



BUSINESS WATCH

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION UNIT
AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

FOREWORD

In line with An Garda Síochána's ongoing commitment to the prevention and reduction of crime, I am pleased to present this Business Watch information booklet. It is designed to provide information to members of the Business Community and An Garda Síochána on establishing and expanding Business Watch schemes. This user friendly booklet will contribute to the effective communication of the scheme to all parties concerned. Crime prevention initiatives combined with assistance from the community have proven to be invaluable in combating crime.

Under these schemes, responsibility can be fixed on members of An Garda Síochána and on individuals in the Business Community for liaison on all crime related matters. Crime prevention advice is readily available, either informally or at specially convened briefings where common problems can be identified and solutions agreed. Review of schemes can take place so that past experience can become a platform for improvement.

This type of partnership between the Gardaí and community has unlimited potential and I wish it continued success. I am most grateful to the many people in the business community and members of An Garda Síochána for their hard work in support of the various projects and appreciate very much the key partner in this venture, Chambers Ireland, for their continued support.

Nóirín O Sullivan
Commissioner
An Garda Síochána



BUSINESS WATCH

Crime accounts for a significant cost to our society and is a serious barrier to economic development. Direct losses from theft, attacks on property and vandalism, as well as preventive measures, can place the viability of many businesses at risk. The overall cost of crime, through personal losses, injuries and overall quality of life is much greater. The image of our towns and cities is critical to attracting tourism and inward investment. Jobs are at stake. We must not let the criminals win.

We cannot look to the public authorities to solve all the problems of crime. There is much that business can do to help itself. Business Watch can help solve many of the problems that business faces in the battle against crime. The principle is simple – helping the business in your own locality is helping yourself. The combined forces of business working together with the Gardaí can be a formidable force. The Chambers of Commerce is ideally placed to organise businesses in their own cities, towns and localities to join the Business Watch scheme.

Chambers Ireland fully supports Business Watch.

Ian Talbot
Chairman
Chambers Ireland



BUSINESS WATCH

WHAT IS BUSINESS WATCH?

Business Watch is a Crime Prevention Programme designed by An Garda Síochána. It is founded on the same principles as Neighbourhood Watch, that is the practice of both the Gardaí and the community coming together to prevent and reduce crime. The only difference being that the community, which this scheme targets, is the business community.

The scheme starts from the basic premise that you and your neighbours in business can play a vital role in the fight to prevent the massive losses to the business community and society caused by crime.

Business Watch provides a framework within which the business community can join together and be instrumental in preventing crime in their own community. Through awareness, observation and commitment to action – people at work become extra ‘eyes and ears’ of the Gardaí and would act as ‘watchman’ to their own and their neighbours’ premises – in the prevention of crime.

Most crimes are crimes of opportunity. Business Watch aims to reduce the opportunity significantly.

HOW BUSINESS WATCH WORKS

The size, location, population of a business centre, coupled with the problems particular to the location; very much dictate the form a Business Watch Scheme will take. However, regardless of the form taken by a scheme, members of each scheme will share a number of common activities:

- They are on the lookout for crime or any suspicious situation that would indicate crime is being committed in or around the ‘Watch’ area.
- They report what they see or suspect immediately to the Gardaí and to other members of Business Watch through the lines of contact provided by their scheme.
- They work closely with their local Gardaí to ensure their premises are as secure as possible.
- They mark company property as a crime prevention measure.
- Preventing crime is the responsibility of every citizen.



BUSINESS WATCH AND AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

Whilst the key participants in Business Watch are the members themselves - An Garda Síochána play an important role, firstly in terms of specialist Crime Prevention advice and secondly, through active liaison with the Business Watch Committee to address crime and crime related issues as they arise.

A Garda from the local station will be given special responsibility to liaise with a Business Watch Scheme and at central level the Community Relations & Community Policing Division will have overall responsibility for the development of Business Watch throughout the country.

The contact details are:

Garda National Crime Prevention Unit
Garda Community Relations & Community Policing Division
Dublin Metropolitan Area Headquarters
Harcourt Square
Dublin 2

Phone: (01) 666 3362



BUSINESS WATCH - STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

The structure of Business Watch can be looked at in terms of three key partners:

- An Garda Síochána
- Chambers of Commerce
- The Business Community

All interrelated and interdependent

AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

Four elements constitute Garda involvement:

- Liaison Gardaí
- Divisional Community Relations/Crime Prevention Officer
- Garda Superintendent
- Garda Community Relations & Community Policing Division

THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

At both national and local level Chambers Ireland will have a key role in the establishment and maintenance of Business Watch schemes in conjunction with the local business people and local Gardaí. A member of the local Chapter of the Chamber of Commerce will be appointed to the Business Watch Committee.

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The Business Community will be involved in a number of different ways:

- Business Watch Committee
- Business Watch Co-ordinator(s)
- Business Watch members themselves
- Employees/management who constitute the scheme

See the relevant paragraphs for the functions of the above elements.



AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA - ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

BUSINESS WATCH LIAISON GARDAÍ

- Liaise with Business Watch Schemes through the Business Watch Co-ordinator.
- Maintain regular contact with the members of the Business Watch Committees to which he/she is assigned.
- Be available to provide relevant advice to Business Watch members and attend Business Watch meetings.

DIVISIONAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS/CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER

- Provide crime prevention advice on premises, home, car and personal security.
- Provide direct support to Business Watch Committees.

LOCAL GARDA SUPERINTENDENT

- Meet the people interested in establishing a Business Watch Scheme.
- Discuss the feasibility of setting up a scheme in that area.
- Advise on the approach to be taken and the method of implementing it.
- Arrange an open meeting and explain the concept of Business Watch and its operation.
- Evaluate the level of support for Business Watch in the proposed area.
- Nominate a Garda to liaise with the Scheme. Manage and supervise the liaison with schemes in the District and monitor the effects of the scheme on crime.

GARDA COMMUNITY RELATIONS & COMMUNITY POLICING DIVISION

The National Crime Prevention Unit at Community Relations & Community Policing Division will monitor the overall development of Business Watch.

- Provide information on the establishment and maintenance of Business Watch schemes.
- Give advice and support.
- Provide relevant literature to schemes.
(also available at www.garda.ie)



BUSINESS WATCH COMMITTEE - ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

The size of the Committee will be dictated by the needs of each individual scheme. However, it should consist of a number of individuals who represent the business community. In addition, a representative from the local Chapter of the Chamber of Commerce and the Liaison Garda will form part of the Committee.

The Business Watch Committee, the members of which will be known as Business Watch Co-ordinators will have a number of responsibilities centring on the establishment, development and maintenance of Business Watch.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Once the Committee has been established, attention can then be focused on the process of preventing and/or reducing crime. This will involve three stages:

Defining the problem:

- Prepare a crime profile
- Collect data
- Consult
- Analyse
- Review policy and practice

This data will be collected by completing a survey in the immediate area of concern. A self-completion questionnaire form should be devised to suit local needs. Once the relevant data has been collected the next step is deciding what to do.

Deciding what to do:

- Prioritise problems
- Develop options
- Appraise options
- Prepare operational plan

Some of the key issues identified by the survey may revolve around shoplifting, theft of stock by employees, robberies, incidents of public disorder due to drinking in public. At this stage the Committee must priorities its response and develop appropriate measures.

Implementing the solutions:

- Plan action
- Obtain resources
- Take action
- Monitor progress



THE BUSINESS WATCH COMMITTEE - STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

This is a vitally important stage in the process and must be done in a co-ordinated fashion and in consultation with all relevant parties. Responsibilities for particular tasks need to be allocated.

The Business Watch Committee should hold progress meetings on a regular monthly/bi-monthly basis to assess what has been achieved and to identify any other issues, which may need resolution.

Finally, it is important to approach the establishment and operation of the Business Watch Scheme in a systematic manner. This will ensure that problems are identified correctly, priorities are determined and alternative options for action are appraised. The foregoing sections have outlined an overview of the structure and functions of the Business Watch Committee. The next section details the day to day functions of the Business Watch Co-ordinator.

BUSINESS WATCH CO-ORDINATORS WILL:

- Act as a link between Business Watch Committee and the ordinary members.
- Have on-going contact with individual members.
- Support and encourage all members of the scheme to be vigilant and report anything suspicious to the co-ordinator.
- Be involved in property marking and any other projects.

MEMBERS OF BUSINESS WATCH WILL:

- Be aware
- Be alert
- Be secure
- Be informed
- Be a good neighbour



BUSINESS WATCH SCHEMES (POINTS TO REMEMBER)

- Unique. No two schemes are alike. Each will operate in a distinct way at ground level. What suits one scheme may not suit another.
- Personality. The personality of the Business Watch Co-ordinator will emerge and influence how the scheme develops.
- Support and participation by all members of the scheme is essential to its success.
- Maintaining interest. In order to ensure that the initial enthusiasm in the scheme is sustained consider developing related projects, such as: the organisation of telephone or radio network to monitor criminal activity in the 'Watch' area, the installation of C.C.T.V. and the possibility of implementing static guard protection.

The local Liaison Garda and the staff at the Community Relations & Community Policing Division will be available to assist in this area.



STARTING A SCHEME IN YOUR AREA

INITIAL MEETING/PRELIMINARY OBJECTIVES

Any member of the Business Community can initiate the establishment of Business Watch. Consultation with the local Gardaí will identify what action is already being taken and provide helpful information on getting started.

A discussion should be held with the local Garda Superintendent regarding the plan to establish a Business Watch scheme. Following this discussion a date will be set for an open meeting with all interested parties at a time and venue to suit all concerned.

During this open meeting, a member of An Garda Síochána will:

- Explain fully the concept of Business Watch.
- Define the function of the Business Watch Committee and in particular that of the Co-ordinators, so that all intending participants will know what commitment is necessary.
- Discuss crime trends particular to that area.

ELECTION OF BUSINESS WATCH COMMITTEE

The election of the Business Watch Committee will take place at the open meeting. The open meeting may be held under the umbrella of the local Chapter of the Chamber of Commerce or any other interested business/commercial group.

SURVEY/PROFILE OF THE BUSINESS WATCH AREA

- The objectives of the Business Watch Survey are to collect data on:
- Types/incidences of crimes occurring in the area i.e. burglaries, vandalism.
- Size of the area to be covered by the scheme. (e.g. units of an industrial estate, block of offices, street(s) of shops, shopping centre, etc.)
- Present physical security measures in the area/buildings/car parks, lighting, alarms, C.C.T.V. and access systems.
- Levels of interest in participating in the Scheme.



MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SURVEY

- **The Physical Area**
Most Business Watch groups will have a good idea of what constitutes their business area. For instance a group of shopkeepers in a locality, a number of units in an industrial estate, a number of offices in an office block, a number of office blocks.
- **Size of the Area**
The size of the shopping/business/industrial area may vary and this should be discussed with the Garda Superintendent.
- **Survey Form**
There is an official Business Watch Survey form, which is available on the Garda Portal and from the Community Relations & Community Policing Division, Harcourt Square, Dublin 2.
- **The Survey Approach**
Ideally the Liaison Garda and Business Watch Committee members should work collectively on the survey. Each will have information necessary to complete the profile of the area.

FINANCE

The Business Watch Committee should take steps to organise the raising of finance to meet the cost of maintaining the scheme.



AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

BUSINESS WATCH SURVEY FORM

In common with all businesses in the area, you are invited to consider participating in Business Watch. Business Watch is a Crime Prevention Programme founded on the same principal as Neighbourhood Watch, that is the practice of both the Gardaí and the community coming together to prevent and reduce crime, the only difference being that the community which the scheme targets is the Business Community.

WHAT BUSINESS WATCH AIMS TO DO

- Identify specific risks and how they can be reduced.
- Prevent crime within business communities by encouraging self and mutual protection.
- Reduce the fear of crime both within business and the community by highlighting the advantages of crime prevention.
- Increase the levels of detection and conviction of criminals and the recovery of stolen property.
- Strengthen communication links between neighbourhood businesses and the Gardaí.

An Garda Síochána invites YOU to join them in taking the first step towards greater co-operation with the business community co-operation which could significantly improve your working environment. Please indicate your level of interest in, and support for, such a Scheme by answering the questions on reverse side.

Signed

Phone

Company/Name

This questionnaire is being distributed to every Business/Company in the area by your Neighbourhood Garda/Business Watch Co-ordinator.

Name

Return to the above named by



A YOUR VIEWS ON BUSINESS WATCH

- 1 Are you in favour of the introduction of a Business Watch Scheme? Yes No
- 2 Would you become a member of such a Scheme? Yes No
- 3 Are you prepared to actively participate in the establishment and maintenance of a Business Watch Scheme? Yes No

B YOUR VIEWS ON CRIME

- 1 Have you been the victim of crime in the last 12 months? Yes No
- (a) Did you report the crime to the Gardaí? Yes No
- (b) Were you satisfied with the Garda response? Yes No
- (c) If 'no' to either of the above, give reason briefly

2 What criminal matters are you and your staff most concerned with?

3 How has crime affected your business?

C IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS WOULD YOU REQUIRE ADVICE?

- Alarm systems
- Personal security
- Access control
- Cash Handling
- Physical security, fences, lighting, locks, shutters, etc.
- Fraud
- Other (please specify) -----

