



## SUBMISSION The Policing Authority - *Policing Priorities for 2019*

6<sup>th</sup> September 2018

### 1. Introduction

The Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women welcomes the opportunity to input into the development of the 2019 Policing Priorities. We welcome the focus in the draft priorities on victim satisfaction, particularly vulnerable victims; human trafficking; sexual offences; and domestic violence (DV). In this submission we provide our recommendations for how the draft priorities can be strengthened to prevent violence against women (VAW), protect victims and bring perpetrators to justice.

#### Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women

The Observatory is an independent network of 18 grassroots and national organisations working together to improve Ireland's response to VAW. The Observatory addresses all of the overlapping forms of VAW, including: rape and sexual assault; DV; prostitution and trafficking; female genital mutilation; and forced marriage. Our work centres on strengthening protections and services for women experiencing VAW across Ireland. We represent a diversity of women's community, service, and advocacy organisations (see Appendix 1 for membership), from service providers such as Cork Sexual Violence Centre, to women's groups, including Longford Women's Link. The Observatory consistently engages with state agencies working on VAW (the Policing Authority, An Garda Síochána (AGS), Tusla, Health Service Executive and Cosc). Observatory members provide training to members of the force and support to AGS, including Women's Aid's recent work with the divisional protective services units to engage with local communities and Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, Women's Aid and Ruhama's training of recruits in Templemore.

#### Violence against Women in Ireland

VAW in Ireland is endemic. 25% of women in Ireland have experienced a form of physical and/or sexual violence (SV) since the age of fifteen, and 8% experience physical and/or SV each year.<sup>1</sup> 79% of Irish women who experienced sexual or physical violence never reported it to an official body<sup>2</sup>. 33% of women in Ireland perceived the frequency of VAW to be 'very common'. 41% of women reported knowing a victim of DV in their family or circle of friends. Fewer women in Ireland reported being aware of laws and political initiatives to prevent VAW (42% compared with 49% EU average).<sup>3</sup> Yet the state response does not reflect the scale of violence experienced by women across the country. Legislative developments, such as the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 and the Domestic Violence Act 2018, while welcome, have not been matched by the essential

<sup>1</sup> Fundamental Rights Agency (2014) *VAW: an EU-wide survey report*.

<sup>2</sup> Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2014) *VAW: an EU-wide survey report*.

<sup>3</sup> Fundamental Rights Agency (2012) *VAW, an EU wide survey report*.

resourcing of frontline services for victims, in the funding of specialised AGS services, or in the collection of data on VAW incidence.

## 2. Comments on the 2019 Draft Policing Priorities

It is vital that the Policing Priorities clearly assert VAW as a core element of AGS work.

### Recommendations

- Adopt VAW as a standalone priority heading.
- Refer to VAW indicators in all other relevant priority headings (e.g. Organisational Development and Capacity Improvement; Confronting Crime; and Community Policing and Public Safety).

In the section below we provide recommendations to strengthen the draft 2019 Policing Priorities circulated by the Policing Authority.

### Priority heading - Organisational Development and Capacity Improvement

#### Policing Priority - Implementation of the Code of Ethics

It is acknowledged that AGS has specific guides on best practice for the investigation of both SV<sup>4</sup> and DV<sup>5</sup> and that these will provide detailed guidance for the investigation of crimes of VAW. However, the rights of victims of VAW must also be reflected in the implementation of the general code of ethics, especially in light of Ireland's obligations, including under the Victims' Rights Directive<sup>6</sup>, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and DV (Istanbul Convention), Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and the UN Convention Against Torture.

The *Code of Ethics for the Garda Síochána*<sup>7</sup> outlines the broad obligations of AGS to recognise and respect the dignity and equal human rights of all people. The *Code of Ethics* commits all members to 'recognise and respect the dignity and equal human rights of all people'. It is important that every member of AGS is aware of the implications of that obligation as it relates to VAW. In light of the degrading and intrusive nature of VAW crimes, dignity is an especially important concern and extra efforts are required by gardaí to ensure that the dignity of these victims is protected. The *Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017* requires actions be implemented to ensure that women who report violence are protected from secondary and repeat victimisation, intimidation and retaliation, including discriminatory stereotyping by professionals with responsibility for supporting them. The Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) as the specialist

<sup>4</sup> Garda Síochána Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes against Children & Child Welfare (2010).

<sup>5</sup> Garda Síochána Policy on DV.

<sup>6</sup> Directive 2012/29/EU Establishing Minimum Standards on the Rights, Supports and Protection of Victims of Crime.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/publications/policy-documents/code-of-ethics-english-1-5-18.pdf>

team investigating these crimes has particular responsibility to ensure its practices and procedures implement this ethos.

#### Recommendation

- Conduct ongoing reviews to ensure that services for victims of VAW meet the requirements of the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act and the Victims' Directive.

#### Organisational Development - Culture Audit

The Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act has changed the criminal justice landscape in Ireland to one that must be more aware of and responsive to the particular needs of all victims of crime, including VAW survivors. Members of AGS have an obligation to ensure they respond to and support survivors of VAW with sensitivity and respect. In this context, it is vital that mechanisms are developed to enable survivors of VAW to feed into AGS learning culture.

#### Recommendation

- Develop a process to ensure that victims' and support agencies experiences are consistently reflected in training programmes to improve AGS awareness of the particular needs of VAW survivors.

#### Data Quality, Governance and Stewardship

The Istanbul Convention recognises the importance of data collection and research, with Article 11 outlining minimum requirements. The Government's *Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence 2016-2021* is committed to establishing a bottom line 'gold standard' of data collection and analysis by all agencies working in the area of DV and SV. The Strategy includes a number of actions in relation to data and disaggregation of data by gender, specific to AGS (in some case in tandem with other state agencies); however, there has been limited progress on these commitments to date. AGS's *Modernisation and Renewal Programme 2016-20* makes the improvement of data quality a priority. This includes commitments to centralisation of crime recording and classification in the Garda Information Services Centre (GISC), the development of new standards for crime definition and classification (in consultation with the CSO), modernisation of Garda Information Systems including PULSE, and use of effective data quality processes and procedures to generate accurate crime statistics and information.

A number of reports in recent years - from the Garda Inspectorate, UN Treaty bodies<sup>8</sup> and NGOs providing VAW services in Ireland - have highlighted the need for better VAW data collection in the policing system. In 2017, the Committee against Torture's Concluding observations to Ireland recommended that: 'all allegations of violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence, are registered by the police and promptly, impartially and effectively investigated and the perpetrators prosecuted and punished in

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<sup>8</sup>For example see: Human Rights Committee (2014) 'Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Ireland'. [https://www.ihrec.ie/download/pdf/un\\_hrc\\_concluding\\_observations\\_on\\_ireland\\_and\\_iccpr\\_24\\_july\\_2014.pdf](https://www.ihrec.ie/download/pdf/un_hrc_concluding_observations_on_ireland_and_iccpr_24_july_2014.pdf)

accordance with the gravity of the crime'<sup>9</sup>. Currently, we do not have adequate data to give us a clear picture of the extent and depth of VAW, nor is there sufficient dedicated staff in AGS to undertake data analysis. Gaps in available data within the policing and justice system include: the PULSE recording system does not lend itself to data analysis; it is impossible to determine the number of cases within the court system that are DV cases because DV does not have a specific criminal code in Ireland and may be prosecuted under a range of criminal statutes; data on breaches of DV Orders are not broken down by gender, ethnicity, age or disability and does not indicate the relationship between perpetrator and victim; and official Irish crime statistics published by the CSO cannot be analysed or disaggregated by age, gender of victim and perpetrator, ethnic minority status or a range of other important indicators for SV and harassment. The 2014 Garda Inspectorate Report<sup>10</sup> found that DV calls were often not recorded correctly. Improvements have been made through the central recording system GISC in Castlebar and the requirement for all incidents to be flagged if they relate to DV. However, there is a clear question as to whether PULSE can provide the data needed for effective analysis. Further, in 2015 and 2016<sup>11</sup> the CSO published reports identifying problems with the recording of crimes on PULSE and suspended publishing crime statistics. On each occasion, the recording (or not) of domestic (intimate partner) violence was of particular concern. Media reporting in January 2018<sup>12</sup> indicated the CSO is conducting a detailed examination of the recording of domestic abuse incidents in PULSE and paper-based records across 2017 to determine if the data is reliable. Underpinning the data and analysis gaps in the policing and justice system is the absence of shared analysis across different agencies to determine a holistic picture of how women are engaging with the policing and justice system and where effective and appropriate interventions should be developed.

## Recommendations

- Increase AGS staffing and resources to ensure adequate capacity for data collection and analysis.
- Measure and compare the emergency calls for VAW received and those logged on PULSE.
- In order to generate robust and reliable data to inform policing policy and practice, disaggregate PULSE data by age, gender, ethnicity and disability to better determine the categories of victims and types of crimes reported, prosecuted and convicted.
- All AGS data should identify all crimes under the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act and other relevant Acts that are carried out in an intimate relationship as DV crimes, and include the relationship between perpetrator and victim.
- Undertake qualitative data analysis of narrative information recorded in PULSE for VAW incidents and feed learnings into AGS training and practice.
- Establish a baseline for incidences, investigation and charges for the relatively new offences of the purchase of sex and coercive control.
- Ensure improvements to data collection reflect the difficulties experienced by particular groups of women in engaging with AGS. For example, there are significant

<sup>9</sup> [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/IRL/INT\\_CAT\\_COC\\_IRL\\_28491\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/IRL/INT_CAT_COC_IRL_28491_E.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Garda Inspectorate: Crime Investigation 2014

<sup>11</sup> Central Statistics Office: Review of the quality of crime statistics 2015, 2016

<sup>12</sup> Irish Examiner, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018, 'CSO investigate quality of Pulse crime records'.

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/cso-investigate-quality-of-pulse-crime-records-465740.html>

concerns with regards to Traveller and Roma victims of crime in terms of low levels of crime reporting and victim satisfaction. Members of these communities are often 'over-policed' in relation to certain situations and crimes and under-protected in other situations. As a result, crimes, such as DV and SV often go under-reported.

- Develop a system of multiagency (AGS, TUSLA, Courts Service) collation of data into an annual VAW crime report.
- Develop a common identifier system for VAW crimes for use by AGS, Director of Public Prosecutions and the Courts Service to feed into statistics gathered by the CSO. This identifier system should be capable of distinguishing all possible assault, harassment, false imprisonment, SV, coercion and other offences.

### Quality of Crime Investigation

The Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act creates important obligations to cater for all victims of crime and will have a significant impact on the investigation of crime. To ensure equality, it is important that reports of VAW are always taken seriously and afforded the same level of attention as reports of other crimes. In addition, gardaí providing protection to women experiencing, or at risk of VAW must take into account the diversity that exists amongst women and ensure equal access and outcomes in supports and assistance without discrimination on grounds of religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity or legal status.

In light of the degrading and intrusive nature of VAW, dignity is an especially important concern for victims of VAW and extra efforts will be required by gardaí to ensure the dignity of these victims is protected to the same degree as victims of other crimes. Every effort must be made to ensure that medical examinations and questioning is conducted in a manner which upholds the dignity of these individuals to the greatest extent possible. It is important that at all times, extra effort is devoted to treating victims with respect and creating an atmosphere of trust. These cases are often difficult to prove and are associated with high levels of under-reporting. Additional efforts to create an environment of respect towards VAW victims will contribute to greater numbers of victims staying the course of the criminal justice process and encourage other victims to come forward to report their experiences. Additional efforts should be made with female victims from marginalised or disadvantaged groups.

One of the key rights within the Victims' Directive is to information at all stages of the criminal justice process and particularly at the early stages of investigation. The need for effective practices to guarantee appropriate and consistent communication with victims has also been highlighted by the Garda Inspectorate.

Survivors of VAW have been subjected to significant trauma and breach of trust. It is important the gardaí who act as first responders in many of these cases treat victims with appropriate levels of care and empathy. Some evidence of a lack of empathy in responses to victims of DV was recorded in the Garda Inspectorate Report where staff at a woman's refuge highlighted some disinterested responses to complaints of DV.<sup>13</sup> SV and DV cases are

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<sup>13</sup> Inappropriate comments reported by victims of DV included: 'there's two of them in it' or 'let him sleep it off': Garda Inspectorate, *Report: Crime Investigation*, (Dublin: Garda Inspectorate, 2014), Part 7, p 6.

inherently complex and there may be instances where gardaí will be frustrated by victims' unwillingness to make an official report or a decision to withdraw a complaint. Women affected by prostitution and sex trafficking often face high levels of stigma and marginalisation and a fear of police. A sensitive, non-judgmental, victim-centred approach by gardaí is therefore critical when engaging with this cohort. It is imperative that at all times, gardaí are understanding of the complex reasons why victims of VAW behave in the manner they do and ensure that these victims are always treated with appropriate levels of understanding and empathy to avoid secondary victimisation by the criminal justice system.

#### Recommendations

- Establish specialised units in each division and provide specialist training for gardaí responsible for VAW investigations in all aspects of their role, including high level interviewing skills for those tasked with obtaining a victim's witness statement and maintain on-going contact with victims throughout the criminal justice process.
- Ensure gardaí collect other forms of evidence so as not to rely only on the victim's statement. This can include body worn cameras and other forms of evidence.
- Ensure that all victims of VAW receive a consistent response and are treated with the same levels of care and respect no matter what part of the country they report.
- To ensure that victims are treated appropriately and afforded the maximum potential for recovery, it is vital that gardaí co-operate with other agencies, including consistent and effective referral of victims to appropriate support services for further support and treatment.
- Ensure women across the country can access Sexual Assault Treatment Units.

### Priority heading - National Security

#### Cybercrime

Digital technology has opened up new methods for perpetrators to undertake VAW. Increasingly, rape crisis centres are hearing from those who have been harmfully impacted by violations including grooming, pornography, sexting, harmful communications and improper use of personal images. The extent to which technology is advancing will inevitably require advances in policing methodologies.

#### Recommendations

- Ensure gardaí have appropriate levels of information and training to respond to technological advances in VAW.
- Ensure AGS have the knowledge and resources needed to investigate and charge the new crimes identified in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, including sexual grooming, and the use of information and communications technology.

### Priority heading - Confronting crime

The minimisation of VAW across society can only be challenged by placing a consistent focus on the actions of perpetrators. VAW is endemic for women in all communities and it

is vital that AGS challenge myths related to VAW, including the ‘stranger danger’ myth consistently used in relation to SV crimes. As documented by Pavee Point<sup>14</sup>, there are a number of misconceptions of violence against minority ethnic women, including: that VAW is more prevalent in minority ethnic groups and is inherent in their cultures; support services and AGS are easily accessible for women from minority ethnic groups; information on VAW is available to all; and that many women from minority ethnic groups do not challenge or resist violence against women within their communities.

Further, it is vital that communications and public awareness campaigns by AGS focus on the actions of perpetrators, rather than placing the responsibility on women to keep themselves safe.

### Organised crime, human trafficking

The GNPSB has responsibility for tackling organised prostitution which is very welcome, given the proven inextricable links between prostitution and sex trafficking, and clear evidence that sex trafficking occurs overwhelmingly in the context of criminally organised prostitution. Individuals involved in prostitution are vulnerable and may be a potential victim of trafficking, a victim of other serious crimes such as physical and sexual assault and theft, or a potential witness against organised criminals. When engaging with those involved in prostitution, it is incumbent on gardaí to keep their focus on the rights of each person as a potential victim, rather than have undue focus on their immigration status and possible immigration related offences. In this regard, gardaí should also adhere to the ‘non-punishment principle’ as it applies to victims of trafficking specifically and which is enshrined in various European and international legal instruments. In relation to human trafficking, prostitution and in particular in relation to ‘organised prostitution’, it is crucial to address the extent and national breadth of criminal operations, including technical work to ‘follow the money’ and online activity, alongside essential transnational police co-operation. In the 2018 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report<sup>15</sup>, it is noted that Ireland was downgraded from a ‘Tier 1’ to a ‘Tier 2’ country, in large part for its failure to secure and convictions for human trafficking since 2013. It is incumbent on AGS to prioritise human trafficking investigations. Similarly, organised prostitution, which is heavily associated with other forms of organised crime, must be tackled and convictions of pimps secured accordingly.

### Recommendations

- Provide training, in cooperation with NGOs, to frontline AGS members in taking a non-punitive approach to women involved in prostitution.
- Proactively police the purchase of sex offence.
- Ensure sensitive, non-punitive engagements with individuals in prostitution.
- Ensure that trafficking and organised prostitution operations identified at a local level are fed into national-level policing to address regional, national and

<sup>14</sup> Pavee Point ‘Challenging the Misconceptions of Violence against Minority Ethnic Women, including Travellers, in Ireland: An Information brochure for service providers’. <http://www.paveepoint.ie/document/challenging-the-misconceptions-of-violence-against-minority-ethnic-women>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2018/>

transnational organised crime, and increased numbers of cases referred for trial.

- Consider new legislative measures to provide AGS with greater ability for transnational cooperation with their counterparts in Europe and beyond.

### Crimes against the Person and Property - sexual offences, DV

Understandings of the complexities of VAW are constantly evolving, as evidenced by the introduction in the DV Act 2018 of the offence of coercive control. The changing nature necessitates a commitment to continuing education and professional development of AGS members. The absence of regular training results in a lack of expertise and understanding to effectively respond to DV and SV in a consistent manner. The Garda Inspectorate recommended improved training for gardaí on VAW, in conjunction with VAW victims and support services. Despite this there has been a significant reduction in the time scheduled for probationer training on VAW in the Garda College, as well as a reduction in the time during this training allocated to support organisations such as Rape Crisis Centres and Women's Aid to provide an insight for gardaí into the impact of VAW on victims.

The quality of the response a woman receives from AGS is critical to her future contact and engagement. The Observatory welcomed the 2017 AGS Domestic Abuse Intervention Policy (in particular the focus on call-takers, the safety of victims, risks to children and the emphasis on supervision of gardaí) and the 2013 Investigation of Sexual Crime Policy. Both policies recognise that inappropriate action by AGS members can confirm the aggressor's perception of invulnerability, leading to further incidents. The establishment of the GNPSB as a specialist team offers great potential to improve the prevention and investigation of VAW. Given the Bureau's responsibility for DV, SV, prostitution, trafficking and child pornography, it is significantly under-resourced to carry out its wide remit effectively. The initial roll-out of the Divisional Garda Protective Units (DPSUs) has been slow and the approach of gardaí on the ground to VAW remains inconsistent. It is crucial that properly-resourced specialist units are rolled out in each division.

Leaving or trying to leave an abusive relationship is a very dangerous time for a woman. Women's Aid's femicide research over 20 years shows that 24% of victims were killed by a former partner and in an additional 15 cases the woman had expressed her intention to leave or the killer thought that she would end the relationship.<sup>16</sup> The Risk Assessment protocol and associated training must be urgently reinstated to protect the lives and safety of women and children.

In other jurisdictions, Domestic Homicide Reviews are systematic multi-agency reviews which are understood to be a route to improving both risk assessment and management, alongside identifying gaps in policy and practice. In 2016, AGS announced it would conduct an analysis of domestic related homicides over the period 2007-2016 to identify any trends and patterns that may exist. While this is a welcome development, the analysis has not been completed and there continues to be a need for an ongoing process for multi-agency Domestic Homicide Reviews.

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<sup>16</sup> Women's Aid Press Release, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017, 'Men's Violence is Killing Women - Femicide Watch 2017 Launched by Women's Aid'. <https://www.womensaid.ie/about/newsevents/news/2017/11/24/mens-violence-is-killing-women-femicide-watch-2017/>



It is estimated that more than 3,780 women and girls between the ages of 15 and 44 in Ireland have experienced female genital mutilation (FGM).<sup>17</sup> The passing of the Criminal Justice (FGM) Act 2012 was a very positive step towards eradicating FGM in Ireland. A critical element of this legislation is its extraterritorial jurisdiction, which protects girls from being taken to their (or their family's) country of origin to undergo FGM.

## Recommendations

### **Garda National Protective Services Bureau and Divisional Protective Service Units**

- Adequately resource the GNPSB and the DPSUs to increase capacity and effectiveness of the AGS. Increase resources for the establishment of specialist units at divisional level.
  - Use the evaluation of phase 1 of the GNPSB and DPSUs to improve practice. Engage in ongoing evaluation to capture learnings for future development and improvement.
  - Complete roll-out of DPSUs and consider the establishment of district units in larger geographical areas.
  - Develop an independent, visible identity for the DPSUs which can be promoted to the public.

### **VAW training**

- Develop a VAW training strategy for probationer gardaí and CPD training with ring-fenced resources.
- Provide mandatory and high-quality training on gender-based, DV and SV for members of AGS, in conjunction with specialist services and experts from different sectors. Training to include:
  - Risk assessment and the implementation of protection plans
  - Trauma-informed care and new offence of coercive control
  - Complex and inter-related nature of the specific needs of victims of VAW
  - Anti-racism and discrimination training (as per Section 42 IHREC Act, 2014) to address unconscious biases and avoid stereotypical thinking in relation to groups of women with specific needs.
- Incorporate use of new technologies for training to ensure coverage across the force.
- Engage survivors of VAW and support agencies in training and awareness programmes to improve AGS awareness of the particular needs of women.

### **Review and update AGS DV and SV policies and responses**

- The DV Act 2018 provides new powers to AGS in DV incidents. Review legislation to identify mechanisms where the powers of the AGS should be increased to protect victims and to support the reporting of incidents. Review offences which are on the Statute books but which are not regularly charged, including marital rape.
- Gardaí should proactively offer to serve orders when it is unsafe otherwise for victims.
- Communicate the new offence of coercive control (DV Act) to all AGS members when commenced.

<sup>17</sup> Akidwa / RCSI (2013) *FGM: Information for Health Care Professionals Working in Ireland 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*.

- Review the AGS DV policy in light of the provisions of the DV Act 2018.
- Undertake periodic review, in consultation with support organisations, of the operation of the AGS policies on domestic abuse and sexual crimes.
- Avail of new AGS power to ask for a special sitting of the District Court to hear an out of hours application under S24 of the DV Act 2018. They also need to be encouraged to use this measure as necessary and this should be monitored.

#### **Supervision and management of VAW incidents**

- Ensure all DV incidents are reviewed at daily accountability meetings. Ensure that the requirement for follow-up visits following DV is recorded and supervised.
- Develop management and supervisory processes to ensure that good practices in relation to VAW incidents are shared, evaluated and incorporated into the new units.
- Target repeat VAW offenders by proactively prioritising repeat callers.

#### **Risk assessment process and protection procedures**

- Establish a first and second phase risk assessment process for all DV incidents. For cases identified as serious risk, identify multiagency approaches and resources to protect victims and to support the reporting of incidents. Engage in continuous evaluation of the risk assessment process. Include support organisations to identify any on-the-ground changes in the protection of women.
- Establish a multi-agency **Domestic Homicide Review mechanism** on a statutory basis (including support services and families) and publish annual data.
- Raise awareness among AGS members of **FGM** and the Criminal Justice (FGM) Act 2012 through training and communication materials. Develop risk identification strategies. Develop mechanisms to refer women and girls at risk of or who have undergone FGM to support services.

### **Priority heading - Community Policing and Public Safety**

#### **Victims - Victim satisfaction, vulnerable victims, hate crime**

Under the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act, for the first time in Irish law victims are legally entitled to the right to information, support and protection from AGS. The commitment to a victim-centred ethos requires a high degree of training and support to ensure individual officers have the required interpersonal and communicative skills.

#### **Recommendations**

- Any garda attending a DV incident should provide information to the victim on specialist services available in their local area, or with the victim's consent, refer the victim to these services.
- Ensure victims of VAW have access to special protection measures during investigation and judicial proceedings.

- Appoint an Assistant Commissioner with responsibility for the Victims of Crime.
- Additional efforts must be made to ensure female victims from certain marginalized or disadvantaged groups, in particular minority ethnic groups including Traveller and Roma Communities, are not subjected to discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

### 3. Suggested KPIs for the 2019 Policing Priorities

- Number of DPSUs in place and resourcing to include staffing, equipment, facilities staffing per unit.
- Arrests for VAW related offences (e.g. assaults of varying degrees with or without weapons, rape, stalking, theft, fraud, arson, threats).
- Number of human trafficking and organised prostitution cases referred for prosecution.
- Number and type of charges (not just breaches of orders).
- % of VAW calls designated for investigation.
- Number of VAW cases where gardaí object to bail.
- Increased detection of crimes with a VAW motive.
- Number of DV call-outs attended as % of DV calls received. Equivalent monitoring for SV (SV) and other forms of VAW. Time elapsed between call and arrival at scene.
- % of DV and SV cases where Gardaí undertake follow-up visit (in line with the time-frames outlined in AGS policies).
- Number of risk assessments undertaken and consequent measures taken or safety plans made.
- Number and distribution of gardaí trained in initial risk assessment.
- Number of referrals to VAW support services.
- Number and distribution of specialist VAW investigator teams.
- To ensure VAW victims' confidence in the Gardaí, surveys on victim satisfaction need to be disaggregated by type of victim (e.g. victim of SV, or victim of burglary).
- Measure AGS collaboration with VAW support services through number of referrals made, number of meetings attended, etc.
- VAW training of probationers and CPD training for qualified gardaí.

### 4. Conclusion

The Observatory welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We will continue to work with the Policing Authority, AGS and the Department of Justice and to ensure AGS has the ability to investigate VAW crimes, protect victims, analyse incidents of these crimes and ultimately to prevent such crimes in Ireland.

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## Appendix 1: Members of the Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women

The Observatory has operated under the auspices of National Women's Council of Ireland since its formation in 2002. Over its 16 years of operation it has provided an important space for leading organisations working on VAW to work collectively, to raise awareness of VAW amongst communities and to influence policy at national and international level. Observatory members share a common understanding of VAW as a cause and consequence of gender discrimination that needs to be located within a gender equality framework. Many of our members provide direct support to women experiencing violence in their communities. This provides the Observatory with an insight into the lived experiences of women, which in turn, influences our advocacy work.

The Observatory seeks to ensure Government commitments to tackle VAW are fulfilled. This is achieved through collective research, seminars, and policy submissions. The Observatory has published three key publications; *Prevalence of VAW in Ireland, 2004*; *Second National Report of the Irish Observatory on VAW, Pornography, 2006*; and *VAW, an Issue of Gender, 2013*. We currently have the opportunity to influence and monitor key government initiatives through our membership of national working groups and committees, including: the NGO data subgroup; the Monitoring Committee for the Government's *Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual, and Gender Based Violence*; and the advisory group of Cosc's 'What would you do?' national public awareness campaign on VAW.

1. **Action Aid** - provide long term support to women and their children in developing countries.
2. **Akidwa**- national network of migrant women living in Ireland and focuses on female genital mutilation (FGM) and DV.
3. **Ascend** - DV service working with women in North Tipperary.
4. **Cairde**- working with ethnic minority women on issues of Violence and health inequalities.
5. **Cork SV Centre** - the direct provision of services to survivors of rape, sexual assault and child sexual abuse.
6. **Dublin Rape Crisis Centre** - at the forefront of the Irish response to SV for almost 40 years. Run the National 24-Hour Helpline for those who suffer sexual violence and their supporters.
7. **Galway Rape Crisis Centre**- providing a professional, caring and confidential counselling and support service for those in our community affected by sexual abuse and SV.
8. **Immigrant Council of Ireland** - has developed a specific expertise targeting responses to trafficking for sexual exploitation.
9. **Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence** - Irish based alliance of International human rights, humanitarian and development organisations, including International NGO's, Irish Aid and The Irish Defence Forces.
10. **Longford Women's Link** - a community organisation that supports women through an integrated model of service delivery. DV is one of their 3 key service areas.
11. **Love and Care for People** - working with migrant women to promote awareness about issues such as family violence, social exclusion, forced marriage.
12. **National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks** - support community-based women who experience disadvantage and marginalisation.
13. **National Women's Council of Ireland** - leading national women's membership organisation seeking equality between women and men. Since its inception, NWCI has a strong track record of work on the issue of VAW.
14. **Oxfam** - a world-wide development organisation that puts women's rights at the heart of everything they do.

15. **Pavee Point** - national NGO that works to promote Traveller and Roma human rights in Ireland. Their VAW programme aims to prevent and combat gender-based violence in Traveller and Roma communities.
16. **Ruhama** - work with women affected by prostitution, sex trafficking and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation.
17. **Sonas** - largest provider of frontline services to women and children experiencing domestic abuse in the greater Dublin region.
18. **Women's Aid Ireland**-leading national organisation that has been working in Ireland to stop domestic VAW and children and provides the National Freephone Helpline for domestic violence.