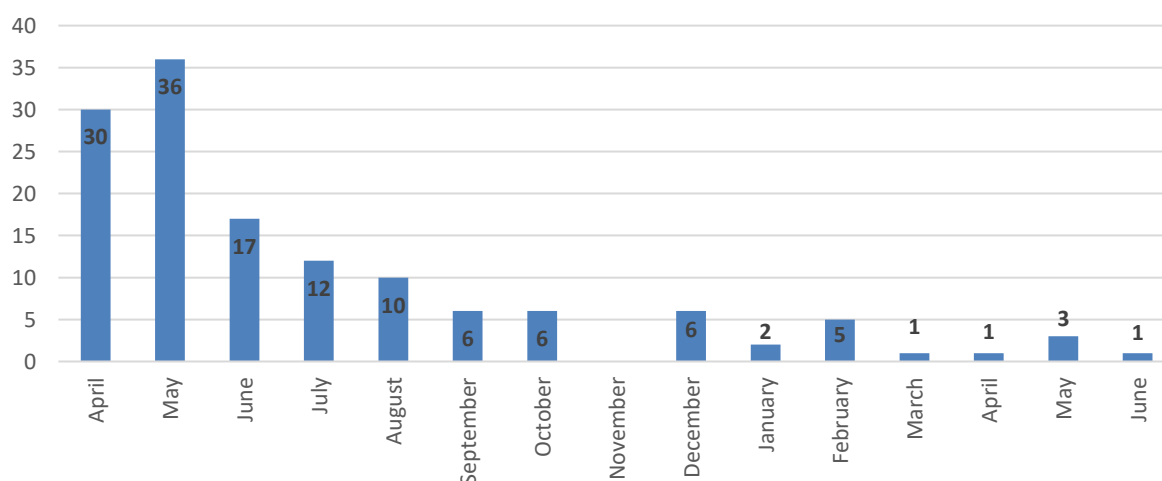
Garda representatives have stated that since the above mentioned incidents, the reopening of public facilities and hospitality has resulted in a more mature, understanding crowd and a more relaxed atmosphere in these areas.

The Authority will continue to monitor this area as restrictions continue to ease and beyond the public health emergency. Some key areas of concern include ensuring that in Garda Síochána interactions with stakeholders for the purposes of planning, there is an appropriate balance in considering the views of business interests and of communities. At a broader level, the Authority is continuing to monitor progress on the implementation of recommendations from the Garda Inspectorate's report on public order policing and has engaged with the Garda Síochána and Inspectorate on this matter.

5.3 Anti-Spit Hoods

Since their introduction, there have been 136 incidents involving anti-spit hoods. This includes two additional incidents since the last report. The low usage of these devices over the past six months is welcome and the Authority will continue to monitor individual incidents as they are reported.

Figure 4: The number of applications of anti-spit hoods by the Garda Síochána by month, 12 April 2020 to 12 July 2021



An assessment of the 136 incidents provided reveals;

- 69 of the incidents involved public order offences while 34 were associated with some form of assault.
- There were no new incidents of use on children, with seven such incidents recorded since the introduction of these devices.
- 116 incidents involved use of the devices on men while 20 relate to use on women.

- 111 involved persons with Irish nationality and 25 relate to other nationalities. There is no data available on the ethnicity of the persons involved.

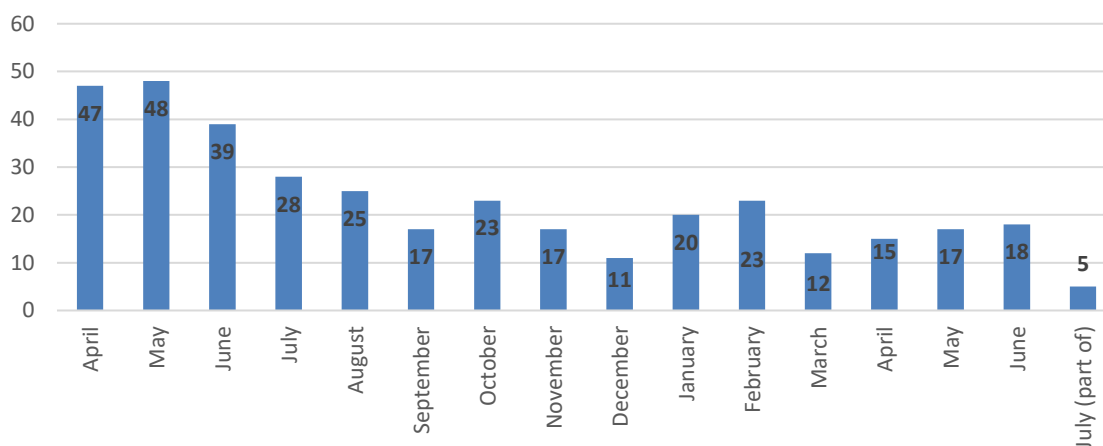
The Authority has received detailed reports for 135 of these incidents and the narratives have been reviewed to ensure they are consistent with the policies and procedures for deploying these devices. Analysis of these more detailed reports reveal the following;

- In 18 incidents, the Garda member perceived the detainee to have obvious signs of a mental health issue. This was not the case in 87 incidents and it was unspecified in a further 30 incidents.
- In 1 incident, the Garda member perceived the detainee to have obvious signs of a learning disability. This was not the case in 103 incidents and it was unspecified in a further 31 incidents.
- In 94 incidents, the Garda member perceived the detainee to demonstrate obvious signs of intoxication. This was not the case in 23 incidents and it was unspecified in a further 18 incidents.

5.4 Wellbeing of Garda Members and Staff

The Authority has continued to condemn assaults on garda members and it is concerning to see that these remain a regular feature within these reports. Since the last report there have been an additional 33 incidents where members have been coughed on or spat at. This brings the total to 365 since recording began.

Figure 5: Monthly breakdown of the number of assaults on Garda members who have been coughed on or spat at, 12 April 2020 to 12 July 2021



Appendix 1 – Graphical summary of certain policing activities

Figure 6: Reported use of COVID-19 policing powers (excluding FCNs) by Garda Division, 8 April 2020 to 10 July 2021



Figure 7: Distribution of crime incidents disclosed during COVID-19 policing activities by region, 8 April, 2020 to 10 July, 2021

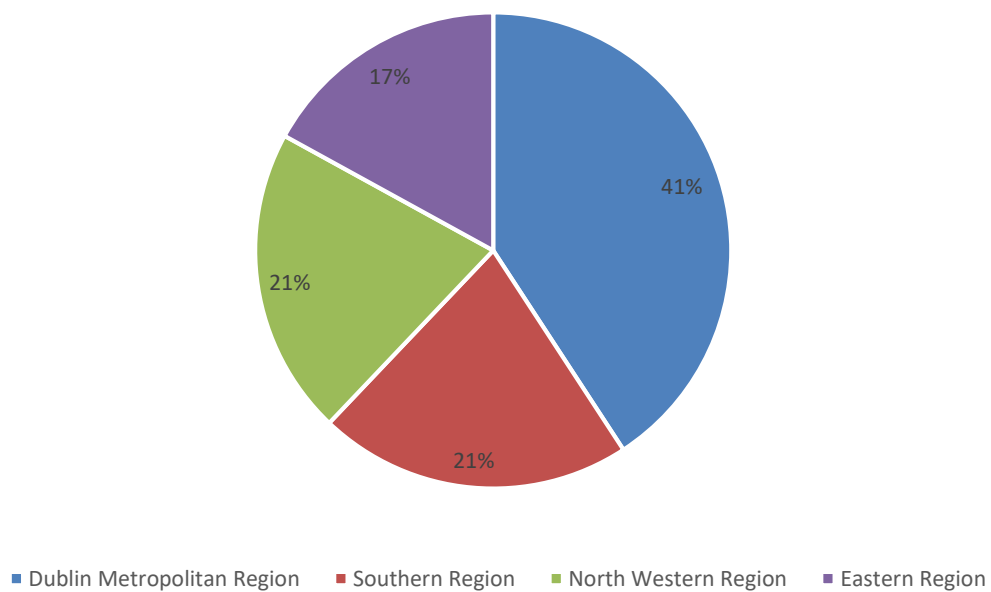


Figure 8: Checkpoints carried out by region, 5 to 11 July, 2021

