

What are Body Worn Cameras and how will they be used?

- Body Worn Cameras are video and audio recording devices which can be attached to a Garda Members clothing. When in use by An Garda Síochána they will only retain audio and video footage where a Garda Member actively switches the device on, they will then record until switched off.
- They may be activated during specific incidents, such as where a Garda Member believes a criminal offence is being committed, where they may be required to exercise force or when executing court orders or warrants. The full range of circumstances in which a Garda Member may utilise Body Worn Cameras is laid down in the Garda Síochána (Recording Devices) Act 2023. Operation of Body Worn Cameras should always be necessary and proportionate.
- Body Worn Cameras will be visible on the Garda Members clothing and when recording this will be indicated by a light on the front of the camera.
- When activating Body Worn Cameras, the Garda Member should make practicable efforts to inform members of the Public present at an incident that recording is occurring.
- Codes of Practice are being developed and before a Garda Member begins using Body Worn Cameras they will be trained in the use of their Camera in accordance with the Codes of Practice.

Background and Context

- An Garda Síochána is committed to implementing Body Worn Cameras in a responsible and effective manner, in keeping with the organisations mission of keeping the public safe. In support of this, the following steps have been taken:
 - Body Worn Cameras are in use by a number of police forces in the United Kingdom, European Union and United States. An Garda Síochána has engaged extensively with a number of these forces, learning from their practices and use cases, and adapting these learnings to the Irish policing environment.
 - Active engagement has occurred with stakeholders within the State. This engagement will continue while the Codes of Practice is developed and in advance of the deployment of Body Worn Cameras. Community Engagement will be key to the success of Body Worn Cameras and will occur in advance of each of the three Proof of Concepts.
 - Body Worn Cameras will be extensively tested before national deployment. This testing will encompass all aspects of their deployment, including technical assessment of potential cameras, development of comprehensive Codes of Practice, delivery of quality training and the limited deployment of Body Worn Cameras in operational policing.
 - This continuous improvement approach will continue after the deployment of Body Worn Cameras, ensuring that they deliver for Garda Members and for the Public.
- The Garda Síochána (Recording Devices) Act 2023 passed in November 2023. This legislation established the statutory framework within which Gardaí can utilise Body Worn Cameras and other Recording Devices.
- Body Worn Cameras will be used to safeguard the public, in accordance with a Code of Practice developed to control the use of Body Worn Cameras by Garda Members. The purpose will be to ensure that Body Worn Cameras are used responsibly, supporting Garda Members in the investigation, detection, prevention and prosecution of criminal offences.

Proof of Concepts

- In advance of the procurement and launch of Body Worn Cameras nationwide the organisation will run three Proof of Concept Roll Outs in specific locations.
- The identified locations are:

-DMR South Central: Pearse Street Garda Station, Kevin Street Garda Station

-DMR North Central: Store Street Garda Station

-Waterford Garda District

-Limerick Garda Division, Limerick City North Community Engagement Functional Area.

- The first Proof of Concept began in May 2024.
- The Proof of Concepts will involve the use of Body Worn Cameras by designated user groups comprised of Front Line Garda Members in each location. A range of Body Worn Cameras have been procured for use in the Proof of Concepts.
- The Proof of Concepts will test the organisations plans for implementing Body Worn Cameras. This will include technical aspects of each camera, how they will be used operationally in addition to the training, Code of Practice and governance of their use. The Proof of Concepts will be monitored at each stage, with extensive engagement with users and stakeholders, with learnings incorporated into future stages of the Proof of Concepts and the national rollout of Body Worn Cameras.