



Garda Professional Standards Unit

ANNUAL REPORT 2014





AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

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Ms. Frances Fitzgerald, T. D.
Minister for Justice and Equality

Dear Minister

In accordance with Section 24(2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended), I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Garda Professional Standards Unit for 2014 which sets out a summary of the Unit's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2014.

The Unit's focus during the reporting period included:-

- The continuation of the programme of examinations and reviews in adherence with the Organisation's commitments under Section 24 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended).
 - The provision of the Unit's findings to senior management in An Garda Síochána and the associated observations on the Organisation's implementation of policies and procedures at operational level, based on these findings.
 - The provision of high risk issues identified for consideration by Organisational senior management.
 - The development and roll out of revised Organisational policy to replace the existing Divisional and District audits with inspections and reviews.
 - The provision of findings to the Director of Training and Development at the Garda College. In conjunction with these findings, the Unit provides recommendations regarding the modification or intensification of Garda training in particular areas where required.
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- Liaison with the Garda Internal Audit Section during combined examinations where directed. This liaison ensures a comprehensive and in-depth examination and audit of operational and financial processes, systems and controls.
 - The periodic alteration of its Business/Policing Plan to include specific and targeted examinations as directed and to address issues raised by internal and external stakeholders.

During the reporting period, the Garda Professional Standards Unit commenced and finalised examinations under a number of categories. Some of the examinations were part of the programme of examinations in the Unit's Business / Policing Plan and some were specific and targeted examinations as directed. The details of the examinations and reviews conducted during the reporting period are set out below and at Chapter 3 of this report.

Each examination conducted by the Garda Professional Standards Unit identifies strengths, areas of concern and Organisational risk and makes specific recommendations to senior management with regard to addressing these areas. Once the examination report is issued to the Division / Districts / sections, the Unit assists them in the development of comprehensive improvement plans to implement the recommendations made. The Garda Professional Standards Unit carries out a review of the Division / District / section that was the subject of an examination with specific focus on the improvement plans.

During the reporting period, the Unit was directed to carry out the following three examinations and reports were completed and forwarded to Organisational senior management;

- Requests sent by the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission in respect of investigations conducted under Section 98 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.
- Report of the examination of audit systems and processes in DMR South Division (in conjunction with the Garda Internal Audit Section).
- Examination of the procedures, policy and decision making processes in relation to cancellations on the Fixed Charge Processing System for road traffic related offences.

During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit finalised the following examination, which commenced in 2013 and forwarded reports to Organisational senior management;

- Examination of systems of controls, processes and procedures of the Serious Crime Review Team (in conjunction with the Garda Internal Audit Section).



The following examinations were also conducted during the reporting period. Reports will be finalised during the first and second quarters of 2015;

- DMR East
- Clare
- Laois/Offaly

The following examinations commenced during the reporting period. The examinations and associated reports will be completed during 2015;

- Cork West
- Joint Garda Professional Standards Unit and Garda Internal Audit Section examination of National Support Services
- National Juvenile Office

During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit continued their examination and monitoring role associated with a number of areas and working groups, as outlined in Chapter 3. In addition, the Unit was assigned responsibilities associated with new or revised Organisational policy. Details of these areas are also set out in Chapter 3.

The role of the Garda Professional Standards Unit's examination and review process is a critical element of corporate governance in An Garda Síochána through inspection and oversight. The Unit also promotes Organisational awareness of issues, more streamlined and effective processes, greater efficiencies and enhances the professionalism of An Garda Síochána.

Yours sincerely

NÓIRÍN O'SULLIVAN
COMMISSIONER OF
AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

March 2015

Ag obair le Pobail chun iad a chosaint agus chun freastal orthu/Working with Communities to Protect and Serve



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended)

The Garda Professional Standards Unit holds a statutory remit in accordance with Section 24 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended). Section 24 of the Act provides:-

- (1) As soon as practicable after the commencement of this section, the Garda Commissioner shall establish a Professional Standards Unit, to be headed by an officer not below the rank of Chief Superintendent, to
 - (a) examine and review, as directed by the Commissioner, the operational, administrative and management performance of the Garda Síochána at all levels,
 - (b) propose measures to the Commissioner to improve that performance, and
 - (c) promote the highest standards of practice, as measured by reference to the best standards of comparable police services, in operational, administrative and management matters relating to the Garda Síochána.
- (2) Not later than 31 March in each year, the Garda Commissioner shall submit a report to the Minister on the activities of the Professional Standards Unit in the preceding year.

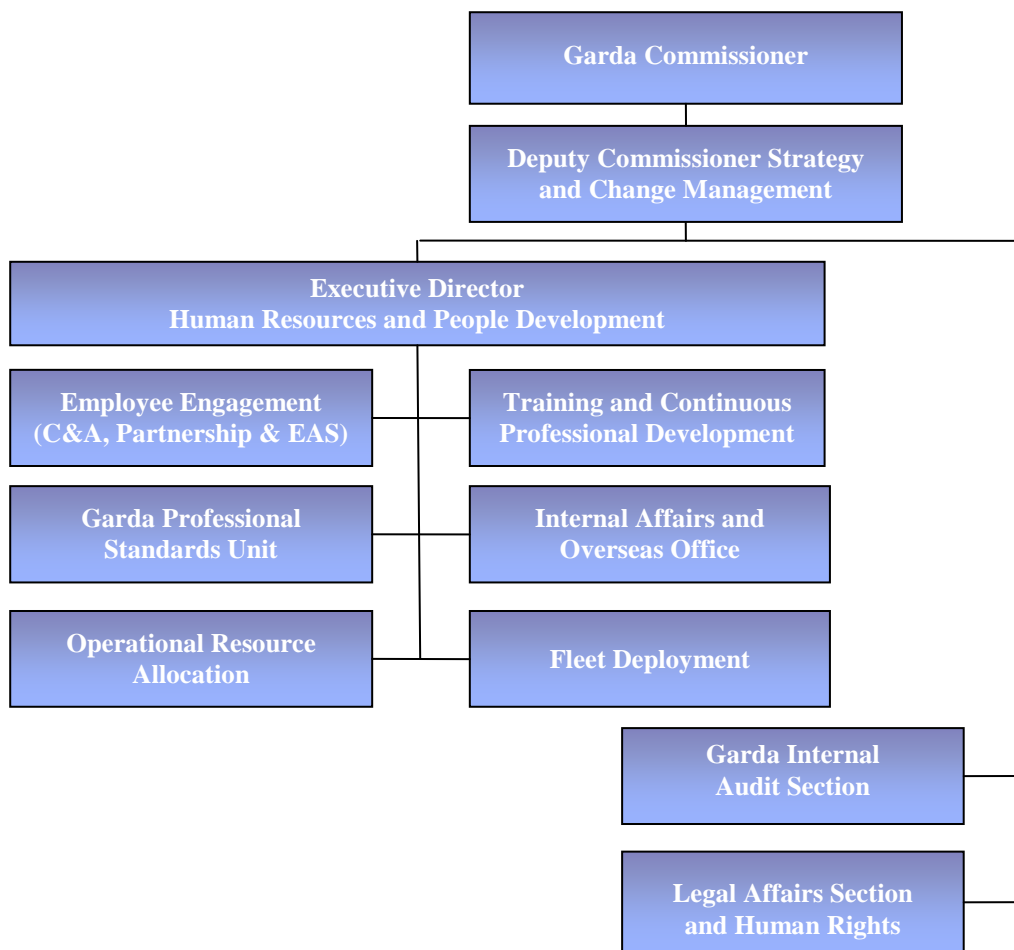
Following on from this statutory requirement, the Unit was established on 6th January 2006 and commenced work at Garda Headquarters, Phoenix Park on 2nd February 2006.



1.3 Garda organisational chart referencing the Garda Professional Standards Unit

In October 2014, the post of Assistant Commissioner Human Resource Management was replaced by the Executive Director Human Resources and People Development.

Fig. 1 Garda organisational chart referencing the Garda Professional Standards Unit

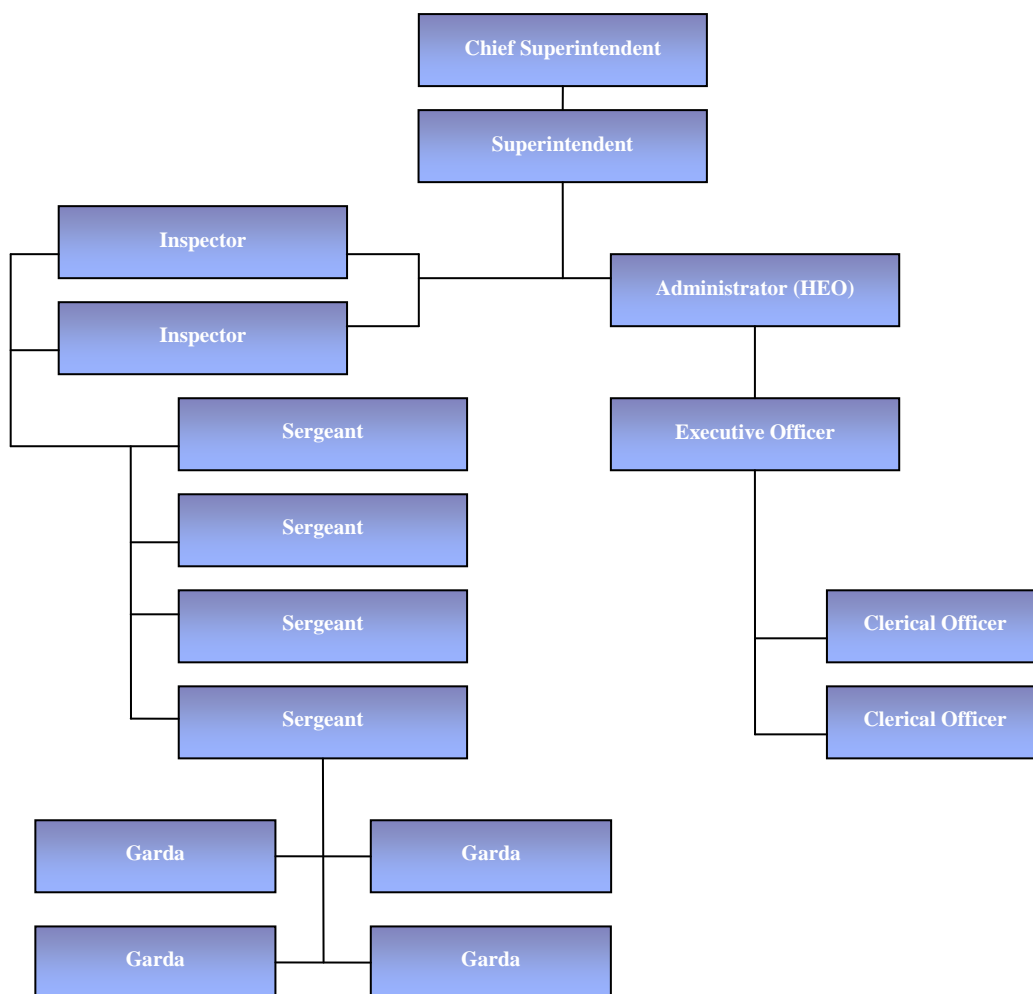




2 STAFFING STRUCTURE

At the end of the reporting period, there were **16** personnel attached to the Garda Professional Standards Unit.

Fig. 2 Current personnel structure of the Garda Professional Standards Unit





3 EXAMINATION AND REVIEW

3.1 Process areas identified for examination and review

The process areas selected for examination are proposed by the Garda Professional Standards Unit and are recommended to the Garda Commissioner based on risk assessments which determine local and Organisational risk. The Unit's Business / Policing Plan is based on an examination and review programme and approved process areas. Specific examinations are also directed by the Garda Commissioner periodically based on Organisational requirements.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit revised its examination and review methodologies during 2013, changing them from wide-scale to more focused thematic examinations and reviews. These revised examinations continued throughout 2014, entailing an analysis of District investigation files and the examination of a number of key operational processes. The processes also incorporate the examination of the management and tracking of evidential property and exhibits, which include cash and drugs. This methodology ensures that the Organisation is adhering to its commitments under Section 24 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended) through these enhanced, cost effective and efficient processes as approved by the Garda Commissioner.

The process areas examined by the Garda Professional Standards Unit during the reporting period included:-

- File management;
- Investigation of criminal complaints;
- Management of property and exhibits (which include cash and drugs);
- Processes and procedures relating to threats to persons;
- Processes and procedures relating to reports of missing persons;
- Compliance with Health and Safety legislative requirements and Organisational policy and procedures;
- Divisional / District audits;
- Domestic violence incident review and analysis;
- Audit of local processes of call taking and dispatching of resources and the creation of associated PULSE incidents;



- Custody record analysis;
- Examination of management reports relative to sexual incident and child welfare to establish if incidents of a sexual nature are being monitored, reviewed and recorded on PULSE in line with Garda policy;
- Examination of the implementation of Garda policy relative to the monitoring of sex offenders;
- Processes associated with bail and sign on at Garda Stations;
- Specific areas as directed by the Garda Commissioner.

3.2 Progress of examination and review

During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit commenced or finalised a number of examinations, which have been categorised in Figs. 3, 4 and 5. The examinations, in Fig. 3, with a specific or limited scope were completed and reports were provided to Organisational senior management. Further details of the examinations with a specific or limited scope are set out at Section 3.3 of this report.

Fig. 3 Examinations completed with a specific or limited scope

Division / Districts / Section			Directed / with specific scope	With Garda Internal Audit Section	On the Business Plan of the Unit
DMR South	Crumlin	Terenure	✓	✓	
	Tallaght				
Examination of systems of controls, processes and procedures of the Serious Crime Review Team (in conjunction with the Garda Internal Audit Section).			✓	✓	
Requests sent by the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission in respect of investigations conducted under Section 98 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.			✓		
Examination of the procedures, policy and decision making processes in relation to cancellations on the Fixed Charge Processing System for road traffic related offences.			✓		



Examinations were carried out in three Divisions, as set out in Fig. 4 below. Reports will be finalised during the first and second quarter of 2015.

Fig. 4 Divisional examinations conducted by the Garda Professional Standards Unit

Divisions	Districts		Directed / with specific scope	With Garda Internal Audit Section	On the Business Plan of the Unit
DMR East	Blackrock	Dun Laoghaire			✓
Clare	Ennis	Kilrush			✓
Laois/Offaly	Birr	Portlaoise			✓
	Tullamore				

During the reporting period, the following examinations in Fig. 5 commenced. The examinations will continue and the associated reports will be completed during 2015.

Fig. 5 Examinations commenced by the Garda Professional Standards Unit

Divisions	Districts		Directed / with specific scope	With Garda Internal Audit Section	On the Business Plan of the Unit
Cork West	Bandon	Bantry			✓
	Clonakilty	Macroom			
National Support Services			✓	✓	
National Juvenile Office			✓		

Following each examination, the Garda Professional Standards Unit works with each Chief Superintendent and/or Superintendent to implement continuous improvement through targeted improvement plans. This includes the preparation of separate Health and Safety improvement plans where appropriate.



The Garda Professional Standards Unit carried out reviews in the following Divisions in Fig. 6 during 2014.

Fig. 6 Reviews completed by the Garda Professional Standards Unit

Divisions	Districts		
Waterford	Dungarvan	Tramore	Waterford
Wicklow	Baltinglass	Bray	Wicklow
Galway	Table top review *		

*** Table top review**

Where the Garda Professional Standards Unit establishes, following a Divisional review that further assistance is required with the improvement plan or where a Division does not agree with the results of the review, a table top review is carried out. For each Division / District that is the subject of a table top review, the Garda Professional Standards Unit meets with a nominated improvement plan liaison person and Divisional management to discuss the progress on each area of concern. Reports containing the results of the table top review are issued to the Divisional Officer and the District Officer.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit carried out a table top review of Galway Division in June 2014, incorporating six Garda Districts. The reports were completed during the first quarter of 2015.



3.3 Divisional / specialist section examinations with specific or limited scope

In addition to the programme of examinations and reviews in the Unit's Business / Policing Plan, the Garda Professional Standards Unit was directed by the Commissioner / Deputy Commissioner to carry out examinations in the following Divisions/specialist sections comprising a specific or limited scope.

Report of the examination of audit systems and processes in DMR South Division

On 7th February 2014, Deputy Commissioner Operations directed Assistant Commissioner Human Resource Management to arrange for the Garda Professional Standards Unit and the Garda Internal Audit Section to undertake an examination of all audit systems and processes in DMR South Division.

The examination focused on reviewing the audit systems and processes in place in the Division and on all categories of property including cash coming into Garda possession. A number of strengths and areas of concern were identified.

Reports outlining the findings of the examination and the associated recommendations were forwarded to Organisational senior management on 24th November 2014. The Garda Professional Standards Unit is assisting DMR South Division in the implementation of an improvement plan.

Examination of systems of controls, processes and procedures of the Serious Crime Review Team (in conjunction with the Garda Internal Audit Section)

On 27th November 2013, Deputy Commissioner Operations directed the Garda Professional Standards Unit, in conjunction with the Garda Internal Audit Section to undertake an examination of the systems of control, including adherence to Organisational policies, processes and procedures and associated roles and responsibilities within the Serious Crime Review Team in the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The examination commenced on 9th December 2013 and continued into 2014.



A report outlining the findings of the examination and the associated recommendations was forwarded to Organisational senior management on 24th November 2014. The Garda Professional Standards Unit is assisting the Serious Crime Review Team with the implementation of an improvement plan.

Requests sent by the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission in respect of investigations conducted under Section 98 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005

In February 2014, Assistant Commissioner Human Resource Management requested the assistance of the Garda Professional Standards Unit to carry out an examination of requests sent by the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission in respect of investigations conducted under Section 98 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

On 18th February 2014, Assistant Commissioner Human Resource Management received the approval of Deputy Commissioner Strategy and Change Management of the scope of the examination and directed the Garda Professional Standards Unit to proceed. This examination examined the Organisation's compliance with the 30 day timeframe provided for in the agreed Memorandum of Understanding Protocols and Agreement on Operational Matters between the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission and An Garda Síochána.

On 17th April 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit forwarded the report of their findings and recommendations to Chief Superintendent Internal Affairs and Organisational senior management.

Examination of the procedures, policy and decision making processes in relation to cancellations on the Fixed Charge Processing System for road traffic related offences

On 29th August 2014, the Garda Commissioner requested a report on the operation of the Fixed Charge Processing System (FCPS) since the issue, on 16th June 2014, of FCPS Policy and Procedures Manual (Fourth Edition) 2014. On 8th September 2014, Assistant Commissioner Traffic requested the Garda Professional Standards Unit to conduct an examination of FCPS cancellations between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014 to include the revised policy.



On 15th September 2014, a meeting was arranged by Assistant Commissioner Traffic with a source of information who outlined issues concerning certain cancellation decisions within FCPS. The source of information sought the protection of the Protected Disclosures Act, 2014. The source of information consented in writing to the information provided being utilised and this information formed part of the Garda Professional Standards Unit examination.

The report entitled '*Examination of the procedures, policy and decision making processes in relation to cancellations on the Fixed Charge Processing System for road traffic related offences*' compiled the results of the Garda Professional Standards Unit examination and the associated findings and recommendations. The report was published on the Department of Justice and Equality website and the Garda Síochána website on 27th January 2015.

Assistant Commissioner, Traffic established an FCPS implementation group in February 2015 which is chaired by Chief Superintendent, Garda National Traffic Bureau. The Garda Professional Standards Unit is involved in this implementation group in an advisory capacity and will provide support and assistance to this group as required. A decision making model is currently being developed at the Garda College to identify good practice and procedures regarding the recording of rationale and consistency of decision making and will be provided to the cancelling authorities and staff of the Fixed Charge Processing Office (FCPO).

A workshop was held on 12th March 2015 involving members of the Garda Professional Standards Unit and members of staff from GNTB/FCPO and the Garda College, to address the lessons learned and training and quality issues resulting from this examination.

The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) is conducting an investigation under Section 102 (1) of the Garda Síochána Act, 2005 (as amended) into certain aspects of the FCPS. As a result, a copy of the examination report was sent to GSOC for consideration and the Garda Professional Standards Unit has liaised with GSOC and has provided a presentation in relation to the report. The Garda Professional Standards Unit also undertook to provide assistance and documentation, if required, to any subsequent investigation or review in respect of the examination.



A copy of the Garda Professional Standards Unit report was forwarded to the Garda Inspectorate and the Comptroller and Auditor General as both agencies have examined FCPS previously.

FCPS Policies and Procedures Manual (Fourth Edition) 2014

The FCPS Policies and Procedures Manual (Fourth Edition) came into effect on 16th June 2014. Section 5 of this policy, titled 'Auditing of FCPS', requires the Garda Internal Audit Section to '*conduct regular audit checks of the full operation of the FCPS to ensure full compliance with all aspects of the policy and report to Assistant Commissioner Traffic*'. The policy further outlined that the Garda Professional Standards Unit will provide support to the audit process by carrying out an examination of the decision making process.

This process is ongoing and the findings from these examinations and audits were shared with the Garda Internal Audit Section and Assistant Commissioner Traffic.

3.4 Additional areas the subject of examinations for consistent compliance

The Garda Professional Standards Unit has a role in the following areas which requires consistent examination and monitoring. Periodic or regular reports are provided to Garda management as appropriate.

Examination of voice recording facilities within An Garda Síochána between 1984 and 2008

Following a requirement to provide a briefing for the Secretary General, Department of Justice and Equality into voice recording of telephone calls by An Garda Síochána, on 26th March 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit was tasked by Assistant Commissioner Human Resource Management, with coordinating searches and examining all documentation relating to voice recording equipment in An Garda Síochána.

On 30th March 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit submitted a report for the information of the Commissioner, outlining all documentation that had been located surrounding the purchase and installation of voice recording equipment in An Garda Síochána



and all internal policies issued in relation to same. Following the submission of the initial report, the Garda Professional Standards Unit continued to coordinate searches for historical documentation and on 4th April 2014 submitted an updated report for the information of the Commissioner on the results of its findings.

As a result of the voice recordings of telephone calls in An Garda Síochána, the Government announced the establishment of a commission of investigation to examine all matters of public concern relating to the issue. On 1st April 2014, the Government appointed Mr. Justice Nial Fennelly as chair of the commission of investigation and on 8th April 2014, the Government published detailed terms of reference for the commission.

On 12th May 2014, Assistant Commissioner Organisation Development and Strategic Planning was formally appointed as the liaison officer for the commission of investigation to be chaired by Mr Justice Fennelly. On 22nd May 2014, the Chief Administrative Officer of An Garda Síochána directed that in the interest of ensuring confidentiality and efficiency, Chief Superintendent Garda Professional Standards Unit should liaise directly with Assistant Commissioner Organisation Development and Strategic Planning and provide copies of any documentation required to enable him to carry out his role as the appointed liaison officer for the commission of investigation.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit has continued to collate, chronicle and digitally record all existing documentation held in relation to this matter and several tranches of information have been provided to the commission of investigation via the Assistant Commissioner.

Compliance with Data Protection Acts - Item of Interest (IOI) Inquiry Report

During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit continued examining District implementation and compliance with data protection policy, procedures and legislative requirements in accordance with An Garda Síochána Data Protection Code of Practice.

Random audits are conducted by the Garda Professional Standards Unit and details are entered into the item of inquiry dialogue box on PULSE to ascertain the quality of information being entered in respect of persons, vehicles and locations. These audits ensure the information entered is as informative as possible and best represents the enquiry reason.



The number of examinations conducted for the calendar year 2014 is as follows:

- Initial examination 26 Districts
- Follow up examination 27 Districts
- Third examination 3 Districts

Where the information recorded is insufficient to demonstrate compliance with regulations, the Garda Professional Standards Unit highlights these concerns to local management and requests replies outlining the actions taken. Follow up audits are conducted and the Garda Professional Standards Unit has found that where follow up examinations have taken place, noticeable improvements have occurred in all areas.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit worked alongside the Garda IT Centre to develop the 'Item of interest (IOI) inquiry report' and composed the associated Headquarters Directive and policy document. The aim was to provide a tool that would allow District Officers/equivalent heads of sections to monitor and increase the levels of compliance with data protection regulations within their area of responsibility.

On 2nd May 2014, the IOI Inquiry report was made available to members holding the rank of Superintendent and above. The IOI Inquiry Report allows District Officers/heads of sections to identify members who are not fully completing the 'reason for enquiry' box and to take any necessary action. With the introduction of revised policy, 'Garda inspection and reviews', the IOI inquiry report provides District Officers/heads of sections with a mechanism for conducting inspections and reviews in the area of data protection.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit continues to conduct ongoing random audits on all Garda Districts.

Investigation into the management and investigation of criminal complaints at Bray District

During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit continued to monitor Bray District in addressing issues identified during the examination into the management and investigation of criminal complaints in 2012. This included monitoring the status of investigation files which contained areas of concern and the progress of a working group established in the District.



A formal review of Wicklow Division was carried out during the second and fourth quarters of 2014. The review report will be issued during the first quarter of 2015 which will conclude the Garda Professional Standards Unit's monitoring role.

Examinations into allegations of neglect when carrying out criminal investigations by specific Garda members

In June 2013, following the conclusion of a board of inquiry in respect of a specific member of An Garda Síochána and an associated adverse discipline finding, Assistant Commissioner Human Resource Management directed the Garda Professional Standards Unit to carry out a full audit of all criminal investigations carried out by this member to establish if they were fully and thoroughly investigated. The Garda Professional Standards Unit conducted an examination of PULSE records with the assistance of the Garda IT Section through the compilation of a list of relevant investigations to be examined. Further assistance was provided by the Inspector in the Division.

The examination concluded and a report was forwarded to senior Garda management for further attention in September 2014.

Audit of property of An Garda Síochána

The Garda Professional Standards Unit continued to co-ordinate the national property audit during 2014. The purpose of the nationwide audit is to ensure that Divisional and District Officers are in a position to account for all property in the possession of An Garda Síochána and to ensure accuracy between PULSE property records and station property records. To date, significant amounts of property have been audited and disposed of where appropriate. The audit is nearing completion.

Smyth Advisory Committee - review of video tapes

The Garda Síochána investigative interviewing policy and manual of guidance for investigative interviewing was introduced on 31st March 2014. In accordance with the policy, the Garda Professional Standards Unit is to ensure quality assurance nationally in relation to its implementation.



The Garda Professional Standards Unit reviews finalised investigation files and accompanying interview tapes and examines the storage, security, cataloguing and tracking of recorded material. The Garda Professional Standards Unit also identifies and conducts interviews with level 3* interviewers as part of the examinations. In preparation for this remit, members of the unit have or are in the process of undergoing training in the Garda Síochána interviewing model.

The examination focuses on the deployment of trained level 3 interviewers to ascertain that these personnel are utilised appropriately in Divisional investigations. The Garda Professional Standards Unit will continue with this approach in the various forthcoming examinations.

** Training in the Garda Síochána interviewing model is set from level 1 to level 4, to develop knowledge and skills in conducting interviews during investigations. Training results in proficiency to conduct interviews from basic to those required for serious and complex investigations.*

Smyth Advisory Committee – review of critical incidents

In accordance with policy introduced on 31st March 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit is required to examine and review files in relation to serious crimes and critical incidents which are referred to them as a result of the following:

1. Where a trial of a case in respect of a critical incident as provided for in policy introduced in 2009 (Anticipatory plans to deal with serious crime and critical incidents) collapses.
2. Where an adverse comment is made by a court at a trial of a case in respect of a critical incident in relation to the conduct of the investigation, Garda behaviour, practice or procedure, (including a breach of the custody regulations); or
3. Where an adverse comment is made by the Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to the conduct of the investigation, Garda behaviour practice or procedure.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit function is to identify issues of importance, good practice/standards or areas for improvement that may influence future investigations, practice, procedures and standards.



The Unit requests the investigation file and all correspondence associated with it from the respective Chief Superintendent. An examination and review of the documentation provided is conducted and a report is developed.

Assignment of additional responsibility

In addition to the above, the Garda Professional Standards Unit was assigned responsibilities associated with the following new or revised Organisational policy throughout 2014;

- Anti-fraud policy.
- Health and Safety executive management team.
- An Garda Síochána policy on the use of social media.
- Implementation of the Performance, Accountability and Learning Framework into six Divisions and one specialist section.
- Failure to observe any provision of the Criminal Justice Act, 1984 (Treatment of Persons in Custody in Garda Síochána Stations) Regulations, 1987 / 2006 (Custody Regulations).
- Monitoring adherence to crime counting rules and Garda policy on crime recording.

These areas will be the subject of consistent focus by the Garda Professional Standards Unit. Reports as appropriate will be developed for the attention of Garda management.



4 FEEDBACK TO THE GARDA ORGANISATION

The Garda Professional Standards Unit presents its comprehensive findings to members of An Garda Síochána at various courses and conferences throughout the year and through a number of other means.

Garda Professional Standards Unit presentations to senior management

During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit, along with the Garda Internal Audit Section addressed the Commissioner and senior management team on the approach, findings and high level recommendations of both sections. During the reporting period, presentations were provided on the following subjects:

- Examination of the procedures, policy and decision making processes in relation to cancellations on the Fixed Charge Processing System for road traffic related offences.
- Revised audit policy entitled inspections and reviews.
- Various examinations as directed.

A high level overview of the broad findings of both sections is provided at these presentations by the Garda Professional Standards Unit and the Garda Internal Audit Section. They result in Organisational sharing of issues encountered during examinations and the associated best practice recommended. This widespread distribution of information provides the opportunity for senior management to address recurring issues within their Divisions in advance of examinations / audits.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit has continued to participate in and contribute to the following working groups, boards and committees established. These groups include:-

Property and Exhibits Management Systems (PEMS) working group

The Garda Professional Standards Unit provided information in respect of its findings relating to property to this working group as part of a revision of the policy and procedures for management of property and exhibits. The policy is currently being finalised.



Deaths in custody working group

Throughout 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit continued the implementation of recommendations from their report entitled, 'Review of deaths in custody between 1997 and 2006', as part of the Organisation's working group on deaths in custody.

The working group also reviewed recommendations which were contained in existing reports on deaths in custody and custody related issues from external agencies including:-

- The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission;
- The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture;
- The State Claims Agency;
- Coroners inquests;
- Director of Public Prosecutions.

Continuing from the progress made in previous years, the working group was responsible for the following during 2014:-

- The revision of Organisational policy regarding supervision, inspection and maintenance of all operational cells in Garda Stations;
- Continuation of the review of cell facilities nationally;
- The continuation of a sub-group to examine the recommendations of external bodies following deaths in custody;
- Approval from the Garda Commissioner to commence a pilot of anti-suicide smocks for high-risk prisoners in three pilot locations in 2015.
- The roll-out of ligature cutting devices to custody areas across the Organisation.
- The commencement of development of a policy on the provision of defibrillators within An Garda Síochána.



Director of Training and Development

The findings of the Garda Professional Standards Unit are provided where appropriate to the Director of Training and Development at the Garda College. The input of the Garda Professional Standards Unit is utilised by the Garda College to develop training materials which include potential or common Organisational areas of concern and associated best practice. The Garda Professional Standards Unit also presents these findings and best practice to various training modules at the Garda College which include detective training, Senior Investigating Officer training and promotion courses.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit has continued liaison with the Garda College during 2014, in the development and roll out of the revised training programme for levels 2, 3 and 4 investigative interviewing. The Unit, in conjunction with the Garda College commenced the development of a quality assurance programme for the examination of investigative interviewing policy. These examinations will include the analysis of interviews through a review of video tape and DVD recording of interviews.

As part of the examination and review process, the Garda Professional Standards Unit places significant emphasis on feedback from operational Divisions and Districts on processes including custody management, health and safety, data protection and monitoring the data quality of sexual assault cases. This feedback is used in the development of examination and review preparatory materials and corresponding best practice for the distribution of recommendations.

The Unit is also cognisant of reports from external bodies and ensures consideration of such reports in their own processes and within the remit of the working groups of which they are members.

Organisational issues identified during examinations and reviews

As part of the Garda Professional Standards Unit examination and review process, District and Divisional senior management are provided with areas of concern to address and associated recommendations to implement. The Unit, on occasions, also finds issues which are outside the control of the Division or District due to resource difficulties or due to deficiencies or restrictions within Organisational policy. Some of these issues are of medium



and low risk and may afford the Organisation time to rectify. However, the Garda Professional Standards Unit has encountered some high risk areas which it is of the view require the urgent consideration of Organisational senior management.

During the reporting period, the Garda Professional Standards Unit forwarded a report on a number of Organisational issues and associated recommendations to the relevant areas for consideration.



5 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LIAISON

The Garda Professional Standards Unit interacts with the following internal policy owners and external agencies:-

Internal Policy Owners

Liaison with and provision of findings to specialist sections of An Garda Síochána

The Garda Professional Standards Unit liaises with various specialist sections of An Garda Síochána as part of the examination and review process. This ensures that examination materials are up to date with changes to policy and expertise. Where relevant, following examinations and reviews, the specific findings of the Unit are provided to appropriate internal specialist units.

Liaison has occurred with the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Investigation Unit (DVSAIU) with regard to the Garda Professional Standards Unit's process area for examination associated with registered sex offenders. The Garda Professional Standards Unit consulted with Liaison and Protection Section regarding policy associated with missing persons and death threats. The Unit also liaised with the Forensic Liaison Office with regard to the process area associated with the management of property and exhibits.

Garda Internal Audit Section

Joint examinations, in conjunction with the Garda Internal Audit Section, commenced in 2013 and continued throughout 2014. During 2014, the Garda Professional Standards Unit was directed to carry out further examinations of audit systems and processes in Divisions / specialist sections of An Garda Síochána. Effective cooperation results in a comprehensive and in-depth combined examination and audit.



Revised audit / inspection and review policy

As a result of discussions on Divisional and District audits at the two Commissioner's Conferences in 2013, the Organisation's former audit policy was reviewed in detail to ascertain if it was achieving operational effectiveness. A direction was issued by the Commissioner to draft a new approach to inspections to ensure an effective methodology which would be of benefit to An Garda Síochána in its overall Organisational governance and accountability.

Consultation between Garda Internal Audit Section and the Garda Professional Standards Unit took place over a number of months and a draft document was produced. The revised policy incorporated changes in principles including:

- Frequency of inspections;
- The utilisation of risk to identify inspection areas;
- The use of a holistic approach to all areas of responsibility rather than separate geographic areas.

A focus group consisting of a cross section of Garda management was held on 28th January 2014 which contributed to the content of the policy. Following agreement and approval of the revised policy, master classes were provided to Assistant Commissioners, Chief Superintendents, Superintendents, Acting Superintendents and Civilian heads of sections nationally by management of the Garda Professional Standards Unit and the Garda Internal Audit Section.

The master classes had four distinct sections:

1. Background to the revised policy, roles and responsibilities, risk assessment tools to ascertain high, medium and/or low risks.
2. The functions of the Garda Professional Standards Unit, the areas the Unit examines, recurring issues identified during examinations and recommendations for inspections and reviews.
3. The functions of Garda Internal Audit Section, areas the Section audits, recurring issues identified during audits and information regarding sample sizes for inspections and reviews.



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4. PULSE review and reporting services: This area provided information on the identification of samples from PULSE, the recurring issues associated with information entered on PULSE, review, clarification, and the process for accessing reports.

Garda Internal Affairs Section

The Garda Professional Standards Unit continues to liaise with the Garda Síochána Internal Affairs Section regarding complaints and behaviours of particular concern and those which have the potential to cause reputational risk for the Organisation. In advance of each examination, as part of the preliminary research, the Unit obtains specific trends of complaints and places additional focus on these areas during its examination.

External agencies

Garda Inspectorate

The Garda Professional Standards Unit has had a number of meetings with the Garda Inspectorate and it has been agreed that there is merit in such meetings taking place into the future. A further meeting was held between the management team of the Garda Professional Standards Unit and the Garda Inspectorate in May 2014, during which the comparisons of work undertaken by both offices was acknowledged. Each member of the Garda Professional Standards Unit was interviewed by the Garda Inspectorate in June 2014 as part of their field visits associated with their 2014 inspection entitled Crime Investigation.

A number of reports developed by the Garda Professional Standards Unit have been provided to the Garda Inspectorate and the Unit will continue this.

Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC)

The Garda Professional Standards Unit carried out an examination of requests sent by GSOC in respect of investigations conducted under Section 98 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005. Considerable liaison through meetings between the Garda Professional Standards Unit and the GSOC formed part of the examination in advance of its finalisation and the associated report.

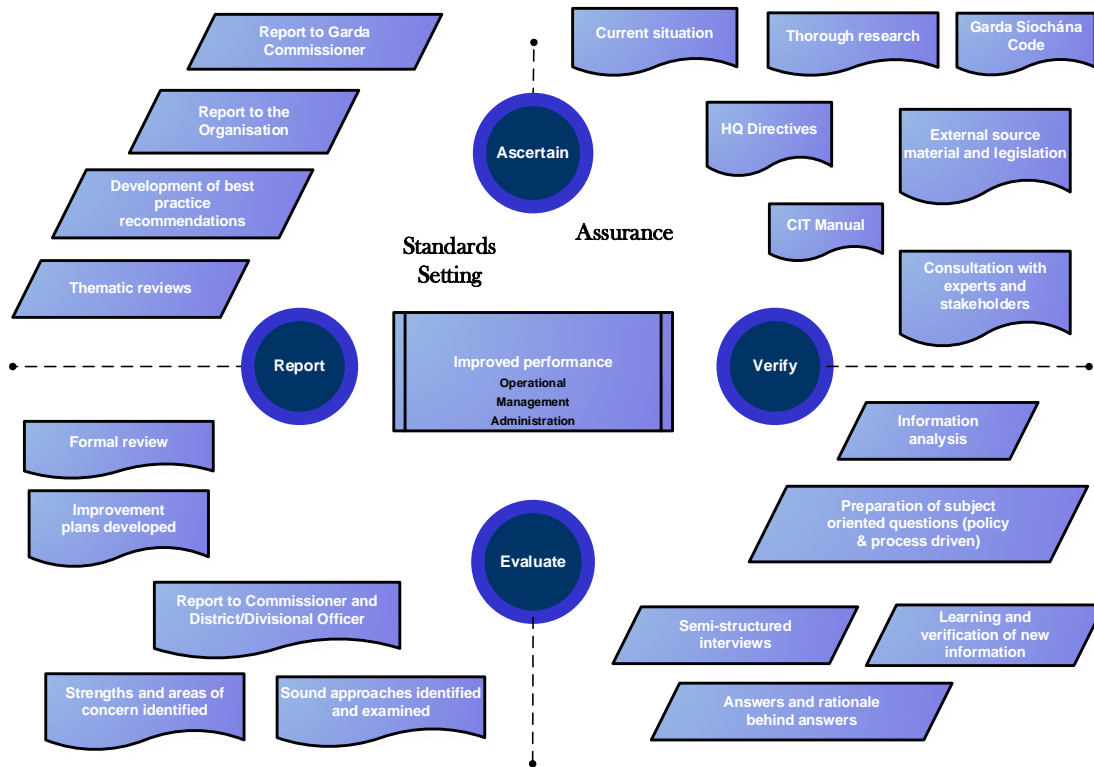


6 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND METHODOLOGY

6.1 Continuous improvement

The Garda Professional Standards Unit monitors and ensures compliance with professional standards and supports the development and achievement of standards of excellence through a continuous improvement cycle.

Fig. 7 Continuous improvement model for the Garda Professional Standards Unit



The Garda Professional Standards Unit, through its members' experience and capabilities as Internal Quality Management Systems Auditors, uses these specific competencies throughout the examination and review process to clearly identify Divisional and District strengths and areas where improvement actions need to be taken and the reporting mechanisms for escalating and distributing findings.



6.2 Methodology

In 2007, the Garda Professional Standards Unit established the methodology for the preparation of the examination and review process to obtain a comprehensive overview of each process area. The methodology has been assessed and refined since then and is currently the five stage approach outlined below:-

6.2.1 Stage one – background research

- Thorough research of each process area is undertaken to obtain the current situation within An Garda Síochána.
- Relevant source data is identified and examined, including:-
 - The Garda Síochána Code
 - Crime Investigation Techniques Manual
 - Headquarters (HQ) Directives
 - Operating and training manuals
 - External source materials and legislation relating to each area
- Subject matter experts within An Garda Síochána are consulted.
- Discussion takes place with external stakeholders who have knowledge or experience in the relevant areas.

6.2.2 Stage two – question development

- Subject oriented questions are prepared following analysis of the information gained.
- The questions, which are policy and process driven, assist in testing local compliance with current policy in each examination area.
- The questions are designed to be administered in semi-structured interviews with specialist members who have a working knowledge of the subject area under examination.



6.2.3 Stage three – semi-structured interviews and analysis of documentation

- The semi-structured interviews are conducted with members from all ranks who have working knowledge of the subject area under examination.
- The interview process confirms information that has already been gathered. This provides the opportunity for new information to be highlighted and learning to be gained by the research team.
- The information obtained provides the rationale behind the answers.

6.2.4 Stage Four – analysis of findings

- The information gained from the interview process is evaluated by members of the Garda Professional Standards Unit who have achieved certification by Excellence Ireland Quality Association (EIQA) as Internal Quality Management Systems Auditors. This evaluation assists the Unit in the identifying the Division and District strengths and areas of concern.

6.2.5 Stage five – improvement plans and reviews

- Guidance on the preparation of improvement plans is communicated to District Officers on completion of each examination.
- The Garda Professional Standards Unit assesses implementation of the improvement plan and carries out a formal review of each District / section to evaluate progress. The Garda Professional Standards Unit provides advice and assistance where required.



7 SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Continuous education and training are an imperative of the Garda Professional Standards Unit. This will ensure that the methodologies of the Unit and all recommendations made reflect current Organisational policy and best practice. Members of the unit are encouraged, in so far as possible, to undertake formal education and training courses and participate in various Organisational operational training under relevant process areas that are the subject of Garda Professional Standards Unit examinations.

In 2014, each new member of the Garda Professional Standards Unit was certified as an Internal Quality Management Systems Auditor by Excellence Ireland Quality Association (EIQA). Internal assessor / auditor training will continue to be provided to new members of staff in the future.

All members attached to the Unit hold or are undertaking a variety of third level qualifications at both under graduate and post graduate level.

The breadth and depth of operational policing experience is central to the role of the Garda Professional Standards Unit. To complement this specific training, the Garda Professional Standards Unit is also focused on maintaining its broad knowledge base. Members of the Unit have backgrounds in or have received training in the following areas:

- Project management
- Policy development
- Public order
- Firearms training
- Detective training
- Interviewing of suspects
- Investigative interviewing of witnesses
- Children First
- Sex offenders matrix
- Data protection practitioner
- Public financial management for internal auditors
- Fraud investigation/money laundering/confiscation of assets



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- Risk assessment and Safety Statement
 - Safety and Health at work
 - Safe management of persons in custody
 - Incident room co-ordinator



8 CONCLUSION

The year 2014 was a very challenging year for An Garda Síochána and the Organisation's Policing Plan for 2015 focuses on commencing the journey of reform, change and continuous development, structurally, technologically and most importantly, culturally.

The Organisation is committed to learning lessons from past experiences and to building upon the positives while accommodating advice and critique from within and from our oversight bodies, demonstrating an ability to improve.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit will continue to provide internal oversight through its comprehensive examination and review process and the various monitoring roles associated with new and revised Organisational policy. The Unit will also continue to use its findings to highlight issues of Organisational risk and to assist the implementation of best practice.

The Garda Professional Standards Unit will play a significant role in An Garda Síochána's path of renewal and innovation and its commitment to put victims and the citizen at the centre of the service it provides.

