



GARDA
INSPECTORATE
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

Report of the Garda
Síochána Inspectorate

ROADS POLICING
REVIEW AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

NOVEMBER

08

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE GARDA SÍOCHÁNA INSPECTORATE IS:

‘to ensure that the resources available to the Garda Síochána are used so as to achieve and maintain the highest levels of efficiency and effectiveness in its operation and administration, as measured by reference to the best standards of comparable police services.’

(s. 117 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
<hr/>	
CHAPTER 01	
Methodology	5
<hr/>	
CHAPTER 02	
The Challenge of Road Safety	7
<hr/>	
CHAPTER 03	
Garda Síochána Roads Policing Assessment and Commentary	10
<hr/>	
CHAPTER 04	
Summary of Recommendations	27
<hr/>	
APPENDIX	31

INTRODUCTION

Road safety is a primary public concern in Ireland. In 2007, 338 people lost their lives and thousands were injured in collisions on Irish roads.

In recent years, successive Governments have pursued a more strategic approach to improving road safety. They have introduced road traffic legislation, established the Road Safety Authority, made substantial investment in roads, increased traffic resources for the Garda Síochána and funded high-impact public education campaigns.

The new emphasis on road safety is having positive effects. Road deaths per million vehicles in the State were down by more than half in 2007 as compared to 1997. This improvement is reflected in a recent road safety report that ranks Ireland as ninth in the top ten EU performing countries in road safety in 2007 – up five places from its previous ranking of fourteenth in 2005.

There is no denying that very commendable progress has been made. Even so, there is no room for complacency. The lesson from best practice countries is that further improvements are possible through a sustained programme based on the “Three E” approach of Education, Enforcement and Engineering. The “Three E’s” is a term commonly used by road safety experts when discussing strategies for collision reduction.

In line with the goal established by the EU of a 50% reduction in road deaths by 2010, the ‘Road Safety Strategy 2007-2012’ published by the Road Safety Authority sets a target of reducing road fatalities to not more than 252 per annum. While there is, of course, no acceptable level of road deaths, this ambitious target will only be achieved with concerted efforts on the part of all road safety partners, coupled with a serious commitment from those using the roads.

It is against this background that the Garda Síochána Inspectorate obtained the approval of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform to undertake a study of roads policing. The broad aims of the inspection were to:

- Assess the Garda Síochána’s commitment and performance in the area of roads policing, including a review of the current organisational structure;
- Examine Garda policies and procedures for roads policing with specific reference to the investigation of fatal and serious road traffic collisions;
- Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of enforcement and prosecution of road traffic offences, including a statistical review of enforcement and its outcomes;
- Explore the relationship between education, enforcement and engineering in promoting road safety;
- Explore current levels of cross-border co-operation with Northern Ireland in roads policing; and
- Work in partnership with the Criminal Justice Inspectorate of Northern Ireland and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, both of which bodies were engaged in a parallel inspection of roads policing in Northern Ireland.

The Inspectorate has concluded that the Garda Síochána is achieving much higher visibility and enforcement levels in recent years and is making an important contribution to greater road safety. This report puts forward twenty-five recommendations. It is the Inspectorate’s hope that implementation of these recommendations will further enhance the contribution of the Garda Síochána to the overall road safety effort.

CHAPTER

01

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this inspection followed that of previous studies undertaken by the Garda Inspectorate. Initial work involved a desktop review of road traffic legislation and relevant reports published by the Garda Síochána and its road safety partner organisations. Statistics produced by the Road Safety Authority greatly assisted the Inspectorate in quantifying the scale of the road safety challenge and the progress being made. Later segments of this report draw on those statistics.

The inspection team met with representatives of each of the primary partner organisations including the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Department of Transport, the Road Safety Authority, the Medical Bureau of Road Safety and the Association of City and County Managers. The team also met with Mothers Against Drink Driving (MADD), Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) and Public Against Road Carnage (PARC).

Fieldwork commenced with briefings from the Assistant Commissioner responsible for the Garda National Traffic Bureau and his staff at Headquarters. The team then visited the Louth/Meath, Cork City, Galway West, Kerry and Donegal Garda Divisions as well as the Northern Division, Western Division and Traffic Corps of the Dublin Metropolitan Region. In the course of these visits, the team listened to the important perspectives of policy makers, managers, supervisors and front-line Gardaí in both urban and rural areas.

In each Garda division, the Inspectorate made a point of speaking both with members of the traffic corps and members of 'regular' Garda units. This served to underline the important contribution that all police officers make to roads policing. In all cases, the Inspectorate was impressed by the commitment of those who were interviewed.

The inspection team also met with leaders and members of the Garda representative associations who put forward their views and made substantive suggestions for change and improvement.

The inspection was undertaken in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Inspectorate (CJI) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), who were jointly undertaking a similar roads policing study in

Northern Ireland. The Garda Inspectorate was pleased to participate in fieldwork undertaken in the North by the CJI and HMIC. The Inspectorate thanks the CJI and the HMIC for their valuable insights and collaborative approaches to common issues. Additionally, the Inspectorate thanks members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland for freely sharing their facilities, materials and important perspectives.

The Inspectorate undertook wider international benchmarking by meeting with and sourcing materials from a number of other police services. These services included the London Metropolitan Police, New Jersey State Police, North Wales Police, Ontario Provincial Police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Strathclyde Police, Swedish National Police and Toronto Police. The team also consulted with Ms. Annette Sandberg, a roads safety expert who formerly held a number of senior posts including Administrator of the United States Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and Chief of the Washington State Patrol.

The Inspectorate thanks everybody in the Garda Síochána, the road safety partner organisations and international colleagues who contributed their knowledge, expertise and suggestions to this important benchmarking exercise.

CHAPTER
02

THE
CHALLENGE OF ROAD
SAFETY

In the ten years to 1 January, 2008 a total of 4,353 people were killed on Irish roads. The scale of this carnage is such that road safety must be a concern for everyone.

Much has been done and continues to be done to improve road safety. The evidence from Table 1 indicates that these measures are having positive impacts and that the overall trends are going in the right direction. However, sustaining improvement is by no means easy. Significant progress in some years, most notably in 2002/2003, was partially offset in subsequent years. While statistics for the past two years are encouraging, it is clear that continued improvement requires strong commitment and unstinting effort.

TABLE 1

Numbers of Fatalities and Persons Injured on Irish Roads, 1997 to 2008

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	30/09 2008
Fatalities	472	458	413	415	411	376	335	374	396	365	338	219
Injured	13,115	12,773	12,340	12,043	10,222	9,206	8,262	7,867	9,318	8,575	N/A*	N/A*
Fatalities per million vehicles registered	330	303	257	247	232	203	173	184	185	159	N/A*	N/A*
Injured per million vehicles registered	9,156	8,454	7,673	7,159	5,776	4,976	4,264	3,863	4,357	3,734	N/A*	N/A*

* *Statistics not yet published*

Progress must continue to be recorded by way of national road safety statistics. It is equally important, however, to benchmark road safety in this jurisdiction against best international practice and European Union goals. The search for ways to achieve greater road safety is now very much an international issue and there is much to be gained from maintaining a strategic international perspective.

On 14 April, 2004, the United Nations (UN) passed a historic resolution aimed at strengthening international cooperation in the area of road safety. The UN has since launched a series of meetings and projects to address the issue and improve collaboration between Member States. Among these efforts was a world report on road traffic injury prevention. The recommendations in this report have been used as a guide by many countries in developing and improving road safety strategies.

The report suggests that governments:

1. Identify a lead agency to guide the national road traffic safety effort;
2. Assess the problem, policies and institutional settings relating to road traffic injury and the capacity for road traffic injury prevention;
3. Prepare a national road safety strategy and plan of action;
4. Allocate financial and human resources to address the problem;
5. Implement specific actions to prevent road traffic crashes, minimise injuries and their consequences and evaluate the impact of these actions; and
6. Support the development of national capacity and international cooperation.

²Peden M, Scurfield R, Sleet D, et al. (Eds). The World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, Geneva, World Health Organization, 2004 (http://who.int/wold-health-day/2004/infomaterials/world_report/en/).

Ireland has taken action on all of these fronts by:

- Establishing the Road Safety Authority;
- Reviewing roads-related policies and programmes;
- Enacting more stringent legal provisions;
- Publishing and pursuing three successive national road safety strategies;
- Providing increased human and other resources in all areas of road safety;
- Making significant investment and implementing specific initiatives in road safety education, enforcement and engineering; and
- Participating in closer cooperation with national and international road safety partners.

At the same time, road safety has been a priority of the European Union. The EU has targeted a 50% reduction in road deaths by 2010 (from the base year of 2000). In order for Ireland to contribute meaningfully to the EU target, the 'Road Safety Strategy 2007-2012' sets an ambitious target of no greater than sixty fatalities per million population by the end of 2012. This is equivalent to not more than 252 road deaths per annum on Irish roads as compared with 338 road deaths in 2007. The Garda Síochána will play a pivotal role in meeting the ambitious goals set by the EU. The reductions in road deaths and injuries in recent years are indicative of what can be achieved through sustained, purposeful efforts.

CHAPTER
03

GARDA
SÍOCHÁNA
ROADS POLICING
ASSESSMENT AND
COMMENTARY

During its review of Garda Síochána roads policing, the Inspectorate studied the following topics:

- The Garda Síochána ‘Strategic Review of Traffic Policing (2002)’;
- Organisational Structures;
- Personnel Increases;
- Policy and Guidelines;
- Changes in Laws and Enforcement Procedures;
- Forensic Collision Investigation;
- Training;
- Equipment;
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition;
- Speed Cameras;
- Digital Tachographs;
- Vehicle Seizures;
- Traffic Watch;
- Measurement of Activity and Prosecutions; and
- Road Safety Partnerships.

This chapter provides commentary and recommendations in each of these areas.

The Garda Síochána Strategic Review of Traffic Policing (2002)

The Garda Síochána ‘Strategic Review of Traffic Policing (2002)’ outlined several commitments aimed at making roads policing in Ireland more effective and efficient. The 2002 review was important in preparing the way for improved operating arrangements in a subsequently better resourced Traffic Corps.

The Inspectorate is satisfied that the commitments in the ‘Strategic Review of Traffic Policing (2002)’ are largely fulfilled. The Garda Síochána should be commended for taking a strong leadership position on road safety, participating actively with road safety partners, providing greater levels of police visibility and developing targets and measures that have led to a reduction in fatalities and injuries on Irish roads. At this time, the Garda Síochána must sustain and build on this success.

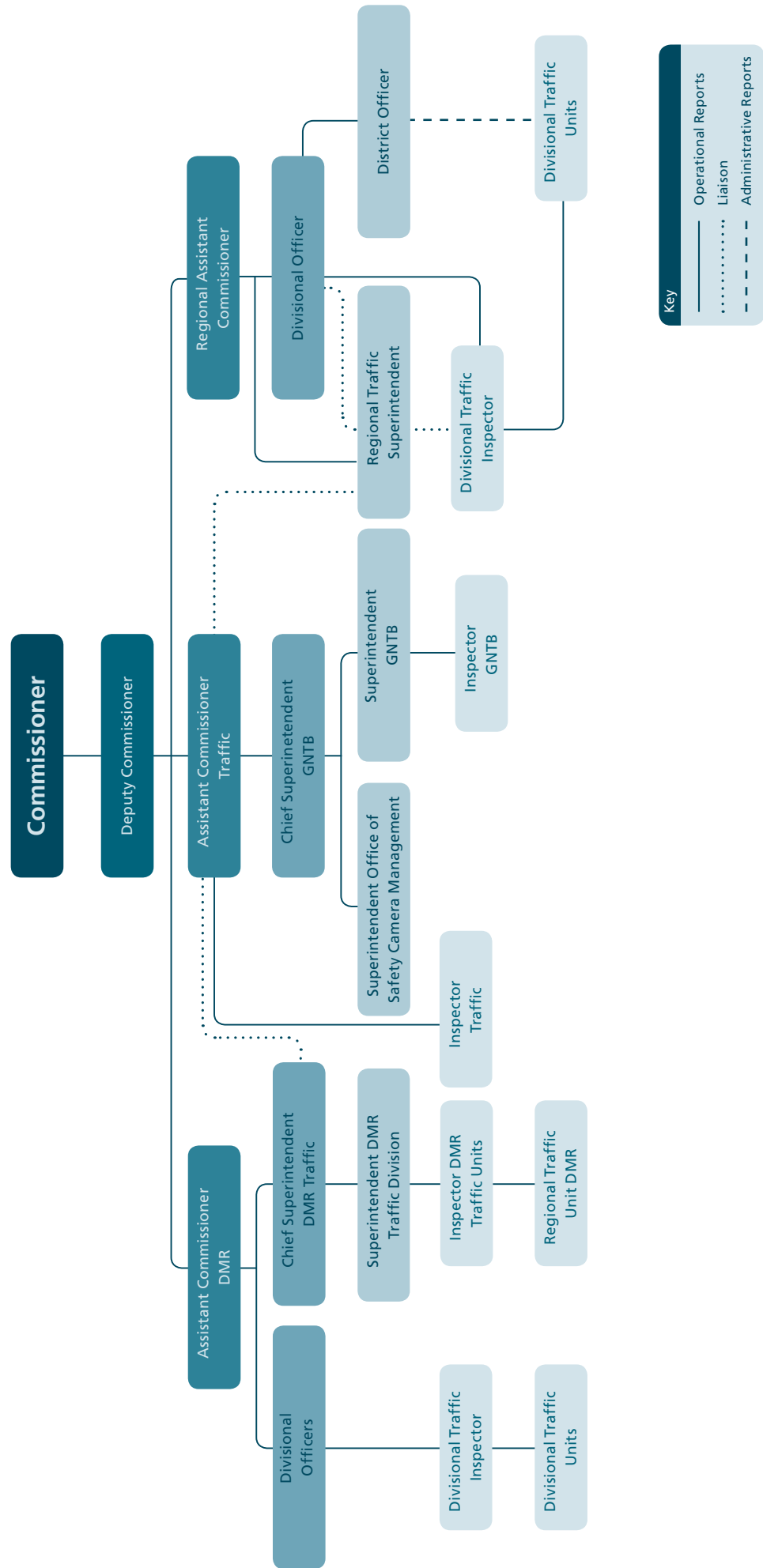
Organisational Structures

The Garda Síochána roads policing structure is set out in the chart on page 12.

The Garda National Traffic Bureau (GNTB) takes the lead in developing overall roads policing enforcement and education strategies for the Garda Síochána. Although this headquarters entity existed prior to the 2002 Strategic Review and was led by a Chief Superintendent, the subsequent appointment of an Assistant Commissioner to oversee the GNTB was seen both internally and externally as a strong signal of the importance of roads policing. At the same time, increased regional and divisional focus on roads policing has also served to raise the profile.

At the regional level, it should be noted that the structure for the Dublin Metropolitan Region (DMR) differs from the other regions. In the DMR, roads policing is overseen by a Chief

CHART 1
Garda Síochána Traffic Policing Structure



Superintendent and the DMR Traffic Corps traverses the city regardless of divisional boundaries. Given the traffic management and congestion challenges in Dublin, particularly during the rush hours, this is an appropriate and flexible use of resources.

The recent emphasis on roads policing and resulting organisational changes have been generally well received in the organisation. Front-line Gardaí who spoke with the inspection team were conscious of the greater emphasis on targets and performance within the new structure and were broadly encouraged by it. In general, to their credit, they had no difficulty working within a strengthening performance framework, providing set objectives were sensible, clear and achievable. They were encouraged by the organisation's support for increased enforcement, particularly high visibility operations and recognised that high visibility and sustained enforcement have contributed significantly to the reduction of injuries and deaths on Irish roads.

There is clear commitment at all levels in the organisation to reach best practice in roads policing. The Garda Síochána should be commended for achieving a significant shift in organisational direction during a period when it has also faced the strong competing demands of violent crime, drugs and public order.

The results of the efforts of the Garda Síochána and its road safety partners are apparent as Ireland has moved into the top ten performing EU countries. Considerable job satisfaction was expressed by many Gardaí who have witnessed the tangible results of their efforts.

While organisational improvements in the area of roads policing have been substantial, based on its review and the valuable input of those interviewed, the Inspectorate believes that greater organisational clarity is required to address the following three areas:

- The role of Garda National Traffic Bureau (GNTB);
- Dual reporting relationships at the district, divisional and regional levels; and

- The responsibilities of the Traffic Corps relative to the responsibilities of the 'regular' Garda units.

The Future Role of GNTB

The establishment and strengthening of the GNTB was essential to bringing Garda Síochána roads policing to its current state of development. The GNTB is now responsible for:

- Formulation of roads policing policy and strategies;
- Internal and external communication relating to roads policing;
- Internal research and analysis; and
- Inter-agency coordination.

The Inspectorate applauds the success of the GNTB to date and recommends that it continue to develop as the core of the Garda roads policing initiative. There are certain issues that the GNTB must address going forward in order to fulfil its mission and bring roads policing to the next level. The Inspectorate recommends that the GNTB prioritise the following projects:

- A comprehensive review of internal policy and procedures relating to roads policing to ensure that such are sufficient, clear, concise, and enhance the safety of police officers and road users;
- A review of the framework for creating and monitoring Garda roads policing plans. As recognised by the GNTB, the framework must allow for significant input from district officers and front-line personnel; and
- The development of technology tools to enhance the PULSE system so as to provide timely and constructive evaluation of the outputs and outcomes of all Garda roads policing operations.

To discharge the planning and evaluation functions, the GNTB must have enhanced IT tools that provide an overview of roads policing performance across the Garda Síochána. This should include real-time mapping of roads policing activities in each Garda district and early warning of high collision locations and other trends. The system

should track and highlight weaknesses, including delays in road traffic investigations and prosecutions.

GNTB should also ensure that updated case law and new developments on roads policing best practice are provided during continuous professional development courses. This will enhance learning and ensure that best practices are adopted.

Dual Reporting Relationships

The Inspectorate has concerns about the implications of dual reporting relationships that exist for many traffic personnel within the current structure of the Garda Síochána.

The district is the primary organisational unit responsible for the administrative management of members, including those assigned to traffic units. This includes the management of promotions, training, transfers, sick leave and other absences. On the other hand, traffic units are assigned their operational duties by divisional supervisors, with varying levels of input from local superintendents. A third level of management, the regional superintendent often sets broader strategic targets and objectives and directs inter-divisional traffic operations.

Many of those interviewed felt that multiple accountability relationships complicated the overall reporting process and impeded effective operations. This issue was brought to the attention of the inspection team by traffic corps members at virtually all locations. Similar concerns were expressed by some local superintendents who were administratively responsible for traffic personnel but felt they had limited ability to manage or supervise their operational deployment. The district superintendents also noted that they were responsible for all of the court cases generated by Traffic Corps personnel.

When discussing these concerns with representatives of Garda management and the GNTB, the Inspection team was assured that some of these issues are being considered and addressed currently. GNTB noted that a new internal directive

published within the past month gives local superintendents additional discretion in designating the locations for Traffic Corps speed enforcement. Under this recently published directive, approximately 80% of speed enforcement will be allocated to data-determined 'collision prone zones' and 20% of the locations will be determined by local superintendents. According to Garda management, in every instance, traffic enforcement will focus on the most dangerous roadways in each district and not 'fish in the barrel' operations directed more at obtaining outputs than valuable outcomes.

Coordinating the Traffic Corps and Regular Garda Units

The role and responsibilities of traffic corps units and arrangements for coordinated deployment of these units with regular Garda units must be reviewed regularly. Effective roads policing requires integration with other policing activities and must be delivered in partnership with other roads safety organisations.

Currently, the traffic corps units are deployed almost exclusively to traffic law enforcement. However, while so engaged, it is inevitable that members of the traffic corps will encounter persons engaged in criminal activity. It is in the best interest of the police and the community that all gardaí assigned to roads policing be prepared to detect crime. Equipment such as automatic number plate recognition systems, which can greatly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of front-line officers, will be an important tool in this regard.

Police services in the United Kingdom and in other jurisdictions have placed great emphasis on efforts to 'deny criminals the use of the road' and are now rigorously measured against this specific criterion by their own police inspectorates. North American police services, in initiatives such as "Operation Pipeline", have trained traffic officers to interdict gang members, drug dealers and other criminals as part of their duties.

In recent times, gardaí assigned to the Traffic Corps have achieved notable success in the arrest of criminals and the seizure of evidence during

routine traffic stops. The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop tactical training segments to further enhance the Traffic Corps' ability to interdict criminal activity and gather intelligence.

It is also important that, in maximising Garda visibility and enforcement, traffic corps and regular units are deployed on coordinated operations to address public order situations and the risks of drink driving. Mandatory alcohol and other checkpoints operated by traffic corps members add considerably to the efforts of regular units in addressing serious public order issues.

In the course of this study, the Inspectorate concluded that there is merit in traffic and regular units becoming more operationally linked. Better coordinated joint efforts will contribute to much more effective policing.

Recommendation 1

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda National Traffic Bureau (GNTB) continue to serve at the core of the Garda roads policing initiative. Building on its success to date, the GNTB should execute a review of existing roads policing policy and procedures and design a modern framework for monitoring roads policing plans and evaluating the outputs and outcomes of roads policing operations.

Recommendation 2

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management bring greater clarity to the role of the GNTB, address the issue of dual reporting relationships at the district, divisional and regional levels and clearly define the responsibilities of the Traffic Corps relative to the responsibilities of the 'regular' Garda units.

Recommendation 3

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management place greater emphasis on 'denying criminals use of the road' by developing tactical

training segments for personnel and ensuring that traffic and regular units are more operationally linked.

Personnel Increases

The most visible change in the Garda road traffic function in recent years has been the increase in the strength of the Traffic Corps as additional Gardaí became available from the accelerated Garda recruitment programme. By 31 July, 2008 the strength of the Traffic Corps nearly doubled from approximately 500 members in 2005 to a total of 949 distributed across all Garda districts. (See Table 2, Page 16) The increase in Garda personnel assigned to roads policing during the past three years has resulted in much greater visibility and enforcement and has, no doubt, saved lives and prevented injuries.

These increases have also resulted in certain 'growing pains' for the Garda Síochána. Many of those interviewed, particularly supervisors, cited increases in the strength of the Traffic Corps as one of the factors leading to a reduction in experience levels among many regular units dealing with crime and public order. Increased numbers in the Traffic Corps have also led to a significant strain on Garda accommodation. The lack of dedicated accommodation, which has been referenced in a previous Inspectorate report, has been a recurring problem for the Garda Síochána.

The Inspectorate is of the view that dedicated accommodation and balancing of experienced personnel are crucial to the success of police operations at the front line. These trends must be closely monitored and addressed by Garda management.

Recommendation 4

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management continue to monitor experience levels in regular Garda units to avoid further depleting experience in units that are already at critically low levels.

TABLE 2

Numbers of Gardaí (all ranks) attached to Traffic Units 1998 - 31/07/08 by Division

Division	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	31/07 2008
Carlow / Kildare	10	10	11	13	12	16	17	21	28	47	41
Cavan / Monaghan	12	12	12	12	16	16	15	16	25	33	27
Clare	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	13	19	29	28
Cork City	25	25	26	26	22	25	22	26	40	50	51
Cork North	7	7	7	11	11	11	13	14	26	36	40
Cork West	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	18	23	25
D.M.R. Eastern	12	12	12	15	15	15	16	17	19	22	16
D.M.R. North Central	10	7	18	21	21	30	29	16	18	23	23
D.M.R. North	0	8	15	15	15	18	18	18	18	18	20
D.M.R. South Central	21	21	21	23	23	23	23	17	28	25	24
D.M.R. South	15	14	17	21	21	20	24	19	20	22	19
D.M.R. West	0	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	20	20	21
Donegal	35	38	25	25	22	21	17	23	30	30	34
Galway West	13	13	13	18	18	21	22	24	31	35	32
Kerry	9	9	9	13	13	13	13	15	23	27	29
Laois / Offaly	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	15	27	39	37
Limerick	15	15	15	15	15	13	14	17	25	32	31
Longford / Westmeath	15	15	17	17	16	19	15	15	27	37	34
Louth / Meath	19	23	23	24	23	24	23	28	46	57	56
Mayo	9	9	9	14	14	14	14	16	23	26	29
Roscommon / Galway East	10	10	15	12	13	12	13	16	22	27	29
Sligo / Leitrim	10	10	10	14	14	15	15	16	25	26	27
Tipperary	10	12	11	11	11	10	11	13	22	27	35
Waterford / Kilkenny	16	17	18	20	21	21	21	17	32	45	48
Wexford / Wicklow	10	10	14	14	13	13	14	16	29	41	45
D.M.R. Traffic	115	120	123	136	134	137	142	141	139	154	148
Totals	434	471	495	544	537	561	565	578	780	951	949

Recommendation 5

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management consider dedicated accommodation for traffic personnel as part of a comprehensive facilities management plan.

Policy and Guidelines

Every large police organisation requires clear statements of policy. These are important in guiding operations and ensuring consistency of approach by individual officers. There have been notable advances in roads policing policy in the Garda Síochána in recent years, including the development of a collision investigation policy. The priority now must be to consolidate and streamline all existing Garda policies on roads policing and bring forward new policies in areas not adequately covered at present.

It is important that roads policing policies are well communicated and readily accessible to front-line officers. The GNTB recently indicated that an effort is underway to put all existing roads policing policy and procedures on a PULSE portal to make them more accessible to those in the field. Greater guidance and clarity for operational Gardaí will enhance their safety, reduce the organisation's overall risk and better equip members for their day to day activities.

Other police services, such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), have extensive policy manuals that cover all aspects of roads policing. These provide both guidance to officers engaged in traffic duties and effective risk management for the organisation. The RCMP constantly reviews its policies to ensure that they remain current in light of legal changes and evolving best practice. Where policy is deemed out of date, headquarters and field representatives, as well as staff association representatives, join to develop new policies that are consistent with the strategic responsibilities of the organisation and attuned to the needs of officers on the ground.

The Strathclyde Police in Scotland has also developed comprehensive service policies and standard operating procedures that reflect the

complexities of modern roads policing. Perhaps most importantly, these policies are disseminated in a way that allows them to be readily accessed by police officers at the front line.

The safety of members engaged in roads policing, particularly those performing traffic stops, must be of serious concern to the Garda Síochána. The Inspectorate acknowledges that section 24.9 of An Garda Síochána Code provides some guidance on safe and effective operation of traffic stops, but it does not take account of road types, weather conditions, multiple lane roadways or lines of sight for oncoming vehicles. Likewise, there is little procedural guidance on conducting roadside inspections of heavy goods vehicles.

A Garda roads policy manual or 'handbook' would address these and other important roads policing practices. There are already indications that, in the absence of an organisational manual, some local Garda divisions may seek to create their own. This is undesirable and could conceivably result in unwanted variations in policies and procedures.

Recommendation 6

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána begin a comprehensive review of internal policy related to all aspects of roads policing. This should be done with a view to providing clarity to existing stated policy, identifying policy gaps and developing new policy where required. This work should include a particular focus on enhancing standard operating procedures, including safety policies on specific roads policing functions. The standard operating procedures and policy guidelines should be accessible to all members.

Changes in Laws and Enforcement Procedures

Legislative change providing for mandatory alcohol testing transformed the operating capability of the Garda Síochána. Mandatory testing has ensured that Gardaí on checkpoint duty now have the legal power to stop all vehicles and demand breath samples. This has greatly increased Garda effectiveness, influenced driver behaviour

and undoubtedly saved lives and reduced injuries. Furthermore, it has underscored the organisation's commitment to road safety.

Much of the improvement in road death figures since 2006 can be attributed to the effect of mandatory alcohol checkpoints. On 21 July, 2007, the first anniversary of the introduction of mandatory alcohol testing, the Road Safety Authority (RSA) released figures that showed 93 lives had been saved representing a "22% decline in road deaths since the introduction of Mandatory Alcohol Testing compared to the previous twelve month period."

Forensic Collision Investigation

The standards for forensic collision investigations within the Garda Síochána have been raised significantly in recent years. The impetus for change was the decision taken in 2002 that investigations of collision fatalities should be afforded the same status as other sudden death investigations. At present, there are thirteen specialist forensic collision investigators in the Garda Síochána. Each holds a recognised professional qualification. These specialists brought additional skill and expertise to the overall investigation of fatal and serious collisions. In the course of this study, a fourteenth post, the position of National Coordinator for Collision Investigations was advertised and filled. The Coordinator is currently based at the Garda College in Templemore. He will further develop and administer the national collision investigation programme within the Garda Síochána. This should include providing a crucial focus on issues such as the selection criteria for collision investigators, mentoring of new investigators, the design of a peer review programme and preparing the investigators for their roles as expert witnesses. All information gathered by the Coordinator through peer reviews and various investigations will provide valuable data for the GNTB. The Inspectorate recommends that responsibility for the National Coordinator of Forensic Collision Investigation be assigned to the Garda National Traffic Bureau.

The new 'Garda Síochána Traffic Collision Investigation Policy' will provide a framework for the National Coordinator and the thirteen collision investigators in performing their functions. The document is an important step in ensuring uniformity in the application of rigorous collision investigation standards across the State.

Specialised equipment used by collision investigators is generally allocated to regional headquarters and not located at the stations where the investigators are assigned. The Inspectorate heard concerns about delays incurred while investigators travelled considerable distances to collect this equipment before proceeding to the scenes of collisions. Such delays could be detrimental to cases. The current practice appears wasteful of time and resources. The Garda Síochána should review the positioning of equipment based on the frequency of collisions and call-outs for forensic collision specialists and, to the degree possible, ensure that the equipment is issued personally to the investigators.

Recommendation 7

The Inspectorate recommends that responsibility for the National Coordinator of Forensic Collision Investigation be assigned to the Garda National Traffic Bureau.

Recommendation 8

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána review the positioning of equipment based on the frequency of collisions and call-outs for forensic collision specialists and, to the degree possible, ensure that the equipment is issued personally to the investigators.

Training

Roads policing training is provided for new entrants at the Garda College and again during continuous professional development. On joining the Traffic Corps, members are given a one-week course covering road traffic legislation and inspection. Specialist training for collision investigators to enable them to sit examinations for their qualification is now provided at the Garda College.

While training in various aspects of roads policing has improved in recent years, the Inspectorate believes there is room for improvement in training. Competency training for roads policing must address the following areas:

- Police officer driver training;
- Use of road traffic equipment;
- Standard operating procedures for safe and effective checkpoints and traffic stops;
- Legal policy changes and court presentation; and
- Specialist training, for example: collision investigation.

The Inspectorate identified police officer driver training as a significant issue in its third report. Approximately 2,600 Gardaí are currently operating vehicles on 'chief's permission' without the benefit of a driving course. This is a serious safety issue for police officers and the public. It must be addressed urgently.

There is currently capacity for only 600 participants on the standard driving course annually. Even if training capacity could be increased, there is a high failure rate of approximately 40% on the current course.

The Garda Síochána must develop a comprehensive driver training programme that effectively instructs all members in the safe operation of police vehicles. If the organisation is not capable of expanding its current capacity, Garda management should consider contracting a vendor to provide the service. It is a common practice for police agencies to do so.

Police officers operating Garda vehicles must provide a positive example for other road users and management should develop policies to ensure such is the case. In non-emergency situations, police officers should fully comply with the rules of the road in the operation of vehicles, observing speed limits, traffic signals and refraining from the use of mobile phones while driving.

While benchmarking against other police services in the UK, elsewhere in Europe, North America,

Australia and New Zealand, the Inspectorate learned that the vast majority of police agencies (with few exceptions) require applicants to possess driving licenses prior to employment. The Inspectorate believes that this is a reasonable pre-employment requirement in modern policing. Also, in these challenging fiscal times, it will be more cost effective for the Garda Síochána to focus on providing specialised emergency driving courses to members rather than expending limited resources on basic driver training.

The Inspectorate has been informed that the Garda Síochána is currently reviewing its approach to driver training and the matter will be considered by the Training Review Group appointed by the Commissioner. The Inspectorate recommends that the following measures be taken as soon as possible:

- Garda members currently driving on 'Chief's Permission' should attend an abbreviated but effective driver training course and the practice of 'Chief's Permission' should cease as soon as possible;
- Recruit applicants to the Garda Síochána should be required to possess a valid driving licence prior to employment and successfully complete a comprehensive police driving course during their probationer training;
- A review should be conducted following each collision to determine if Garda members responsible for on-duty traffic collisions should be required to undertake remedial driver training; and
- Each instructor providing driver training should possess a professional qualification.

Recommendation 9

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop a plan to improve all training relating to roads policing, including legal and policy changes, court presentation, standard operating procedures for checkpoints and traffic stops and use of road traffic equipment.

Recommendation 10

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána urgently develop a comprehensive driver training programme and do away with the current practice of driving on ‘Chief’s Permission.’ If necessary, to expedite this recommendation, a vendor should be contracted to provide this training. Those currently driving on ‘Chief’s Permission’ should attend an abbreviated but effective driver training course.

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The Inspectorate recommends that all recruit applicants to the Garda Síochána be required to possess a valid driving license prior to employment and successfully complete a comprehensive police driving course during their probationer training.

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The Inspectorate recommends that a review be conducted of all ‘at fault’ on-duty collisions to determine if Gardaí involved should attend remedial driver training.

Recommendation 13

The Inspectorate recommends that all driving instructors be required to possess and maintain a professional instructor qualification.

Equipment

In recent years, successive governments have made significant investment in additional human resources for the Garda Síochána. In order to maximise the return on the substantial investments, it is essential that the Garda Síochána are not only well trained but also properly equipped to carry out their functions.

Fleet

Recent improvements in Garda transport have been essential to more effective roads policing. The Garda Inspectorate is pleased to see progress on the recommendation in our third report for an increase in the Garda fleet and, more particularly,

the number of marked and highly visible traffic corps vehicles.

It is essential that Gardaí in general and the Traffic Corps in particular set the standard and lead by example in terms of the quality of their fleet and the manner in which their vehicles are driven. This requires that the fleet be safe, fit for purpose and maintained to the highest standard. Standard operating procedures requiring clean, well-presented vehicles, pre-drive vehicle checks and grounding of defective vehicles must be adhered to.

Alcometers, Intoxilizers and Speed Devices

With a goal to have 1,000 alcometers for effective impact at mandatory alcohol testing checkpoints, the Garda Síochána were only able to deploy approximately 600 at the time of the inspection because of delays in calibration by the Medical Bureau due to a staffing shortage. It is the understanding of the Inspectorate that this matter has now been resolved and the Garda Síochána has realised its goal of 1,000 alcometers in use throughout the country.

The intoxilizer is a breath machine which provides a reading indicating whether or not a prosecution for drink driving will proceed. The Medical Bureau of Road Safety, which is responsible for analysis of specimens provided to Gardaí by persons suspected of driving offences, has made sixty-four intoxilizer machines available to the Garda Síochána. They are mostly located at divisional and district headquarters. The Garda Síochána should track and review the number, distribution and use of the machines. For instance, the Inspectorate is concerned that there is only one intoxilizer machine in the Cork City Division which serves not only the city but its rural environs. This has implications for Garda time taken to process drink driving cases and may explain the unexpectedly high incidence of doctors being called to take blood samples in drink driving cases, which has additional cost implications.

The Garda Síochána has 410 laser speed devices. On average there are four speed guns per Garda district. At the time of the inspection, representatives of the GNTB stated that this number is very satisfactory when compared proportionately to the number of Garda personnel.

The Inspectorate understands that equipment training is usually done on a once-off basis. Specific alcometer training is provided on a 'train-the-trainer' basis with most Gardaí being trained by their supervisors or more senior colleagues. GNTB should maintain a central record to monitor the numbers and distribution of members trained on road traffic equipment. It should also monitor the positioning of roads safety equipment, the locations where it is used and how often it is being used.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) has the potential to greatly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Gardaí on traffic duty. It operates by checking camera-read vehicle licence plates against computer records. Where a match indicates an issue to be addressed, for example, stolen vehicles, wanted criminals and stolen plates, the police officers are alerted accordingly.

Police agencies already using this system routinely, such as the North Wales Police, the PSNI and the London Metropolitan Police, speak to its effectiveness. Through ANPR they have seen improvements on a number of policing fronts, including roads policing.

In July, 2006 four ANPR systems were procured by the Garda Síochána for the purpose of carrying out a pilot study of its effectiveness. The results of the pilot study led to invitation of tenders in March, 2008 for the supply and installation of more than one hundred mobile speed detection and video recording systems complete with an automatic number plate recognition system. Tenders are currently being evaluated.

An ANPR system fully integrated with PULSE, the Garda Síochána's information system, would be a powerful aid to front-line police officers. In roads policing it has the capability of detecting those committing motoring offences such as driving without a valid licence, as well as more serious offences such as driving a stolen vehicle. It should be noted that ANPR's capabilities extend well beyond roads policing. The Inspectorate supports the decision of the Garda Síochána to use ANPR for a variety of purposes.

As a cautionary note, the Garda Síochána should learn from the experience of other police services in introducing ANPR. A significant issue for many services was the failure to make adequate provision for the 'back office' functions associated with maintaining up to date records of stolen or suspect vehicles. At times, this resulted in front-line officers being given out-of-date information that caused them to lose confidence in the system. Accordingly, the Garda Síochána should not underestimate the 'support function' requirement to ensure that ANPR operates to its full potential.

Speed Cameras

In considering the potential benefits of speed cameras, the Inspectorate found that France provided the best example. France has seen a dramatic decrease in road fatalities in recent years, much of the progress attributed to the use of speed cameras. In 2002, then French President Jacques Chirac, indicated that road safety would be one of three major priorities of his presidential mandate. By the end of 2007, France had 1,950 speed cameras, one third mobile cameras and two-thirds fixed cameras. The OECD cited the deployment of the cameras as a vital contribution to the progress achieved in decreasing road deaths in France, from 7,655 in 2002 to 4,620 in 2007.

The Inspectorate enthusiastically endorses the Irish Government's decision to proceed with the purchase of speed cameras. The cameras, coupled with a strong public information campaign, will deter speeders and serve as an effective collision prevention tool.

Digital Tachographs

The introduction of digital tachograph technology to replace the existing analogue recording devices in new commercial vehicles and buses became mandatory within the EU from May, 2006. A digital tachograph is an instrument fitted in trucks and buses to record the driving durations, speed, distance travelled, and rest periods of drivers.

In addition to the Garda Síochána, the Road Safety Authority has an enforcement responsibility for the effective operation of tachographs in trucks, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and buses. As part of their enforcement, the RSA and the Garda Síochána operate joint checkpoints, inspecting the operational safety of vehicles and analysing digital tachograph readings.

At present, the Garda Síochána does not have its own equipment to read digital tachographs in HGVs, trucks or buses to determine if the vehicles were speeding or have taken the breaks required by law. The GNTB established a working

group to analyse the equipment available on the market to read digital tachographs. The working group has finalised its deliberations and is in the process of identifying equipment for a pilot. It is essential that such equipment and training be compatible with that of the RSA.

Recommendation 14

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána track and review the number, distribution and use of intoxilizer machines.

Recommendation 15

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda National Traffic Bureau maintain a central record detailing the numbers and distribution of personnel trained on roads policing equipment, the positioning of road safety equipment, the locations where it is used and how often it is being used.

Recommendation 16

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop a policy and plan for deployment of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR). The plan should clearly identify the organisational requirements, including 'back office' support and front-line operational guidelines and training.

Recommendation 17

The Inspectorate recommends that, in considering the purchase of digital tachograph equipment, the Garda Síochána ensure that any such equipment or required training be compatible with that of the Road Safety Authority.

Vehicle Seizures

Several division and district personnel expressed concern about the lack of storage space for seized vehicles. Once impounded, vehicles can remain the legal responsibility of the Garda Síochána for a long period. The time involved is generally greater in the case of vehicles not registered in the State.

The Cork City Garda Division has contracted out the management of the process, from towing to storage. Not only has this streamlined the seizure process in that division, it has freed up valuable space in the divisional vehicle compound. These outsourcing arrangements are currently being replicated in other Garda divisions.

Recommendation 18

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána consider further extending vehicle seizure contracts to other Garda divisions. In doing so, the Garda Síochána should determine if any legal or policy changes and training are required to prepare commanders to exercise this authority.

Traffic Watch

The Traffic Watch programme was introduced by the Garda Síochána in 2004. It was designed as a programme to deter speeding and other dangerous driving offences. Traffic Watch encourages road

users to contact the Garda Síochána if they witness careless or dangerous driving. Members of the public expect that Gardaí will intercept the careless or dangerous drivers who have been reported. In practice, it is often difficult to meet this expectation due to a number of factors including inaccurate infraction location and time lapses between the police receiving the information and arriving at the scene.

The Traffic Watch programme should be evaluated with a view to improving its long term utility. This should include an analysis of its current position in the Garda organisation, its linkages to GNTB and the benefits of data analysis in determining priorities for the future.

Recommendation 19

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána evaluate the Traffic Watch programme with a view to improving its long term utility. This should include an analysis of its current position in the Garda organisation, its linkages to GNTB and the benefits of data analysis in determining priorities for the future.

Measurement of Activity and Prosecutions

Like many organisations, the Garda Síochána finds itself under increasing pressure to demonstrate greater efficiency and effectiveness in all areas of its operations. Target setting and monitoring of roads policing activity are now established processes and are indicative of the organisation's commitment to an accountability framework. In recent years, the Garda Síochána set two clear roads policing goals:

- Increased visibility as a means to influence positive driver behaviour; and
- Increased traffic law enforcement targeting those who continue to put road users at risk.

Key data indicate that the Garda Síochána is accomplishing both of these goals. The following is a sampling of traffic-related enforcement data provided by the Garda Síochána:

- The number of speeding notices issued in 1997 was 71,337 rising to 198,989 in 2007;
- The number of breath tests performed rose from 13,841 in 1997 to 489,029 in 2007.
- The number of incidents of drink driving detections rose from 11,491 in 2003 to 19,837 in 2007.

The use of mobile phones while driving has been prohibited since 2006. A total of 6,171 penalty notices were issued that year. The figure increased more than five fold to 32,672 during 2007.

Mandatory alcohol testing, speeding and other road traffic checkpoints, which provide both visibility and enforcement, are now a daily feature of policing in all Garda divisions. Garda traffic enforcement activity is at its greatest level during high risk times such as holiday weekends.

Analysing data and establishing collision prone zones for enforcement gave focus to the work of the Traffic Corps. The Inspectorate acknowledges the contribution of the Galway West Traffic Corps for introducing the collision prone zones approach to the Garda Síochána. The Inspectorate agrees with the GNTB and local superintendents that the designation of collision prone zones must reflect adequate local input. This can be accomplished through strong communication and the provision of reliable and timely data to the field.

While it is important to track roads policing outputs, it is of greater importance to focus on the achievement of outcomes. The challenge for the Garda Síochána going forward is to develop strategies that focus even more on achieving valuable outcomes such as reduced casualties and greater compliance with traffic laws. The relocation of checkpoints from perceived 'fish in the barrel' spots to researched collision prone zones has been a very positive move and is an example of adopting more outcome-focused strategies.

Essential to an outcome-focused approach is the construction of an information system to monitor roads policing activity and provide timely and reliable data to support programme evaluation. The PULSE system already holds significant quantities of roads policing data and provides

³The appendix to this report has a table showing the numbers of drink driving incidents in the years 2003 to 2007 and the related numbers of prosecutions taken and convictions secured.

valuable information to Garda management. The Inspectorate believes that the Garda Síochána, particularly those on the front lines, could benefit significantly from more timely, reliable and accessible information to assist in monitoring and evaluating roads policing performance. For instance, the Inspectorate could not establish the number of Mandatory Alcohol Testing (MAT) checkpoints and related tests carried out in a particular period. Neither was there sufficiently detailed information readily available on the status of drink driving prosecutions for a particular period. The information is not readily available because it is not centrally held by the Garda Síochána. Garda management needs this information at national, regional, divisional and district levels. Ensuring its availability will require better data collection, recording and analysis.

There are also several independent roads safety databases. Data is held by the Garda Síochána, the Courts Service, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), the Medical Bureau and the Road Safety Authority. There are difficulties in reconciling these data. Consequently, this limits the ability of the Garda Síochána to deploy resources proactively and to track outcomes effectively.

The Inspectorate recommends that the GNTB work with the partner agencies to develop integrated information systems incorporating the full range of roads policing activity, including volumes of enforcement, interventions, detections, fixed penalties, prosecutions, convictions and other activity.

Finally, successful and timely prosecution of drink driving cases is crucial to the overall effort towards achieving greater road safety. The Garda Síochána must closely monitor prosecution data to identify and correct impediments to successful court outcomes and, in so far as it is within their control, minimise delays in the prosecution process. For instance, according to PULSE data, there were 5,173 drink driving detections recorded during the last three months of 2006. The Inspectorate tracked those cases through August, 2008. PULSE records indicate that 1,458 cases (28%) had not yet been heard by the courts in August, 2008. 489 cases (9%) were unsuccessful in the courts. The Garda

Síochána and its road safety partners need more reliable information to properly assess and address the underlying causes of delayed and failed prosecutions. This is important to ensuring that would-be drink drivers are given a clear message that sanctions will follow for those who break the law. It is also important to maintain confidence among front-line Gardaí that their efforts are achieving results. The Inspectorate was pleased to learn that a project is currently underway to integrate Garda data with that of the Courts.

Recommendation 20

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána continue to develop road safety strategies that are outcome-focused, not simply output-focused.

Recommendation 21

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána modernise its system for recording, collecting and analysing road traffic data. The system should be integrated with PULSE and provide user-friendly information to Garda management and those in the field.

Recommendation 22

The Inspectorate recommends that the GNTB work with the partner agencies to develop integrated information systems incorporating the full range of roads policing activity including volumes of enforcement, interventions, detections, fixed penalties, prosecutions, convictions and other activity.

Recommendation 23

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána closely monitor prosecution data to identify and correct impediments to successful court outcomes and, in so far as it is within their control, minimise delays in the prosecution process.

Road Safety Partnerships

A reduction in road deaths and casualties cannot be achieved by the police alone. It requires the coordinated efforts of all road safety partner organisations.

At the national level, the Inspectorate noted many positive examples of partnership between road safety partners. They engage regularly with each other and share relevant statistical information, trends and analysis on all road safety matters. Joint communication campaigns involving the Road Safety Authority, the National Roads Authority, the Garda Síochána and other road safety partners help reinforce these important partnerships and deliver a consistent, strong road safety message.

At the local level, it is not unusual for the RSA to liaise with the Garda Síochána to address a particular road safety issue in a given locality. The RSA uses local media to make the public aware of planned Garda operations. This heightens road safety awareness at the community level. Also, whenever a fatal or serious injury collision occurs, a designated Garda member meets with the local council engineer to determine if the condition of the road was a contributing factor to the collision. This practice was consistent in all locations visited by the Inspectorate.

Many independent sector and non-governmental groups, such as Public Against Road Carnage and Mothers Against Drink Driving, also play an important role in promoting road safety. Often staffed by volunteers whose loved ones were injured or killed in collisions, these organisations have raised public awareness, lobbied for the passage of important legislation and promoted safe driving habits.

In Ireland, there is also an important cross-border aspect to road safety and roads policing. Road safety agencies such as Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) are sharing critical road data obtained during surveys undertaken with both the Garda Síochána and Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). This analysis is providing helpful data and trends relating to driver behaviour.

On 14 September, 2007 the North/South Ministerial Council of Ministers on Transport published a joint communiqué in which they agreed a number of initiatives relating to strategic transport planning and road safety. The communiqué outlines specific proposals relating to road safety and agrees to further “promote road safety through joint advertising and publicity campaigns.” It also states that “available evidence of the effectiveness of the existing approach (to road safety) should be reviewed.” The Council agreed to the sharing of results from road safety research and noted that “opportunities for improving and harmonising arrangements for collecting, collating and reporting road safety information will continue to be explored.”

In response to long-standing concerns about drivers from one jurisdiction eluding sanctions on the opposite side of the border, the British-Irish Council of Transport Ministers committed in 2006 to progress the recognition of driver disqualification in both jurisdictions. This is expected to be implemented in the first quarter of 2009.

The Inspectorate witnessed good cross border police cooperation on road safety. This was further confirmed by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate Constabulary (HMIC) in their recently published Roads Policing Report. The signing of two Protocols in 2005 relating to personnel exchanges and secondments with policing powers aims to further improve bilateral co-operation between the Garda Síochána and the PSNI.

The Inspectorate learned that formal meetings occur annually between the Garda National Traffic Bureau (GNTB) and PSNI Roads Policing in order to develop and reinforce practical working relationships and assist each other with roads policing policy development. Similarly, the Inspectorate found effective cooperation between the Garda Síochána and the PSNI at the local level in addressing the issues of speeding and drink driving in border areas. Monthly meetings are held to develop cross border road safety strategies. Good examples of cross-border police co-operation included mutual assistance during the successful

World Rally Championship held in the border counties and coordinated, directed patrols to reduce the level of fatalities and injuries.

In 2006, the RSA recorded a total of 34 fatalities in the three border counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan with Donegal recording 19 of the total deaths. The 2006 figures represent a significant improvement over 2005 when 48 people lost their lives with Donegal recording 27 fatalities. There is no doubt that this improvement can be attributed in part to the positive co-operation between the Garda Síochána and the PSNI.

Road safety co-operation is also apparent on a European basis. The EU Convention on Driving Disqualification was adopted and signed by all the EU Member States in June, 1998. The objective of the Convention was that drivers disqualified from driving in one member state should not escape the effects of that disqualification when driving in another EU state. Ireland and the United Kingdom will be leaders in Europe when providing for the recognition of disqualified drivers in both jurisdictions in 2009.

The Garda Síochána regularly participates in EU meetings on road safety matters with a goal to ensuring that Ireland's roads policing is contributing to and learning from the best practices of other jurisdictions. Similarly, the Garda Síochána keeps abreast of roads policing developments specific to the United Kingdom through participation in the Association of Chief Police Officers.

On the broader international front, the cities of Boston, Massachusetts and Washington, DC recently hosted a delegation of fourteen Irish road safety professionals who visited the United States to take part in a ten-day programme examining several road safety topics, including road engineering, operator education and behaviour, the development and enforcement of penalties and the establishment of continuity in regulation across different jurisdictions. The group was also briefed on the latest technologies for collision analysis, innovative practices in mobile breath testing and complex traffic and collision monitoring systems.

The programme was developed and delivered by the Irish Institute at Boston College and funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The group included senior members of the Garda Síochána and the PSNI as well as representatives of roads authorities, safety authorities and community bodies from both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Continued engagement at the local, cross-border, European and International levels is encouraged by the Inspectorate. The GNTB should also develop a database that captures best practices, analyses initiatives undertaken and documents successes and failures. This information would be of significant value to Garda management and to the regions.

Recommendation 24

The Inspectorate encourages the Garda Síochána to continue strong road safety collaboration at the local, cross-border, European and international levels.

Recommendation 25

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda National Traffic Bureau develop a database that captures best practices and documents programme successes and failures.

CHAPTER
04

SUMMARY OF
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda National Traffic Bureau (GNTB) continue to serve at the core of the Garda roads policing initiative. Building on its success to date, the GNTB should execute a review of existing roads policing policy and procedures and design a modern framework for monitoring roads policing plans and evaluating the outputs and outcomes of roads policing operations.

Recommendation 2

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management bring greater clarity to the role of the GNTB, address the issue of dual reporting relationships at the district, divisional and regional levels and clearly define the responsibilities of the Traffic Corps relative to the responsibilities of the 'regular' Garda units.

Recommendation 3

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management place greater emphasis on 'denying criminals use of the road' by developing tactical training segments for personnel and ensuring that traffic and regular units are more operationally linked.

Recommendation 4

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management continue to monitor experience levels in regular Garda units to avoid further depleting experience in units that are already at critically low levels.

Recommendation 5

The Inspectorate recommends that Garda management consider dedicated accommodation for traffic personnel as part of a comprehensive facilities management plan.

Recommendation 6

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána begin a comprehensive review of internal policy related to all aspects of roads policing. This should be done with a view to providing clarity to existing stated policy, identifying policy gaps and developing new policy where required. This work should include a particular focus on enhancing standard operating procedures, including safety policies on specific roads policing functions. The standard operating procedures and policy guidelines should be accessible to all members.

Recommendation 7

The Inspectorate recommends that responsibility for the National Coordinator of Forensic Collision Investigation be assigned to the Garda National Traffic Bureau.

Recommendation 8

The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána review the positioning of equipment based on the frequency of collisions and call-outs for forensic collision specialists and, to the degree possible, ensure that the equipment is issued personally to the investigators.

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The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda Síochána develop a plan to improve all training relating to roads policing, including legal and policy changes, court presentation, standard operating procedures for checkpoints and traffic stops and use of road traffic equipment.

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The Inspectorate recommends that the Garda National Traffic Bureau develop a database that captures best practices and documents programme successes and failures.

APPENDIX

TABLE 3

Numbers of Drink Driving incidents detected and related numbers of Court Proceedings and Convictions (2003 - 2007)

TABLE 3

Numbers of Drink Driving Incidents detected in each of the years 2003 to 2007 and related numbers of Court Proceedings and Convictions *

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Drink Driving Incidents Detected	11,491	12,168	14,076	18,602	19,837
Proceedings Commenced	9,939	10,493	12,143	15,344	15,960
Outcomes of Concluded Proceedings (as of 6/11/08)					
Convictions	6,661 (74%)	7,414 (79%)	8,708 (82%)	11,154 (85%)	10,682 (86%)
Non Convictions	2,321 (26%)	2,007 (21%)	1,868 (18%)	1,915 (15%)	1,759 (14%)
Total	8,982 (100%)	9,421 (100%)	10,576 (100%)	13,069 (100%)	12,441 (100%)
Proceedings Still Outstanding as at 6/11/08	957	1,072	1,567	2,275	3,519

* Based on Garda Síochána statistics provided in the reply to Parliamentary Question 40196/08 on 13 November, 2008 by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.