

C O M M U N I Q U E



GARDA COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE AWARD



THE IRISH SECURITY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION AWARDS will again include an award for a member of An Garda Siochana who has provided an outstanding service to the Community.

Nominations are requested for members of the force who make contribution to the community, either nationally or at a local level, which is over and above what would normally be expected of them.

Those nominated may be active in sporting, cultural or social groups either through their membership of An Garda Siochana or in their own time. The activity for which they are nominated may be a once-off event or a regular or on-going activity.

The main criteria is that the person nominated has given voluntarily and unselfishly of their time and energy to help others.

The prize will comprise of an ISIA Medal and a cheque to the value of €1,000. In addition the winner and partner will be guests at an Evening Banquet on Saturday, 13th November 2004 in Jury's Hotel, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

THE CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES: FRIDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER 2004

ENTRY FORM

To: **IRISH SECURITY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION,**
21, Waterloo Road, Dublin 4. Tel: 01-607 0198

I / We wish to nominate

of _____ Garda Station

for the Garda Community Excellence Award 2002.

A DETAILED SUBMISSION IS ATTACHED.

Nominated by: _____ Date: _____/____

Contact address: _____

_____ Tel: _____

Sponsored by



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A N G A R D A S Í O C H Á N A

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COMMUNITY

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Garda Corporate Strategy



Deputy Commissioner
T. P. Fitzgerald

How a Blended Approach,
Incorporating Hardwired Game Plans
and 'Soft' Team Focused
Leadership Competencies, are
Creating Real Value for Garda
Stakeholders

Deputy Commissioner T. P. Fitzgerald

INTRODUCTION

Strategic planning is often depicted as a top down rationally planned imperative (Chandler, 1962). In modern organisations such strategy making is perceived as being inextricably linked with senior leadership responsibility (European Foundation for Quality Management, 1999). It appears that in their wisdom and understanding of the business and its environment, corporate level leaders have greater insight of emerging challenges and opportunities facing the organisation. Therefore, they are best qualified to bring forward plans and strategies which differentiate the organisation's strategic approach and the priorities and initiatives to be promoted and pursued for the lifetime of the strategy. For several years now, Garda Corporate Strategy, which is prepared by the Garda Commissioner's senior management team, has delineated the strategic direction and strategic imperatives for An Garda Síochána. In essence Garda corporate strategy incorporates the whole gambit of executive level considerations – policing philosophy, vision, mission, values, strategic priorities, critical success factors, core processes: in other words, it presents us, as stakeholders (internal and external), with a strategic framework (Figure I) which defines the achievement and opportunity seeking space which An Garda Síochána occupies and wherein it seeks to perform, achieve, learn and grow in pursuit of its public mission.

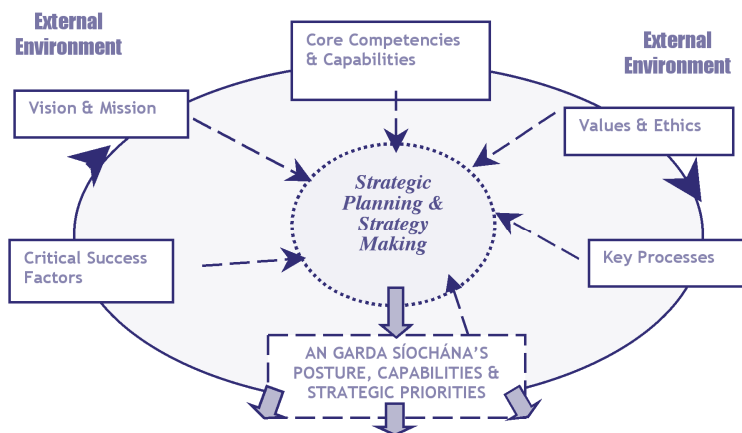


FIGURE I: STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Experience of leading, achieving and learning in the context of Garda strategic imperatives, over the past several years, has exemplified the

tension filled nature of strategic leadership. At its core we can differentiate two sets of countervailing forces: on the positive side, creative and inspirational energies and behaviours, striving to engage with and master the challenges thrown up by our policing environment; on the negative or controlling side, we are challenged to create constraints and controls to ensure compliance with public policy, liberal democratic values and legal, ethical and value for investment imperatives.

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The leadership challenge is to envision the desired successful future state and to clearly craft an achievement map for all to clearly see, understand and follow. Strategic managerial insight, coupled with courage and conviction, enables leaders to model the way and enables others to act (Kouzes and Posner, 2003). Such strategic behaviours enable leaders to effectively manage the countervailing forces, which create essential dynamic tension and open up the opportunity space necessary for effective crafting, implementation and control of strategy (Simons, 1995). Embracing the dynamic tension of the strategy arena and harnessing its achievement opportunities and potential is the business of true strategists. It is to this arena that one comes to experience true leadership in the form of unique enabling strategies and breakthrough organisational successes. How is An Garda Síochána's leadership coping with this challenging strategic reality? Is the strategy game helping? Is structure, strategy and culture combining to build excellence based capability and performance? Or is the traditional risk-adverse public administration mindset holding sway?

FORMULATING STRATEGY: GARDA CONSIDERATIONS

Before analysing the interface of Garda leadership and strategy, we will briefly reflect on some contemporary core ideas on strategy¹ and its formulation. The idea of 'strategy' is usually associated with activities and decisions concerning the long-term interaction of an organisation with its environment. Strategy represents the organisation's game plan (Kaplan and Norton, 2004): it's about selecting the set of activities in which the organisation will excel to create a sustainable difference, and how such activities will be performed. While competitive-based strategy formulation generally makes markets and customers the starting point for consideration (Porter, 1980; 1996), the resource-based approach (Hamel G. & Prahalad C.K., 1990; Blackler, 1995; Wernerfelt, 1995) tends to place more emphasis on the organisation's capabilities or core competences. The resource-based perspective promises to improve understanding of strategy formulation in firms, that are dependent on intangible resources (Hall, 1992). These include the rapidly growing knowledge-based services and knowledge-intensive industries (Sveiby,

¹ For a full exploration see, for example, Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, and Joseph Lampel, (1998) *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management*, Simon & Schuster, New York, and P. Ghemaat, "Competition and Business Strategy in Historical Perspective," *Business History Review*, Spring 2002: 37-74.

1992). Effective modern public policing, is in many respects, an example of a *social ordering* (Steward, 1992; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 1995) citizen focused service. Yet, if it is to succeed (in terms of public legitimacy and public cooperation, which are critical foundational supports of effective community-focused policing) in our market dominated liberal democratic society, it must also embrace the development and delivery of effective, client and customer focused services. Hence, our public service and community-focused ethos, which requires trust and trustworthy relationships to grow and flourish, must also accommodate new public management principles (Osborne, and Gaebler, 1992) of economic prudence, accessible and transparent accountability, and quality assured service standards as the second strand of our emerging twin track strategy. The complexity and tension created by this new reality points to new knowledge as a significant resource in strategy formulation.

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Knowledge-based strategy formulation should start with the primary intangible resource: the knowledge, skills, know-how and competence of people. People are seen as the only true agents in business; all tangible physical products and assets as well as the intangible relations are results of human action, and depend ultimately on people for their continued existence. People are seen to be constantly extending themselves into their world by both tangible means, such as policing craft, police stations, investigation equipment, transport systems and intangible corporate/voluntary associations, ideas, and relationships.

The next Garda Corporate Strategy for the period 2005 – 2007 must take cognisance of both approaches to strategy formulation and implementation, and bring forward a blended integrated strategic approach which will identify clear strategic areas for competitive interaction with the external environment, while bringing forward associated capability building initiatives that will enable An Garda Síochána to deliver effectively on its public mandate. Strategy which is 'learning friendly' encourages experimentation, learns about new challenges, practices and technologies, and builds a commitment to continuously improve performance across a range of domains, in the light of experience and new opportunities. In so doing, and following Mintzberg (1987), it will provide us with a dynamic blueprint for the strategic guidance of An Garda Síochána over the next three to five years: having incorporated a dynamic change capability as a key internal process, the intended strategy will enable unrealised strategy actions to be disregarded and emergent strategic issues to be incorporated as associated strategic uncertainties are mastered.

TRENDS IN GARDA STRATEGY

Significant progress in strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation is evident from a review of strategy making in An Garda

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Síochána. From simply describing what ought to be pursued, in the early days, more recent corporate strategy documentation and activities display improving alignment, integration and emerging cause/effect relationship logic, linked capability building, process integration and strategic goal achievement paths. An Garda Síochána is reforming its structures: it has established a strategic resource planning and management capability at Commissioner level. This capability is supported by ever improving human resources, information technology, technical/scientific, and financial management capabilities; all designed to support and enable the operational organisation progress towards excellence². There is increasing evidence of prudent incorporation and synthesis of new public management principles and associated Total Quality Management tools and techniques with sound public service principles and standards. There are moves to develop a common management and leadership language, and the application of learning from frameworks such as EFQM and the Balanced Scorecard. The evidence points to an ever increasing momentum in the leveraging and exploitation of intangible organisational assets as a critical means of delivering value for Garda sponsors, citizens, clients and customers.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Building on earlier achievements, the next Garda strategic plan must envision a desired future state which An Garda Síochána intends to pursue. A vision based on imperatives such as public safety and public confidence achieved through citizen focused organisational excellence recommends itself. Clearly, behaviours that are strategically evaluated as threatening public safety and public confidence in the Garda contribution must be prioritised – serious crime, threats from terrorism, dangerous road behaviour, disorder on our streets, etc. Our community policing philosophy mandates that fears and concerns among communities, and in particular new and vulnerable communities, must figure significantly in Garda strategic thinking. Pursuit of policing excellence signifies a strong commitment to continuously improving the internal structure, key competencies and core processes with a view to developing and delivering world-class public policing services. In reality it requires engagement, in an innovative and determined way, with the challenging realities of our ever changing, unpredictable and dynamic global policing arena while simultaneously developing, refining and delivering stakeholder valued contributions.

Garda mission and values demarcate the space within which An Garda Síochána will seek opportunities to make its public safety contribution – protection of each individual person, safety of communities and security of the State. Equally such mission and values signal domains of engagement, which are beyond the remit of An Garda Síochána in terms

² Excellence is defined as outstanding practice in managing the organisation and achieving results, all based on eight fundamental concepts – results orientation, customer focus, leadership and constancy of purpose, management by processes and facts, people development and involvement, continuous learning, innovation and improvement, partnership development, and public responsibility (EFQM, 1999). The aim here is to inculcate a continuous improvement philosophy and culture with a view to benefiting from periodic breakthroughs in capability, performance and outcomes.

of unacceptable risk. For example, everything that An Garda Síochána does must be underpinned by adherence to the rule of law and must demonstrate absolute respect for the dignity and rights of every person encountered. Activities which compromise these principles represent an unacceptable risk as being counterintuitive to An Garda Síochána's strategic imperatives of public safety and stakeholder confidence. Having clarified and agreed our opportunity achievement space, strategic initiatives identify the critical priority actions, which will be progressed over the next strategy period.

For any strategy to be meaningful, it must be steeped in, and take account of the culture, structure and belief systems of its community. In essence, it must be reflective of, and contribute to "our way of doing things around here – the Garda way", while stimulating necessary change to assure effectiveness. Here managing strategy and managing change are regarded as symbiotic. A core strength of An Garda Síochána and a foundation of our core competence lies in the strong esprit de corps which exists between and among its teams at all levels in the organisation – corporate level teams, tactical managerial level teams and street level service delivery teams. There is increasing evidence that An Garda Síochána's leaders are recognising and deploying this competence in aligning and implementing strategies.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND STRATEGY TEAMS


As noted above, managing strategy is, in essence, managing change. That simple observation adds an important dimension to the topic of strategy, one that is frequently overlooked. Strategy has a 'hard' side and a 'soft' side. The hard side involves describing strategy (with initiatives, goals, maps and measures) and executing it (with processes and procedures). The soft side, while less understood, is no less important. It involves leadership, culture, teamwork and reciprocal relationships - all prerequisites for organisational change. If we are to succeed, we need to have a better understanding of the critical enabling and achievement contribution of the soft side.

The challenge facing Garda Strategy Teams (strategic and operational) is to communicate the strategy to Garda stakeholders, both internally and externally, thereby building a common understanding and gaining commitment and engagement. In many respects, this communication, explanation and commitment building engagement process represents a real and significant leadership challenge. For if Garda leadership fails to engage and induce trust and reciprocity among stakeholders touching on the honesty, merit and value of the strategy, it is unlikely that the internal and external resources, in terms of psychological, emotional and practical

³ Goldman et al (2002) has brought forward an emotional intelligence framework to help develop leader competence in self-management and the management of relationships. The framework focuses on self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

⁴ See for example the four perspective (learning and growth; internal processes, customer; and value for investment) cause/effect relationship logic, which Kaplan and Norton (2001) proposes for successful implementation of strategies.

commitment will be forthcoming.



A further test of executive level leadership emanates from the dichotomous challenges of retaining organisational readiness for today, while engaging the transformational changes which will be required to meet the unseen challenges of tomorrow (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Here, involvement and engagement of people at every level of the organisation, by deploying the integrating power of teams and teamwork makes real sense. It assures early surfacing of misunderstandings, identification of knowledge and understanding gaps, and involves people in mapping the terrain required for successful implementation. Experience of the strategy game has identified strong emotional competence³ as a key leadership resource at this juncture. Value can be added by establishing a strategy team to drive each strategic initiative. Having taken cognisance of the overall corporate strategy, the logic of its cause/effect relationships as set out in a corporate level strategy map⁴, strategy teams would bring forward professionally grounded action focused strategic initiatives. Such team-based approach helps ensure that the broadest and best intellectual and experiential insights are engaged; that the import and intent of the overall strategy is communicated, engaged and rigorously appraised and evaluated for different core business areas of An Garda Síochána. In addition to creating dialogue and analysis, this engagement process also demands cross-functional teamwork and consideration of opportunities for synergies, integration and organisation wide alignment in pursuit of the Garda mission.

When the product of the work of the strategy teams is aggregated, clear achievement paths emerge, thus facilitating ease of communication, understanding and engagement of all employees in strategic behaviours. In addition, tactical management and service level teams will be afforded access to comprehensive leadership guidance and direction, thus simplifying local planning, priority making and behavioural engagement. In reality the overall strategic plan of An Garda Síochána will have been translated into operational terms for stakeholder guidance, direction and action. Where tactical and operational staff understand, identify with, and champion strategic priorities as valuable and worthy of support, the more likely it is that they will engage in strategic behaviours.

CONCLUSION

The strategic planning process is by now very well established in An Garda Síochána. While the preparation of documentation touching on corporate strategy and strategic planning has been around for some time, there is credible evidence emerging of ever increasing alignment and integration in Garda strategic processes. An Garda Síochána is on the move – from a functional organisation, comprised of functional islands of expertise to a much more strategy focused organisation. Garda leaders are engaging with and mastering the tensions of strategic management and leadership. There is a strong desire to strive for and achieve excellence in everything touching on the development and delivery of Garda services.

Dynamic and effective leaders⁵ are valued as an imperative at corporate, tactical and service delivery levels. Well-crafted strategies, which reflect key stakeholder priorities, and which command the support and commitment of staff, are emerging. A strategic framework for significant advancement is in place and the roadmap to guide strategic achievement signals the way ahead.

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⁵ Kouzes and Posner (2003) identify five practices of exemplary leadership. When extraordinary things get done, leaders: Model the way; Inspire others to act; Challenge the process; Enable others to act, and Encourage the heart. They also posit that for people to follow someone willingly, they must believe that the leader is Honest; Forward-looking; Competent; and Inspiring.



Inspector
Josephine Crowe



Sergeant
Kieran Dunne

Risk Management and An Garda Síochána

Inspector Josephine Crowe & Sergeant Kieran Dunne

INTRODUCTION.

While Corporate Governance may have been once seen as an issue solely for private listed companies, it is fast becoming an issue for public bodies and consequently for Government Departments. Risk management is a key element of corporate governance and therefore in the public sector, it must go hand in hand with the internal control environment operative within organisations. The issue of risk management and internal control within An Garda Síochána is a subject that has become more important and relevant in the recent past.

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While An Garda Síochána remains unique insofar as the Garda Commissioner has not yet attained the status of Accounting Officer, this is subject to change in the near future.¹ An Garda Síochána is one of the largest public sector organisations in Ireland with a current budget of over €1 billion provided out of public funds, and possesses almost 12,000 sworn members as well as 1,700 civilian support staff at more than 700 locations throughout the country. With the foregoing in mind, it is essential that An Garda Síochána monitor and manage risks through a control system and in a way in which the organisation will not be found wanting. The time to adopt a consistent policy of risk management is now.

WHAT IS RISK?

There are a variety of ways organisational risk can be defined but in the main it is about the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the organisation in its ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies, therefore risk can be defined as "*a set of circumstances that hinder the achievement of objectives*"²

The objectives of An Garda Síochána are set out annually in the Annual Policing Plans as well as in the longer term Corporate Strategy documents published every three to five years. Risk Management is the process by which the circumstances or set of circumstances that hinder or prevent the achievement of these objectives are identified, evaluated and subsequently controlled. An important issue in considering the response to risk is the ability to identify the *'risk appetite'* of the organisation. Risk appetite is the amount of risk to which the organisation can or is prepared to accept before it deems action to be necessary. The fact that the resources available to control the identified risks are likely to be limited means that internal control and value for money decisions must be made.

¹ Garda Síochána Bill, 2004.

² David M. Griffiths. 'Internal Auditing – A Risky Biz', November 2003

THE MULLARKEY REPORT

The *Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers*³ otherwise known as ‘The Mullarkey Report’, *inter alia*, places for the first time in Government Departments and the wider state sponsored bodies, the embedding of risk management into the culture of all organisations which are publicly funded.

The Mullarkey Report was the result of a Government decision taken in May 2000, when the Minister for Finance established a Working Group under the chairmanship of Mr. Paddy Mullarkey. This Group set out to examine the authority, responsibility and accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers in the context of other developments that were taking place under the Strategic Management Initiative - SMI⁴.

The findings and subsequent recommendations of this Working Group in July 2002 form the basis of internal control structures for accountability in the Public Service in Ireland. Subsequent to the publication of this report, the Mullarkey Implementation Group (MIG) was set up in late 2002 and comprised of Departmental Accounting Officers/Finance Officers with the express job of implementing the various recommendations, which include timeframes, and targets that affect An Garda Síochána. These recommendations, *inter alia*, include the establishment of a formal Risk Management Strategy and states - *by December 2004, all Government Departments must introduce formal risk management strategies into their management process.*

THE GARDA SÍOCHÁNA BILL, 2004.

The Garda Síochána Bill, 2004, currently before the Houses of the Oireachtas, indicates at Section 35 that the Garda Commissioner is to become the Accounting Officer for An Garda Síochána. The Bill also provides for the establishment of an Audit Committee comprising of a Deputy Garda Commissioner, a nominee of the Minister (Justice, Equality & Law Reform) and not fewer than three other persons who have relevant skills and experience in this area none of whom is, or has ever been, a member of An Garda Síochána.⁵

The Garda Síochána Bill, 2004 goes further than the Mullarkey Report recommendations and states with regard to embedding risk management in An Garda Síochána that the Audit Committee’s duties include advising the Accounting Officer on the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of An Garda Síochána’s procedures relating to Risk Management.⁶

³ *Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers*, Department of Finance, 2002

⁴ *Delivering Better Government – The Strategic Management Initiative*, Government Publications, Dublin 1996

⁵ *The Garda Síochána Bill, 2004*, Section 36.2

⁶ *The Garda Síochána Bill, 2004*, Section 37.2 (c) (iv).

RISK MANAGEMENT.

Risks can be categorised into many different varieties⁷ and those with particular reference to An Garda Síochána would include:

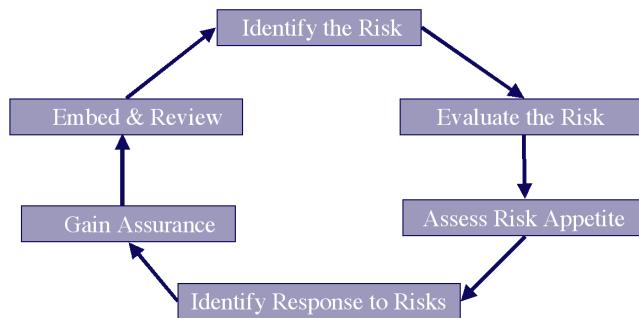
- | **Strategic Risk** – those risks that may be external to the organisation such as demographics and also can include other Social issues as well as Political, Economic, and Environmental factors,
- | **Operational Risk** – the risks relating to the procedures and methodologies employed to achieve particular objectives including the internal workings of the organisation and the adequacy of information received, the use of technology, planning and the management of projects/operations as well as innovation,
- | **Financial Risk** – risks relating to the accounting procedures and systems employed to ensure that the organisation is not exposed to monetary and asset loss as well as factors including budget management, liability, fraud etc...
- | **Reputational Risk** – the risks relating to the public reputation of the organisation and its ability to perform effectively.

How significant the above risks are to the organisation and how they are responded to is outlined in the Risk Management Cycle and the Risk Management Matrix which are set out below in more detail.

THE RISK MANAGEMENT CYCLE.

The Risk Management Cycle⁸ as displayed in Figure 1 below goes through six stages and is a continuous cycle from initially identifying the risk - **Strategic, Operational, Financial and/or Reputational** - to reviewing the response and ultimately embedding the risk into the organisation before going on to identify new or emerging risks and completing the cycle once more.

FIGURE 1: RM CYCLE



⁷ The Mullarkey Report, Department of Finance, 2002.

⁸ A Strategic View of Risk Management, HM Treasury, London, 2001

Coupled with the Risk Management Cycle, the Risk Management Matrix allows practitioners and managers to plot the impacts of the known risks using two axis – the *Likelihood* of the event occurring and the *Materiality* of the event on the organisation. The use of this matrix will determine the Risk Response that can be divided into four categories:

- a) *Transfer the Risk,*
- b) *Tolerate the Risk,*
- c) *Treat the Risk*
- d) *Terminate the Risk*

Referring to *Figure 2 below* where eventualities are determined, as being of *Low Materiality and Low Likelihood* would be tolerated while *High Materiality and Low Likelihood* would be determined as treatable, therefore the requirement of having a plan/process in place should the event occur and so on.

Events that are placed in the upper right hand quadrants would represent a Significant Risk to the organisation and would require a suitable response by the organisation bearing in mind the consequences of the event occurring.

FIGURE 2: RM MATRIX

Risk Management Matrix		Materiality		
		Low	Medium	High
Likelihood	High	Treatable Risk	Significant Risk	Significant Risk
	Medium	Tolerable Risk	Treatable Risk	Significant Risk
	Low	Tolerable Risk	Tolerable Risk	Treatable Risk

To *Terminate* the risk, as a response is not considered an option for An Garda Síochána nor in most circumstances is the *Transfer* of the risk to other agencies, therefore the risks identified must be either *Tolerated* (depending on Likelihood and Materiality) or *Treated*. The purpose of treatment is not necessarily to obviate the risk but more likely to contain the risk to an acceptable level.

The main difficulty of considering and evaluating risk is that different types of risk arise which may not be easily comparable. The analyses will assess the level of risk that the organisation is likely to be exposed to. This will also outline how effectively the risk is controlled and managed within an organisation such as An Garda Síochána.

ASSIGNING OWNERSHIP

It is not only important to identify the risks but it is also important to allocate responsibility for the management of these risks. The designated risk owners should be formed into a Risk Management Committee. Whatever structure is adopted, a mechanism for reporting to the Accounting Officer on risk issues must be established. For An Garda Síochána, this element is important considering the implications of both the Mullarkey Report and the requirements of the Garda Síochána Bill, 2004.

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The embedding of risk management into the organisation is critical to its success - it must become an intrinsic part of the way things are done in An Garda Síochána. The process must allow for the periodic review of risks and for adjustment in the response to the perceived risk.

CONCLUSION.

The task of risk management is to respond to perceived threat by taking action on the *Likelihood* and *Materiality* of the identified risk occurring. In the context of corporate governance requirements in the public sector, as mentioned at the outset of this paper, it must be ensured that An Garda Síochána, embed a risk and control structure firmly into the organisation and that the structure is subjected to review by senior management on a continuous basis.

Bearing in mind that the risk environment of An Garda Síochána is eclectic and constantly changing and that priority objectives and the consequent importance of that risk will regularly change. A risk management process is therefore an on-going requirement in all organisations and not a once-off exercise.

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Competency Approach to Selection and Promotion



*Superintendent
John Grogan*

Superintendent John Grogan

INTRODUCTION

The interview is the most favoured method of selection for promotion used by organisations world-wide. An Garda Síochána is no exception in this regard. Each year An Garda Síochána interviews approximately three thousand people, this includes internal promotion competitions and selection interviews for admission to the organisation.

In common with most organisations, An Garda Síochána traditionally employed an unstructured, general interview for both admission to the organisation and internal promotion competitions. International research indicates that unstructured interviews lack direction, preparation and uniformity. Generally interviews are conversation between the candidate and the interview board with no guidelines, commencing with the candidate giving a broad overview of their curriculum vitae. Seldom are two candidates asked the same questions. In many cases the questions asked are not relevant to the post applied for. Also, it is well known that unstructured interviews, may be subject to biases of the interview panel. In the current era of openness and transparency the major disadvantage of the unstructured interview is that where an unsuccessful candidate requests feedback or requests information on the interview process there is no formal method to meet any such request.

In 1997 the Garda Commissioner instituted a review of recruitment methods which was undertaken on behalf of the organisation by Saville & Holdsworth Ltd., Occupational Psychologists. The review took the form of a job analysis of Garda rank. The end result was the introduction in 1998 of a structured competency based interview system for admission to the organisation.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

During the 1990's the concept of competency based interviews gathered momentum. The rationale behind their introduction was the need to replace the general / unstructured interview with a selection process that would focus on core skills, in other words those specific skills or behaviours that constitute success in a particular role. During the course of the interview each competency is examined for a predetermined amount of time with the interviewer asking a set of focussed questions. The interviewer is seeking specific evidence that the applicant being assessed has the particular competency. In a competency based interview the interview panel allocates a score to each of the competencies being examined, the final score being an objective measure of the candidate's ability.

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WHAT IS A COMPETENCY

A competency may be defined as a written description of a trait or quality that someone must display if they are to be successful in a particular job. A competency is behavioural in that it is based on the way a person behaves in the job. Therefore it could be argued that a competency is a written description of the behaviour underpinning job performance, in that it describes what you actually do in order to meet the objectives of your role.

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The ingredients of a competency include in varying amounts – past experience (skills and knowledge) and the person's overall disposition (ability, personality and motivation). For example the competency of 'Directing and Co-ordinating Operations' (Inspector Rank) may be defined as '*co-ordinates activities and resources across units and operations. Ensures effective implementation by monitoring, reviewing and adjusting plans or operations on a frequent basis*'. (Saville & Holdsworth Ltd., 1999, p82)

Any organisation intending to introduce competency based interviews must first carry out in-depth research in order to identify the desired qualities and attributes which lead to effective performance in the post being analysed. An Garda Síochána was no different in this regard.

COMPETENCY BASED STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS IN AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA.

When the review of recruitment methods for new entrants to An Garda Síochána was carried out in 1997 by Saville & Holdsworth Ltd, amongst the terms of reference for the study were to:

- | Identify the key qualities and attributes necessary for effective performance in An Garda Síochána at Garda level
- | Prioritise the key requirements
- | Ensure that the recommended selection procedures identified those candidates most likely to perform effectively in the job.

The resulting extensive research programme involving personnel within and without the organisation was the genesis for the introduction of competency based structured interviews within the organisation. The information gleaned was then analysed to meet a number of information objectives, including a description of the key objectives of a Garda and a description of the key tasks performed at Garda level. These tasks were prioritised for the group according to their importance to the job objectives and the amount of time spent on them.

The competencies identified for Garda rank are:

- | Preparing for events and having an organised approach
- | Making balanced decisions and using your judgement
- | Working in a team

- | Understanding and working with the community
- | Persuading others and taking charge
- | Being determined to do your best

The competencies identified at Garda level are comprehensive, covering all of the key skills required to perform the job. They are an accurate reflection of the Garda Síochána culture, language, and are discrete and clearly defined. It may also be said that they incorporate a visionary element in that they avoid just reflecting the status quo. It is envisaged that this process of selection will produce Gardaí who will adapt quickly to the role of a police officer in what is becoming a more diverse and changing environment. It is also envisaged that the process will enable the service to recruit people who are competent at Garda level, yet also ensure that there will be a sufficient stream of candidates with potential for progression to the highest management levels in the organisation.

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STUDENT / PROBATIONER EDUCATION / TRAINING PROGRAMME AND COMPETENCIES.

The first major review of Garda training was conducted in 1985 under the chairmanship of Dr. Tom Walsh. The ensuing report entitled "Garda Training Committee – Report on Probationer Training" led to the introduction of a new training / education programme for new entrants to An Garda Síochána in 1989. Arising from the many significant changes in the economic, legal, social, cultural, educational and political fields a further review of Student Garda Education Training Programme was carried out in 1997 under the chairmanship of the then Assistant Commissioner Keating. This comprehensive review recommended the adoption of a competency based education / training and development programme conducted over two years, both in the Garda College and at designated Stations throughout the State. This recommendation was accepted by the Garda Commissioner and a competency based programme was introduced.

The competency based programme requires students to display the development and achievement of particular behaviours and standards (known as competencies) which are deemed essential for carrying out the Garda function effectively in addition to the acquisition of predetermined levels of knowledge and experience in police related subjects and technical skills. An Garda Síochána has identified six professional competencies that students are required to develop as they progress through the programme. These competencies mirror those used to assess the Students suitability at the initial selection as Garda Trainee's thus maintaining the link from selection through training to successful appointment to An Garda Síochána.

C E N T R E

Planning

"But tomorrow always arrives. It is always different. And then even the mightiest company is in trouble if it has not worked on the future" (Drucker, 1967).

Planning is generally considered to be concerned with setting of goals, the organisational mechanisms to achieve these goals and the formulation of evaluative techniques to monitor progress towards the goals set (Harding, 1987). Planning is a primary management function.

The value of a clear planning structure for an organisation is that all middle and first-line management, as well as employees, can see where they are expected to go, focus on the options that are available and know when they have arrived at the destination. Without clear strategic planning, enterprises lack focus, employees see inconsistency in actions taken; and it seems that every year or so something new is being tried. In short organisational disillusionment can emerge.

Executive managers in an organisation should be planning several years ahead - thinking, strategically, of new products and services, of new ways of obtaining resources, and of new ways of structuring their organisation. Most managers however, have a shorter time horizon. Most managerial planning is usually concerned with the next event or the next few months or, at most, one or two years into the future.

Planning generally falls into a number of categories;

▮ STRATEGIC

The strategic plan outlines the organisation's long-term ambitions and aspirations, which includes a list of strategic objectives. It should be congruent with the organisations mission, values, strategy purpose and behaviour standards (Lynch, 2003).

▮ TACTICAL

Tactical planning tends to be short term, undertaken by middle management and closely related to operational planning. Tactical planning deals with resource allocation, production or service level activities. It often involves developing schemes or tactics that ensures a particular section, unit or area buys in to a new initiative or venture.

▮ OPERATIONAL

Operational planning also tends generally to be short term, focused on particular events and designed to achieve definitive results. It is generally aimed at functional issues such as how to deal with production in industry or in a policing context how to deal with street disorder or event management.

▮ CONTINGENCY

Contingency planning reacts to the unanticipated and is usually short-term in nature. It has a close association with crises and the unexpected. All types of planning should contain elements of contingency planning. For contingency planning to be effective it requires a number of key components, flexibility, creativity, an effective communication mechanism, an ability to respond and clear lines of command and responsibility (Harding, 1987).

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING :

▮ Collaborative planning (Collins, 2004) is a modern



Corporate Strategy



Garda Meeting



Garda Filling Out Form

P O I N T

development particularly important to large global organisations that have geographically dispersed membership. This concept is becoming more prevalent within the public sector with the advent of cross-departmental involvement in projects. The F.C.P.S. Project¹ involving An Garda Síochána, The Department of Transport and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government entails such a requirement for collaborative planning.

Planning involves the use of many skills and techniques including the application of common sense, a factor that is always an asset. Much the same thought processes and consultation skills are required in planning the introduction of an ICT² computer system or moving to new offices as apply in planning a family holiday or an extension to your house. A plan essentially should have three basic aspects:

1. **Objectives:** what are the goals, targets, outcomes, or results you intend to accomplish?
2. **Implementation:** how are people and resources to be combined, in what activities over what time period, to accomplish the objectives?
2. **Evaluation:** how is the progress of the implementation to be continuously monitored so that amendments to the objectives or implementation can be made if things are not working out as they should. Organisations worldwide are finding it increasingly difficult to create robust plans for an uncertain

environment. The challenge is to create a road map of strategic directions that is responsive to the need for

1 FCPS is the Fixed Charge Processing System due for implementation in June 2004.
2 ICT is the title given to Information and Communication Technologies

rapid decisions, while providing an ongoing implementation framework that is consistent with strategic business drivers. A recent Gartner Consultancy Group publication revealed that CIOs (Chief Information Officers) timelines for IT strategic plans varied from the traditional five-year horizon down to 24 months. As planning horizons shrink, so does the time available to update plans (Roberts, 2003). An Garda Síochána has similarly reacted to a changing environment by reducing the timeframe for its Strategic Plan from five to three years.

Such is the pace of change today, the growth of uncertainty, and the diversity of customer expectations that the major risk for survival and success is in failing to plan. Strategic planning enables organisations to manage the future- if you don't manage the future, the future will manage you.

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Peter Fitzgerald, Editor



PC with Photo



Organisation Chart
Photographs by Photography
Section, Garda H.Q.

Much emphasis is placed on developing the abilities and skills deemed necessary to develop properly within the learning environment. Learning skills and the effective management of the learning environment are recognised as essential competencies to enhance professional development within the training programme.

In order that students progress through the various phases of their educational training they must satisfy their assessors that they have achieved the learning outcomes and that they have developed significantly in the achievement of the competencies specified.

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The natural progression for the organisation from the initial introduction of competency interviews for prospective applicants to the competency based model being applied to the Student / Probationer Training / Education Programme is to introduce a competency based promotion system. This system which will be introduced for the promotion competitions to be held in 2004 is based on the key competencies identified for each of the ranks from Sergeant to Chief Superintendent.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS AND PROMOTIONS.

Promotion to all ranks of An Garda Síochána, other than those of Deputy Commissioner and Garda Commissioner, is governed by the Garda Síochána (Promotion) Regulations 1987 / 2001. Selection of members for promotion to the rank of Superintendent and Chief Superintendent is by means of a competition held by an interview board, which consists of an interview with each candidate. The selection of members for promotion to the rank of Sergeant and Inspector is also by means of a competition held by an interview board consisting of an interview with each candidate at a Regional Interview Board followed by interviews with successful candidates at a Central Interview Board. The promotion interview format employed until now was unstructured and general in content, having regard to the make up of the selection panel. The perceived lack of uniformity and transparency in this system was the cause of certain discontent among some applicants. It was perceived that the promotion system in place may have been an obstacle to many members putting themselves forward for promotion resulting not only in a disadvantage to the members themselves but to the organisation in general.

In 1998 the Garda Commissioner under the aegis of the Promotion Advisory Council directed that a study be carried out that would identify new promotion systems which would be more effective and would use the most up to date selection techniques for all ranks up to and including Chief Superintendent. Amongst the terms of reference of the review were

the identification of the key qualities and attributes necessary for effective performance in supervisory / management posts in An Garda Síochána, the devising of a range of suitable techniques for use by An Garda Síochána in the promotion process and ensuring that the procedures recommended identify those candidates most suitable for promotion on a competitive basis. The research was conducted by Saville and Holdsworth Ltd in conjunction with a Garda working group comprising of a job analysis taking three forms; (1) questionnaires, (2) one to one interviews and (3) structured interviews.

Arising from the review, new promotion methods have been recommended. These recommendations have been accepted by the Garda Commissioner and following agreement between Garda management and the Staff Associations at Garda Síochána Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme, this year's promotion competitions will now take the form of structured competency based interviews for each rank analysed. The following improvements in the promotion procedures have also been provided:

- | Role descriptions and person specification have been developed
- | The 'self' and manager assessment forms have been revamped
- | The newly defined criteria (competencies) have been embodied into the 'self' and manager assessment forms and into the interview format for each rank
- | The interview structure, content and evaluation, has been revamped
- | The sourcing and training of civilian interviewers have been redefined
- | There will be standardised feedback from assessors and interview board personnel to all candidates.

The new structured competency based interview will therefore work to a predefined standard agenda, probe the candidates skilfully, evaluate consistently against predefined standards and will be characterised by consistency, fairness, objectivity and transparency. In order to ensure this, training is provided to the interview panels in the skills of competency based interviewing, analysing applicant responses and the provision of feedback. Likewise information guides together with briefing sessions are provided both for the applicants and the assessors to ensure a complete understanding of the process.

ADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS OF COMPETENCY BASED PROMOTION SYSTEM.

The introduction of competency based interviewing into the promotion system brings with it the positive advantages associated with all other interviews while reducing if not eliminating the negatives, namely:

- | Questions are based on an objective analysis of the job and can be seen to be directly relevant to the skills required in the job.

- | It is easier for information gathered in the interview to be evaluated on a rating scale against the competency.
- | Research demonstrates that competency based interviews have higher predicative validity (i.e. are better at predicting future job performance) than typical unstructured or biographical interviews.
- | The competency based interview may be a useful technique at second interviews and where selection is shared between interviewers (sequentially or in panels), as it allows for a structured and systematic approach with minimal overlap or repetition.
- | By using the same competencies, evaluations of the assessment from the interview can be readily integrated with information from other sources such as tests and exercises used in an assessment centre process.
- | While the competency based interview is less expensive and time consuming to develop, than the situational interview, it has comparable levels of validity.

Like any process there are potential limitations, namely:

- | To cover a large number of competencies thoroughly, the interviews may be very long.
- | If a chronological / biographical interview has not been carried out there could be significant aspects of a candidate's work history which have not been explored.
- | With less skilled interviewers articulate candidates may perform better during the interview and/or be overrated subsequently. (Saville & Holdsworth Ltd., Undated, p8)

However it is clear that the benefits far outweigh the limitations and An Garda Síochána has endeavoured to deal with these potential limitations by providing comprehensive training for interview panels, setting strict time scales for the examination of the core competencies during the interview process and providing an opportunity for the applicant in his/her self assessment form to give his/her career history (biographical background).

CONCLUSION

Since the initial study of Garda recruitment methods, An Garda Síochána has seen the successful implementation of competency based interviews for applicants to the service. This initial achievement has been progressed into the Student / Probationer training programme where it is once again proving to be a very successful benchmark for teaching and assessment. As a result the natural progression for An Garda Síochána was to develop a competency based interview selection system for promotion within the organisation.

Despite some trepidation at the introduction of competency based interviews, the process has proved to be a very useful tool in the selection

of suitable candidates for admission to the service and their development during their training phases. Deriving from this success it is envisaged that competency based selection methods can be beneficially employed for the selection of suitable personnel for promotion to the highest ranks with benefits accruing to both the organisation and the individual applicant.

The principal benefit of the new system to an applicant is that it presents a formalised objective structure as a means of standardising the interview process. This provides all applicants with an equal opportunity to present their abilities and skills in line with the specific requirements of the rank being sought. It also provides for transparency and feedback to the candidate both from local assessors and interview panels.

Similarly it will be most beneficial to the organisation in that the specific skills and qualities required for effective performance at each rank have been identified, thus permitting the interview panel to ascertain the candidate's capabilities. This will ensure that the best candidates are selected for promotion thereby maintaining continued efficient and effective management in An Garda Síochána in the future.

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Garda
Steven Meighan

An Examination of the concept of Cyber-terrorism

Garda Steven Meighan

"Tomorrow's terrorist may be able to do more damage with a keyboard than a bomb"

U. S. National Research Council, cited in Pollitt (2002).

"[The] location of leaders [of terrorist groups] no longer matters... They can inspire and guide a worldwide movement without physically meeting their followers - or even knowing who they are"

Paul Eedle, writing in *The Guardian*, cited in Thomas (2003).

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INTRODUCTION

It is argued that we all depend on computers (Pollitt, 2002), perhaps even more than society's dependence upon electricity, and that we use them to enable and control processes such as industry, business, power delivery, aviation and financial services, and also to communicate with each other worldwide 24x7. Computers have vital and valuable information stored on them. In short, millions of people around the globe have incorporated the Internet and advanced information technology into their daily endeavours (Vatis, 2000); unfortunately some people use this technology to commit crime and unlawful acts. Norman (2002) argues that crime involving computers has existed since their invention and their rapid development and utilisation has helped 'globalisation' to occur. But this has also increased the scale and opportunities for offending and crime.

The prefix 'cyber' refers to computers and Internet technology. Cyberspace is the Internet and the material and services provided by it and by extension terms such as cybercrime refer to criminal acts committed utilising these technologies.

Cybercrime² is inherently transnational due to the makeup of the World Wide Web, and also because cybercriminals transcend national boundaries to evade detection and capture by law enforcement agencies that are constrained by national jurisdictions. DiGregory (2000) suggested that "...armed with nothing more than a computer and a modem [one could] victimise people, businesses and governments anywhere in the world without ever stepping outside [their] home. This can happen for nearly every type of crime including violent crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, distributing child pornography, identity theft, theft of intellectual property and attacks on e-commerce merchants".

¹ The United Nations (UN) (2003) offers a number of candidates for the so-called "Gordian definitional knot" of terrorism. It is interesting to note that no one definition has yet been accepted as conclusive. The author considers the following to best describe the term; "Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of [fear or] terror in the general public for political purposes". The UN explanation further states that these acts are in no circumstances justifiable "whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked [in justification]". Cyber-terrorism will be defined in the main body of this case study.

² Grabosky (2001: 195) offers the following simplistic but satisfactory definition of cybercrime as: crimes "committed with or against" computers, the Internet and other advanced informational technologies.

Cyberspace provides new tools and opportunities for offending, not only for criminals but it also creates new threats for national security systems as well, for example terrorism (Vatis, 2000). Cyberterrorism is the convergence of terrorism and cyberspace and understandably will be utilised to its fullest effect by terrorists at every opportunity (Gordon and Ford, 2002).

DEFINITION OF CYBERTERRORISM

Within conventional academic writings on the subject there exists a plethora of definitions for both cybercrime and cyberterrorism. Cyberterrorism is in fact a sub-set of cybercrime, the only difference being the motivation involved for the particular act. Cyberterrorists operate with a political agenda or type of fanaticism (Furnell & Warren, 1999), whilst cybercriminals are normally economically motivated (Norman, 2002). Therefore, any crime in cyberspace³ could in fact be cyberterrorism if the aim and motivation is fanatical in nature.

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The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation defines cyberterrorism as a premeditated, politically motivated attack against stored information and computer systems, which may result in violence against non-combatant targets committed by terrorist groups or clandestine agents⁴. This takes into account the fact that a computer may be used as a facilitator to or enabler of terrorist activity. The Information Warfare Site⁵ defines Cyberterrorism as the intentional use of or threat of use of violence, disruption or interference against cyber systems when it is likely that such use would result in death or injury, civil disorder, or damage to property or extreme financial harm.

Pollitt (2002) argues that one must differentiate cyberterrorism from other kinds of regular computer crime, such as 'economic espionage', using Internet technologies to enhance spying capabilities and 'information warfare', the hacking of information systems (Wall, 2001: 32-33). The author disagrees and suggests that all activity by terrorists on the Internet should be considered cyberterrorism.

TERRORISM IN CYBERSPACE

Thomas (2003) suggests that the Internet has been used as a "virtual battle ground for peacetime hostilities between Taiwan & China, Israel & Palestine, Pakistan & India, China & US; [and] in actual conflict between NATO forces and elements of the Serbian population". In most cases hackers from both sides, for example in the latter Serbia and Kosovo, became involved in a war to see which group could cause the most damage against the computer systems of the other group (Drakulic & Drakulic, 1999). Vatis (2001) discusses these incidents in detail and states that there exists a link between the Internet and a number of critical systems such as banking & financial institutions, telecommunications systems (e.g. 999), and utilities (such as electricity, water, gas, oil). A doomsday

³ Vatis (2000) lists a number of potential offences that range from simple defacement of websites by juveniles to sophisticated intrusions. Grabosky (2001) expands on this list.

⁴ As cited on <http://www.whatis.com>, an excellent site offering topic definitions.

⁵ <http://www.iwar.org.uk>

scenario could unfold if a terrorist group were to take control of a computer controlling a critical unmanned system and cause it to malfunction⁶.

Gordon and Ford (2002) say that it is possible to utilise computers as a new form of traditional terrorism. Terrorist groups are increasingly using information technology systems and their associated tools of email and the web for their purposes. Thomas (2003) agrees by saying that the "Internet [is] used as a Cyberplanning tool for terrorists". Cyberplanning is the digital coordination of an integrated plan stretching across geographical boundaries that may or may not result in bloodshed (Thomas, 2003).

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Commentators such as Thomas (2003), Vatis (2001), Cohen (2002), Furnell and Warren (1999) suggest that terrorist groups use Internet technology for propaganda, publicity, fundraising (finance), information dissemination, secure communications, planning and coordination. This is another example of a legitimate Internet facility being misused for nefarious purposes.

CYBERTERRORISM: THREAT OR FANTASY?

There exists two bodies of opinion on whether cyberterrorism is a threat or a fantasy, one who says that cyberterrorism cannot physically hurt you and is a myth, the other arguing that the threat is real (Desouza and Hensgen, 2002). The truth probably lies somewhere between the two.

Jane's Intelligence Review (1999) states that, cyberterrorism has had intense media coverage, and argues that much of the threat is unsubstantiated rumour and media exaggeration, with 99% of incidents akin to digital graffiti caused by "script-kiddies" rather than 'serious' terrorist groups in action. *These are individuals who break security on computer systems without understanding the exploit they are using (Vatis, 2001: 14), scripts and associated tools are readily available, with instructions, on the Internet.* For example, the recently arrested author of the Sasser worm, a piece of self-replicating software that has the potential to deny access and destroy information on a computer system, was an 18 year old German student (Silicon Republic, 2004).

Vatis (2001) argues that to date few terrorist groups have used cyber attacks as a weapon, but the media have fuelled the fear of computer misuse and in turn has raised the perception levels of what a potential terrorist attack might achieve with them (Pollitt, 2002). He also states that information stored in cyberspace is at risk, but the risk to the physical health of mankind as a result is, at present, indirect or discrete. He says that it is not possible, now, for computers to control sufficient physical processes, without human intervention, to pose a significant risk of terrorism in the classical sense (ibid, 2002), i.e. remote digital terrorism.

⁶ Pollitt (2002) enumerates a number of such examples. (1) Take over the computer that measures the dosage of an ingredient into an everyday commodity, and make it fatal (2) The Die-Hard 2 Scenario, Take over Air Traffic Control and cause a plane to crash. These examples would have to overcome the built-in human fails-safe as well as the automatic controller to be 'successful'.

⁷ E.g. Bomb a building and execute a simultaneous cyber attack on the power grid, hospitals, emergency services and media to cause confusion, distraction and maximise damage (Jane's Intelligence Review, 1999). The author suspects that this type of attack is beyond the realm of reality at this point in time.

Thomas (2003) asserts that cyberplanning is a more important cyber weapon than the much touted and feared option of a virtual attack resulting in violence against non-combatant targets, with the author's agreement. What could happen is a combination of actual attack and a simultaneous virtual attack⁷.

CONCLUSION

Cyberterrorism as a concept is relatively unknown at present but evidence suggests that it is plausible, but in reality it is difficult to conduct anything beyond simple kiddie script attacks (Jane's Intelligence Review, 1999). The much feared and touted remote digital terrorist act is a long way off yet. What is real is the use of the Internet as a tool to support terrorist activity. Activities such as recruitment, financing and coordination can be carried out effectively using the tools readily available in cyberspace.

The fear of a cyber attack and the damage perceived is more significant than what can be achieved in reality (Thomas, 2003). However, the goal of terrorism is to create terror and fear. This in turn undermines faith in the establishment and disrupts the normal way of life. The perceived threat, even if not attainable, achieves the terrorist's goal, by inducing the fear of crime and uncertainty among the population.

This potential method of offending will undoubtedly present new challenges for An Garda Síochána in its continuing fight against terrorism in all its guises, national and international.

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An Organisational structure of An Garda Síochána - a Machine Bureaucracy?



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INTRODUCTION

Machine bureaucracies are defined by their standardisation of work processes and have traditionally been associated with the private sector and more specifically with the production and manufacturing industries. Machine bureaucracies work most effectively in simple and stable environments where work tasks can be routinised and standardised. (Mintzberg, 1983).

This article will discuss the concept of machine bureaucracies and how elements of machine bureaucracies can be applied to the organisational structure of An Garda Síochána.

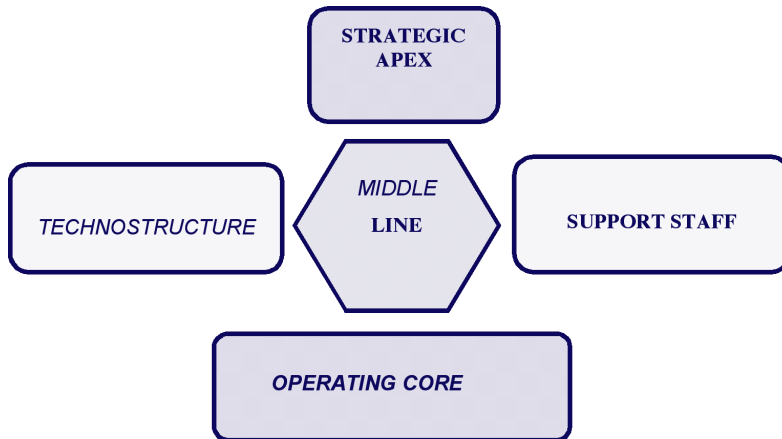
FEATURES OF A MACHINE BUREAUCRACY

Machine bureaucracies are typical in large established organisations where the volume of work allows for repetition and standardisation. As standardisation is of paramount importance to the operational effectiveness of a machine bureaucracy, the technostructure, which coordinates the standardisation of practices, plays a central role in the organisational structure. (Mintzberg, 1983). The main features of a machine bureaucracy include:

- | Hierarchical management structure
- | Highly specialised and routine operating tasks
- | Formalised procedures in the operating core
- | Rules and regulations which permeate through all levels of the organisation
- | Formalised communications structure
- | Large sized units at the operating level
- | Centralised decision making process
- | Elaborate administrative structure

The organisational structure of a machine bureaucracy is dominated by the Technostructure. It does however have a well-defined hierarchical management structure that emanates from the strategic apex to the operating core. A machine bureaucracy displays the following organisational structure:

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FIGURE 1. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF A MACHINE BUREAUCRACY

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Source: Structure in Fives: Designing effective organisations by Henry Mintzberg

Machine Bureaucracies have, as already stated, traditionally been associated with the private sector. Elements of a machine bureaucracy can however, also be identified in the public sector.

AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA - A MACHINE BUREAUCRACY?

An Garda Síochána is one of the largest organisations within the public sector and has a well-defined, hierarchical structure. Many elements of the organisational structure of An Garda Síochána could be compared to that of a machine bureaucracy. A machine bureaucracy relies on authority of a hierarchical nature, and the power of "office" and "rank" are seen as essential.

Within An Garda Síochána, the Commissioner holds the position of the strategic apex. His office must sanction all H.Q. directives relating to the operation of An Garda Síochána. The Commissioner is assisted in this function by two Deputy Commissioners and eleven Assistant Commissioners.

Their role within An Garda Síochána could be likened to that of elaborate middle management within a machine bureaucracy. They are responsible for the allocation of resources within their own particular department or section. For example the Deputy Commissioner, Strategic and Resource Management, directs strategy, planning, and all other resource activity within An Garda Síochána. (An Garda Síochána Annual Report 2002).

FIGURE 2. ELEMENTS OF A MACHINE BUREAUCRACY WITHIN AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

Subunit	Example positions
<i>Strategic Apex</i>	<i>The Commissioner</i>
<i>Middle Line</i>	<i>Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners</i>
<i>Technostructure</i>	<i>Change Management, Organisation Development Unit, Garda Internal Audit Unit</i>
<i>Support staff</i>	<i>Civilian staff</i>
<i>Operating Core</i>	<i>Operational Gardaí</i>

Although strategic and operational decision-making rests with the top and middle layers of management in An Garda Síochána, the operating core provides the essential foundation on which the Commissioner relies for the day to day running of the service. The Gardaí who operate on a daily basis "to achieve the highest level of Personal Protection, Community Commitment and State Security" represent the operating core of An Garda Síochána. (Garda Corporate Strategy 2000-2004). It is at this operating core where the elements of a machine bureaucracy are deficient.

Certain tasks within An Garda Síochána are carried out in a routine and standardised way. For example, there is a standard approach to dealing with a passport application and these standards are applied throughout the force.

Other tasks however cannot be standardised and may require a different approach every time. For example, dealing with a victim of a crime. It would be impossible to standardise this activity as every case may present different factors. Some victims may require more Garda time than others. Other Garda activities may present themselves as standard mundane tasks but external factors may create complications. Court procedure and the prosecution of offenders may appear to be standard and straightforward procedures. The Gardaí however operate in a perpetually changing environment. Externalities such as media attention, witness and defendant behaviour and legislation can sometimes adversely affect even the simplest of court cases. Machine bureaucracies operate most effectively in stable and predictable environments. An Garda Síochána operates in neither.

The variability of police work makes it difficult to standardise. (O'Brien, 2003). Gardaí are not only seen as enforcers of the law but are often called upon to deal with matters that are often outside the remit of general policing duties. This again complicates the standardisation process.

The use of discretion, when dealing with members of the public has always been an important aspect of policing within An Garda Síochána. To completely standardise the operational work of members of An Garda Síochána, the use of discretion would also have to be addressed. If the use of discretion was removed and standard operating procedures were adhered to without room for flexibility this could create an atmosphere of hostility not only within the operational core of An Garda Síochána but it could also create a negative public image. An Garda Síochána polices Ireland by consent and therefore relies on public cooperation in the execution of its duties.

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The development of IT and Change Management within An Garda Síochána could be interpreted as another step towards the development of a machine bureaucracy. The introduction of the PULSE (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively) system in 1999 was a major development in the move towards the standardisation of work processes.

Because of its scale and complexity, the project was introduced over a number of stages but it facilitated the standardisation of police records. For example, records relating to traffic accidents are standardised; a template on the PULSE system ensures that the same details in a traffic accident are recorded every time. The Fixed Charge Processing System which is currently being developed by Fujitsu in Garda Headquarters, will also facilitate standardisation; it will enable members of An Garda Síochána to electronically process fixed charge road traffic offences as provided for in the Road Traffic Act, 2002.

The Change Management Section was primarily developed to ease the introduction of the PULSE system into the daily operation of An Garda Síochána. It has however become since its inception a fundamental and essential section of An Garda Síochána concerning itself with any issues associated with change within the organisation.

Organisational analysis is another key task of the Change Management Section, which includes diagnosing inconsistencies between existing practices and proposed future practices in terms of legislation, policies, roles and responsibilities. The Change Management Section also concerns itself with marketing and communication. An Garda Síochána in the same way as any other public sector organisation faces huge challenges that the introduction of new systems and practices generates and must be equipped to meet these challenges. (Nolan, 2002).

There are many similarities between the role of Change Management and the role of a technostucture within a machine bureaucracy. A

technostructure houses the analysts who are responsible for planning, training and changing of work practice. Although they are removed from the workflow, their influence on work practices and employees directly affects the organisation. Two other sections within An Garda Síochána that could be classed under the technostructure label are the Organisation Development Unit and the Garda Internal Audit Section. Both sections are removed from the operating workflow but their work also affects the operational effectiveness of the force, thus building organisational change capacity for goal achievement.

The Organisation Development Unit has responsibility for researching, developing and improving the organisational effectiveness of An Garda Síochána. Strategies for improving the effectiveness of An Garda Síochána are evaluated and implemented by this unit. In addition any issues concerning the organisational effectiveness, raised by the management of An Garda Síochána are researched and reported upon. (An Garda Síochána Annual Report 2002).

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The Garda Internal Audit Section was established in July 2001 and has responsibility for ensuring that all assets are properly recorded and that all expenditure is properly authorised. The Garda Internal Audit Section is capable of providing records that form a reliable basis for the preparation of organisation wide statements. The work of this section identifies any areas that may require attention or any policies that may require amendment.

Another element common to the organisational structure of An Garda Síochána and that of a machine bureaucracy is the formalised communications structure. The channels of communication within An Garda Síochána follow the same pattern of the hierarchical structure. Written communication must pass through each level of the rank structure, that is from Garda to Sergeant, Sergeant to Inspector, Inspector to Superintendent and so forth.

CONCLUSION

Although there are many similarities between the organisational structure of An Garda Síochána and that of a machine bureaucracy, An Garda Síochána does not meet all of the criteria that would define it as a machine bureaucracy. An Garda Síochána has learned many lessons and adopted many of the practices that are typical of a machine bureaucracy such as the hierarchical structure, the formalised communications structure, the existence of a technostructure and rules and regulations that permeate the organisation. There are however limitations to the lessons that can be learned from machine bureaucracies, and only certain elements of its organisational structure that can be applied to that of An Garda Síochána.

The standardisation of work practices can only be applied to certain aspects of policing work. The variability of policing does not allow for the complete standardisation of police duties. Machine bureaucracies are concerned with "outputs" whereas An Garda Síochána perceives itself to be more "outcome orientated".

In addition An Garda Síochána does not operate in a vacuum, and external factors repeatedly dictate the path that the organisation must follow. Machine bureaucracies work most effectively in stable and simple environments, An Garda Síochána operates in a dynamic, unpredictable environment.

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