



Cross Border Policing Strategy



Garda Commissioner Fachtna Murphy and Chief Constable Matt Baggott

It is with great pleasure that we are jointly introducing this Cross Border Policing Strategy. The strength and depth of co-operation between An Garda Síochána and the Police Service of Northern Ireland is unprecedented in its depth and significance.

This Strategy is therefore about building on existing practical and strategic co-operation, and identifying a number of key strands of work where both Services feel that co-operation and supporting legislation can become even stronger.

Terrorism, serious and organised crime, and local crime strike fear into the heart of communities and know no boundaries. It is therefore increasingly important that law enforcement agencies work in partnership to achieve the shared objective of keeping all of our communities safe.

In recent months, through sharing information and intelligence, and by putting in place joint policing operations, many instances of terrorism, serious and organised crime and local crime have been prevented. This has, undoubtedly saved lives, while ensuring those involved in such activity are identified and brought to justice.

However, there is no room for complacency. Criminals are always trying to be one step ahead of the law enforcers, which makes it even more pertinent for police officers in both jurisdictions to utilise the expertise, technological capabilities and knowledge at their disposal to maximum effect. The Cross Border Policing Strategy seeks to enhance the policing capabilities of both Police Services and identifies further opportunities, ranging from cross border investigations and operations, intelligence sharing and security to communication and information technology. There are also areas of training, human resources and emergency planning, where stronger alliances could benefit both organisations. Over the next three years, we will work to implement these objectives.

We welcome the support which we have already received from our respective Justice Departments and Ministers and are very grateful for their commitment to work with us to further enhance our effectiveness.

We know only too well the many challenges involved in this process. Experience however, has shown us that a partnership approach can identify new ways to work even more effectively and efficiently to protect all the people of Ireland, North and South. We look forward to furthering this strategy and making all of our communities safer as a result.



Fachtna Murphy Matt Baggott

Justice Minister David Ford MLA and
Minister for Justice and Law Reform Dermot Ahern T.D.

As the Ministers responsible for policing and justice matters on the island of Ireland we very much welcome this new Cross-Border Policing Strategy and the commitment to openness, accountability and continuous improvement which its formulation and publication demonstrates.

Praise for the excellent cooperation between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and An Garda Síochána has become commonplace in recent years, and the strength of the relationship which exists between the two organisations is well known. But the current situation has not arisen by accident and no-one should underestimate the efforts that have gone into getting us to where we are. As the Ministers responsible for policing we have seen at close quarters the hard work and dedication that is necessary to make such a relationship work – and the abundance of goodwill between the two police services which provides the base upon which good cooperation can be built. This new strategy provides clear evidence of the commitment of the Chief Constable and Garda Commissioner and their officers to ensuring that policing cooperation between the two parts of Ireland continues to operate at the highest level.

We share many challenges in Ireland, North and South, and we will continue to work together in tackling them. Inevitably, much of the focus is placed on security cooperation, and of course the two police services will continue to work hand-in-hand to frustrate the efforts of those who would seek to drag us back down the road of division and bitterness, but we should not let the importance of working together across the full range of policing areas be obscured. This new Cross-Border Policing Strategy shows the breadth of cooperation that exists and the determination of both police forces to use all the tools available to them to ensure that those who would seek to exploit the border for criminal ends will not succeed.

The devolution of justice powers in Northern Ireland has provided the opportunity to enhance cross-border policing cooperation and this is an opportunity which it is incumbent upon us to grasp, for the benefit of all the people of this island. The Cross-Border Policing Strategy represents another significant step forward in this respect for the Police Service of Northern Ireland, An Garda Síochána, and the communities in both jurisdictions that they exist to serve.

David Ford MLA Dermot Ahern T.D.



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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND LAW REFORM

1

Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this joint cross border policing strategy between An Garda Síochána and the Police Service of Northern Ireland is to improve public safety throughout Ireland; disrupt criminal activity and enhance the policing capability of both police services on the island of Ireland. This will be achieved by the development of the initiatives articulated below.

2

Operations

- 2.1 Establish a joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland Tasking and Co-Ordination Group (T&CG).
- 2.2 Continual review of joint operational procedures to further enhance and maximise the An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland response to the prevention and detection of terrorism in the border region.
- 2.3 Building on existing practical co-operation to develop and agree guidelines relating to maximising the safety of principals and accompanying police officers in the border region.
- 2.4 Building on existing practical co-operation underpinned by more detailed strategies, subject to continual review, to enhance the effectiveness of visible police resources in border areas.
- 2.5 Building on existing practical co-operation to support a proactive multi-agency immigration strategy for the policing of the borders between An Garda Síochána, Police Service of Northern Ireland, United Kingdom Border Agency and Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service.
- 2.6 Building on existing practical co-operation to develop a joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland Crime Prevention Strategy for the border region.
- 2.7 Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to support the sharing of police equipment to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency between An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland.

3

Cross Border Investigations and Operations

- 3.1 Examine legislation with a view to putting forward proposals to respective departments, which would further enhance the ability of the An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland to work together to prevent and detect crime.
- 3.2 Review the effectiveness of the information-sharing agreement between An Garda Síochána and Police Service of Northern Ireland relating to sex offenders and identify further ways to maximise its effectiveness.
- 3.3 Review the effectiveness of ANPR in the border region and identify further ways to maximise its effectiveness.
- 3.4 Finalise the text of Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the sharing of information relating to Fingerprints, DNA (subject to resolving legal issues) and footprints.
- 3.5 Finalise Manual of Guidance in relation to cross border investigations.



4

Intelligence Sharing and Security

- 4.1 Building on existing practical co-operation, continually review the effectiveness of the intelligence-sharing and identify further ways to maximise its effectiveness.
- 4.2 Develop and continually review a joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland strategy to maximise and enhance the safety and security of police officers living and working in the border area.

5

Communication and Information Technology

- 5.1 Enhance the effectiveness of cross border communications and introduce improved interoperability between the An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland radio systems.
- 5.2 Agree the business priorities for information exchange and undertake a review of how this data can most effectively be exchanged between An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland ICT Systems.

6

Training

- 6.1 Building on existing practical co-operation by developing a joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland training and best practice strategy to include the following areas:-
 - Crime
 - Leadership and Management Development
 - Personnel Exchanges
 - International Operations
 - Sex Offenders

7

Human Resources

- 7.1 Undertake a review to maximise the effectiveness of current arrangements relating to personnel exchanges, secondments etc. and the mutual sharing of experience and best practice in areas pertaining to Human Resources.

8

Emergency Planning

- 8.1 Building on existing practical co-operation and partnerships to implement the cross border Joint Disaster Planning Protocol to maximise the effectiveness of the joint An Garda Síochána / Police Service of Northern Ireland response to cross border emergencies.

9

Review

- 9.1 Develop a mechanism to capture, record and review the effectiveness of the cross border strategy.





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