



An Garda Síochána

Garda Reserve Strategy 2021-2025

FOREWORD



I am pleased to present An Garda Síochána's Garda Reserve Strategy 2021-2025.

The Garda Reserve represents a real opportunity for anyone wishing to support policing and give something back to their communities.

An Garda Síochána is committed to keeping people safe. We recognise that amongst other benefits, the Garda Reserve offers An Garda Síochána essential community links, and the capability to draw on additional resources to assist in policing. The Garda Reserve offers policing experience to a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds and communities. Fostering and increasing diversity and inclusion in our organisation improves service delivery through the talents and life experiences of people from all backgrounds.

The value that the Garda Reserve bring to An Garda Síochána is to support the work we do in keeping people safe and this is what is intended to be accomplished through the lifespan of this strategy and beyond. Through this strategy, An Garda Síochána will ensure that Reserve Gardaí perform their duty as valued members of dedicated community policing or regular units to deliver proactive, high visibility policing which contributes to keeping people safe.

This strategy is partially informed by an internal review of the Garda Reserve which identified areas for development with regard to ensuring the structure, management and governance of the Garda Reserve are consistent throughout the organisation. It aims to ensure that the duties of Reserve Gardaí are well defined and that they are trained adequately and supported by local management teams for their role. The review identified a number of areas that are required to be addressed in order to ensure that the Garda Reserve operates as an efficient and worthwhile resource for the organisation and the communities we serve.

This strategy provides a roadmap to deliver the necessary changes to enable the Garda Reserve support us in delivering a world class policing service, promote diversity within our organisation, and make the role of the Garda Reserve a worthwhile commitment for the men and women from our communities who voluntarily give their time to helping make our communities safe.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by our Garda Reserve members, who give up their time to work alongside our full-time members and staff keeping communities safe across Ireland.

J.A. Harris

Commissioner, An Garda Síochána



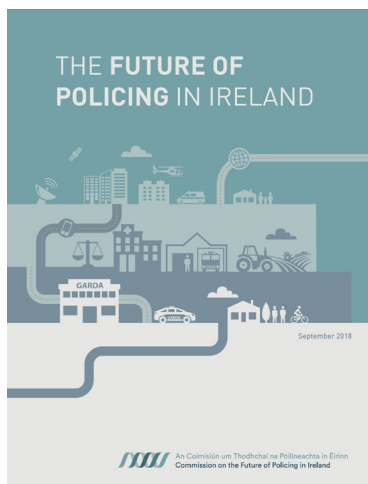
OVERVIEW

The Garda Reserve is an opportunity for people from all communities to support policing and to give back to their communities. Reserve Gardaí are representative of diverse groups in society. They provide a quality service, supporting proactive policing and represent the partnership between An Garda Síochána and the many communities we serve.

The Reserve Garda is a voluntary position within An Garda Síochána. The principal role of a Reserve Garda is to perform policing duties in support of community policing and regular units to make our communities safer. Reserve Gardaí are involved in policing major events, community engagement and in providing operational support to full-time Garda members. This strategy will identify a number of key areas essential for the development of the Garda Reserve to 2025 and beyond.



BACKGROUND



The Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland (CoFPI) was published in September 2018 and outlines the drivers for change and vision for the future of An Garda Síochána.

Recommendation 26 addressed reform of the Garda Reserve:

'Further recruitment to the Garda Reserve should be paused, pending the outcome of a comprehensive strategic review, examining how best to structure a reserve to meet the needs of the police service, which should recommend proposals for significant reform.'

The Government of Ireland's Policing Service for the Future sets out a four year plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the CoFPI Report. This strategy has been developed in response to the CoFPI plan. An Action Plan will support the implementation of this strategy and ensure the

future development of the Garda Reserve so that it best supports An Garda Síochána's strategic objectives and mission of 'Keeping People Safe.'

INTERNAL REVIEW

This strategy is partially informed by an internal review of the Garda Reserve conducted in 2019 which identified some areas for development including the structure, management and governance of the Garda Reserve.

The internal review team consulted with a variety of people, conducted focus group research with key stakeholders and took cognisance of a number of reports. Recommendations of this review partially inform the strategic objectives of this strategy.



THE ROLE OF A RESERVE GARDA

The role of the Garda Reserve is to support the work of An Garda Síochána in the provision of a policing service to the community.

The role of the individual Reserve Garda will vary depending on the Division they are attached to and on the policing requirements of that Division.

Reserve Gardaí undertake duties as authorised by the Garda Commissioner which currently include:

- High visibility patrolling
- Engagement with communities
- Policing of events
- Providing in-station support

This strategy will ensure that Reserve Gardaí are assigned to Community Policing or Regular Units, which maximises the effectiveness of deployments, increasing visibility of policing resources in the communities we serve.



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



The Garda Reserve training programme consists of a comprehensive syllabus of instruction and practical training which is divided into five phases, including placement at a station and a passing out ceremony. The Garda College continuously reviews and modifies its training programmes to meet the requirements of the role performed.

This strategy will ensure that Reserve Gardaí are trained and appropriately supported to fulfil their role. Reserve Gardaí will receive continuous professional development throughout their service in line with their full-time

colleagues.

In addition, we will ensure that Reserve Gardaí are allocated a named full-time member who will provide guidance, advice and support to the Reserve Garda in the performance of their operational duties.

INDEPENDENT PATROLLING

Current policy states that all duties performed by Reserve Gardaí must be in the company of a full-time member of An Garda Síochána and that no Reserve Garda can perform independent patrolling.

This strategy proposes to undertake an examination of the requirements for independent patrolling. A review of the powers available to and the duties performed by Reserve Gardaí will be undertaken to ensure they are adequately equipped for independent patrolling. A review of the current policy will scope the development of national policy and governance structures to enable independent patrolling and duty at events.

POLICING POWERS

Under the provisions of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, the Commissioner, following consultation with the Policing Authority, may determine the range of powers to be exercised and the duties to be carried out by Reserve Gardaí. Currently, the Garda Commissioner has directed that Reserve Gardaí shall exercise the following powers:

- Specified powers under the Road Traffic Act 1961 as amended.
- Specified powers under the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994 as amended
- Powers of arrest for an 'arrestable offence' as provided for in Section 4 (3) of the Criminal Law Act 1997

An Garda Síochána will ensure that powers for Reserve Gardaí are reviewed to meet operational needs. For example, at the time of finalising this strategy, Reserve Gardaí have additional powers to assist in policing the Covid-19 pandemic.





PATHWAY TO FULL-TIME MEMBERSHIP

The Garda Reserve provides an opportunity to experience a career in policing. This may encourage some individuals to pursue a full-time career as a member of An Garda Síochána.

The internal review found that while Reserve Gardaí have access to a specific stream during recruitment campaigns, the benefits to the individual and the organisation are limited. Currently there is no formal recognition of ability or time served by a Reserve Garda who applies to become a Trainee Garda. There is no process for local supervisors or management to assess the suitability of a Reserve Garda in the application process.

This strategy proposes to examine the opportunity to develop the recruitment stream for Reserve Gardaí taking account of their operational experience.

STRATEGIC ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

GARDA RESERVE SPONSOR

Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing and Community Engagement (RP&CE) is the Garda Reserve sponsor and will have strategic responsibility for the implementation of this strategy. The Assistant Commissioner will also chair the Garda Reserve National Oversight Committee.

GARDA RESERVE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Garda National Community Engagement Bureau (GNCEB) will be responsible for the operational implementation of this Strategy. The Garda National Community Engagement Bureau (GNCEB) will be accountable to ensure that, within the lifespan of this strategy, the objectives are achieved.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This strategy will be implemented over a five year timeframe from 2021 to 2025. The strategy is based on commitments to six key objectives which are:

Strategic Objective 1

Recruit Reserve Gardaí

We will recruit Reserve Gardaí on a voluntary basis for an initial five-year tenure with the option to renew for further five-year periods, subject to review by local management. We will eliminate perceived barriers and promote inclusive recruitment.

Strategic Objective 2

Training and Development

We are committed to the delivery of training and professional development for Reserve Gardaí appropriate to their role and function.

Strategic Objective 3

The Role and Deployment of Reserve Gardaí

We will ensure that the Garda Reserve is utilised to enhance An Garda Síochána's responsiveness to its community policing function.

Strategic Objective 4

Oversight and Governance

We are committed to ensuring effective governance, oversight and a consistent national approach to the management of the Garda Reserve.

Strategic Objective 5

Value Our People

The role of the Reserve Garda will be recognised and promoted throughout the organisation.

Strategic Objective 6

Evaluation

We will commission an independent evaluation of the Garda Reserve in 2025.

The strategic objectives will be delivered in our action plan which will ensure An Garda Síochána deliver a policing service to the community we serve, promote diversity within our organisation, and make the role of a Reserve Garda a worthwhile commitment for the volunteers who give their time to help make their communities safe.



ACTION PLAN



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 - RECRUIT RESERVE GARDAÍ

CONTEXT

We will recruit Reserve Gardaí on a voluntary basis for an initial five-year tenure with the option to renew for further five-year periods, subject to review by local management. We will eliminate perceived barriers and promote inclusive recruitment.

ACTION PLAN

No.	Commitment	Outcome	Ownership	Time Line
1.1	Ensure an inclusive approach to the recruitment of Reserve Gardaí	An inclusive approach to the recruitment of Reserve Gardaí by the removal of perceived barriers to recruitment	Human Resources & People Development	Q 3 2022
1.2	Ensure greater understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Garda Reserve to attract applications from all communities	Recruitment literature to set out clearly the commitment required from Reserve Gardaí and the duties they will carry out in An Garda Síochána	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q4 2021
1.3	Eligibility requirements for the Garda Reserve to be reviewed	Consideration of amendment to Statutory Instrument No. 413 of 2006	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q4 2022
1.4	Recruitment to the Garda Reserve to take place in line with An Garda Síochána's workforce plan	Recruitment campaigns to be conducted in line with organisational recruitment	Human Resources & People Development	Lifetime of Strategy
1.5	Examine the feasibility of targeted recruitment campaigns based on Garda Reserve vacancies	Updated recruitment policy to be developed	Human Resources & People Development	Lifetime of Strategy
1.6	Develop the pathway for Reserve Gardaí who wish to join An Garda Síochána on a full-time basis	The pathway for Reserve Gardaí will be further developed to take account of their service during the recruitment process	Human Resources & People Development	Q4 2022
1.7	Under current recruitment policy, develop a roadmap for recruitment of Reserve Gardaí from diverse and underrepresented groups	An increase in the number of Reserve Gardaí from diverse and underrepresented groups	Human Resources & People Development	Lifetime of Strategy
1.8	Under current recruitment policy, develop a roadmap for recruitment of Reserve Gardaí from the Gaeltacht community	An increase in the number of Reserve Gardaí from the Gaeltacht community	Human Resources & People Development	Lifetime of Strategy



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 – TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Context

We are committed to the delivery of training and professional development for Reserve Gardaí appropriate to their role and function.

ACTION PLAN

No.	Commitment	Outcome	Ownership	Time Line
2.1	Deliver foundation training to Garda Reserve recruits	Training will continue to be delivered to trainee Reserve Gardaí	Director of Training, Garda College	Lifetime of strategy
2.2	Review the current initial training Programme in line with the development of the role of the Garda Reserve	The current initial Garda Reserve Training Programme to be reviewed	Director of Training, Garda College	Q4 2022
2.3	Ensure that all Reserve Gardaí receive a Code of Ethics workshop and on completion sign the Code of Ethics Declaration	Reserve Gardaí will receive training in An Garda Síochána's Code of Ethics and sign the Code of Ethics Declaration	Garda Ethics and Culture Bureau Director of Training, Garda College	Q3 2021
2.4	Deliver Continuous Professional Development training to Reserve Gardaí	Reserve Gardaí will receive Continuous Professional Development in line with full-time members	Executive Director, Human Resources and People Development Director of Training, Garda College	Q1 2023



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 – ROLE AND DEPLOYMENT OF RESERVE GARDAÍ

CONTEXT

We will ensure that the Garda Reserve is utilised to enhance An Garda Síochána's responsiveness to its community policing function.

ACTION PLAN

No.	Commitment	Outcome	Ownership	Time Line
3.1	Embed the role of Reserve Gardaí within An Garda Síochána	Reserve Gardaí will be assigned to specific community policing, regular or events units and will have a named point of contact within that unit	Divisional Chief Superintendent	Ongoing
3.2	Minimum number of hours to be performed by Reserve Gardaí	Tours of duty will be agreed in advance and hours performed recorded, with a minimum commitment of 60 hours annually, in agreement with local management	Divisional Chief Superintendent	Q1 2022
3.3	Ensuring effectiveness of the Garda Reserve	Reserve Gardaí must complete 100 hours of duty annually to qualify for the Garda Reserve Annual Allowance	Divisional Chief Superintendent	Q1 2022
3.4	An operational support structure will be examined for Reserve Gardaí	A Reserve Garda will be provided with support and assistance to carry out their role	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q1 2023
3.5	Update roles and responsibilities for the Garda Reserve	An updated Policy and Procedure document will be developed	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q3 2021
3.6	Independent patrolling to be examined for Reserve Gardaí	A scoping exercise will be undertaken to inform a review of policy	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q1 2022
3.7	Carry out a review of Garda Reserve powers to ensure they meet operational needs	Review to be completed	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q2 2022



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 – OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE

CONTEXT

We are committed to ensuring effective governance, oversight and a consistent national approach to the management of the Garda Reserve.

ACTION PLAN

No.	Commitment	Outcome	Ownership	Time Line
4.1	Reinforce organisational capacity to manage the Garda Reserve	A Garda Reserve Oversight Committee to be established	Assistant Commissioner Roads Policing & Community Engagement	Already established
		Roles & responsibilities of all internal stakeholders to be clarified and policy and procedure documents to be updated	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q4 2021
		National oversight for duties and hours performed by Reserve Gardaí to ensure required minimum number of hours are worked	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Ongoing



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 – VALUE OUR PEOPLE

CONTEXT

The role of the Reserve Garda will be recognised and promoted throughout the organisation.

ACTION PLAN

No.	Commitment	Outcome	Ownership	Time Line
5.1	Increase organisational awareness of the Garda Reserve	Internal communications strategy to be developed	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q1 2022
		Develop a briefing pack for Garda Supervisors		
5.2	Recognise and acknowledge the voluntary contribution of Reserve Gardaí	The development of an organisation wide recognition program will include the contribution of Reserve Gardaí	Human Resources & People Development	Q1 2023
5.3	Examine a support plan for Reserve Gardaí	Reserve Gardaí will have access to the support services provided by the organisation to all other personnel	Human Resources & People Development	Continuously
5.4	Promote employee engagement	Develop a Regional Engagement Forum between the Garda Reserve and the Garda Reserve National Support Unit	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q3 2021



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6 – EVALUATION

CONTEXT

We will commission an independent evaluation of the Garda Reserve in 2025.

ACTION PLAN

No.	Commitment	Outcome	Ownership	Time Line
6.1	Commission an independent evaluation	An independent evaluation will be commissioned to review the effectiveness of the Garda Reserve Strategy	Garda National Community Engagement Bureau	Q1 2025



