

Press Release

Friday 28th May 2010

The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC), Dermot Gallagher, Chairman, Conor Brady and Carmel Foley, launched its Annual Report, covering the year 2009, at 11.00 this morning. The Report has been received by the Minister DJELR and placed before the Houses of the Oireachtas in accordance with the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

The Report outlines details of the 2,097 complaints received from members of the public, 104 referrals received from the Garda Commissioner and 2 investigations commented in the public interest during 2009. Of the allegations received, 26% related to abuse of authority; 25% to neglect of duty; 18% to discourtesy and 15% to non-fatal offences against the person. This does not represent a major change from the previous year.

Referrals from the Garda Commissioner occur where the Garda Commissioner forms the view that the conduct of a member of the Garda Síochána may have resulted in the death of, or serious harm to, a person. Of the 104 referrals received, 16 involved fatalities. Six occurred as a result of road traffic incidents; 1 in Garda custody and 8 following custody or contact with the Gardaí. Road traffic incidents resulted in 51% of the referrals. Garda pursuit, observation or attempt to stop a vehicle driven by a member of the public was a factor in 35% of referrals.

In all, 146 gardaí were disciplined and one was convicted before the courts during 2009.

GSOC chairman, Dermot Gallagher commented...

“In this, our third year of operations, I am pleased to say that dialogue between GSOC and the Garda Síochána has developed into a productive pattern. While GSOC continues to discharge its duties fully and impartially under the Act, there is an enhanced understanding among gardaí of its role arising from experience, regular dialogue at senior levels and ongoing provision of feedback to the Gardaí by GSOC”.

Carmel Foley expressed satisfaction at the 17% increase in public confidence in the impartiality of GSOC.

“The promotion of public confidence in the process is not only a statutory duty for GSOC, it is also a key element in ensuring that the atmosphere exists in which people who have issues which should be brought forward feel comfortable doing so. The public and gardaí can expect fair treatment in their dealings with GSOC”.

The fact that the Commission has sought some amendments to the Garda Síochána Act 2005 was mentioned by Conor Brady

“While the Act is generally fit for purpose and the progress to date shows this, there are some areas which we consider could benefit from refinement. We have made these recommendations on foot of the experience we have gained to date and we continue to engage in dialogue with the Minister, his officials and other stakeholders, not least the Garda Síochána, with regard to them”

Ends.

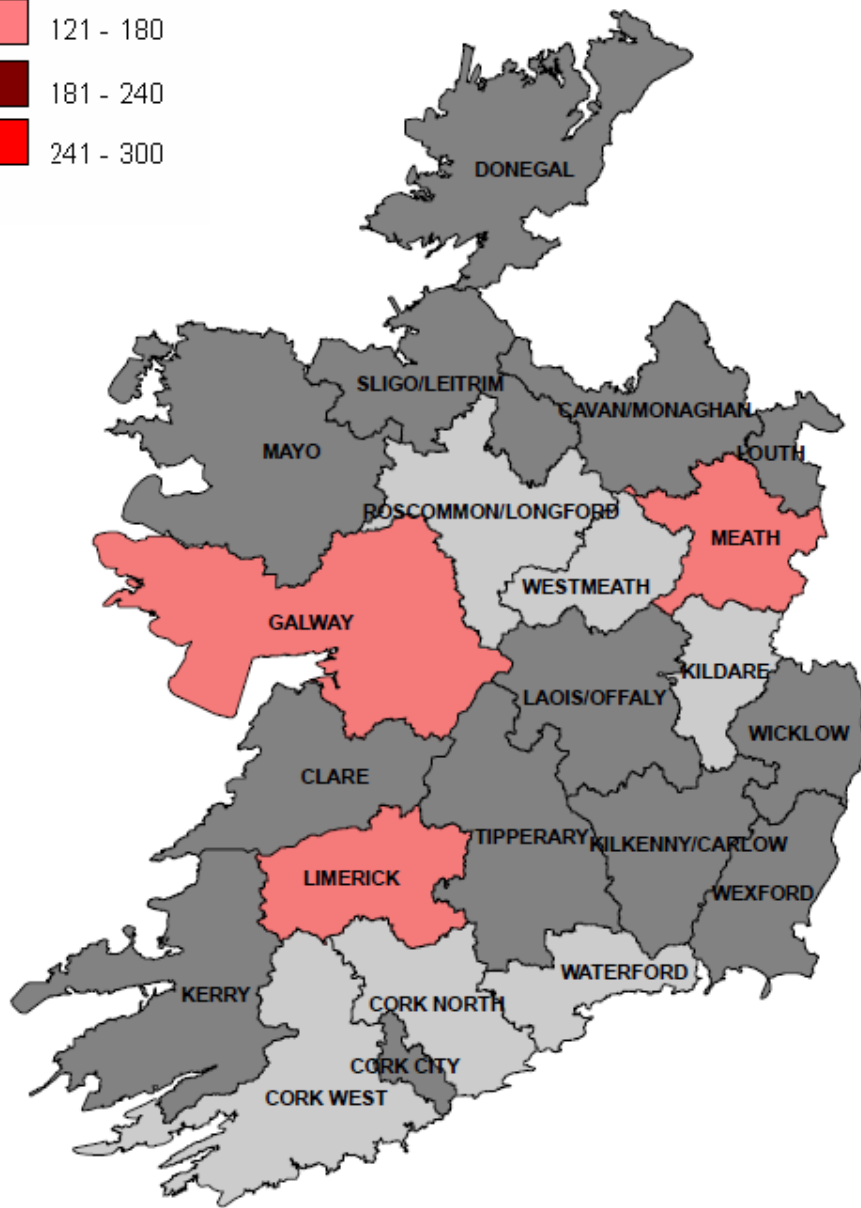
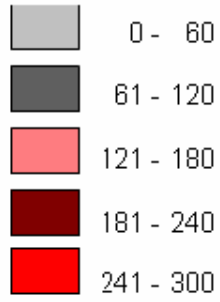
Note

For further inquiries Kieran FitzGerald 1890 600800, 087-2851096 or communications.research@gsoc.ie

Below are two maps showing the geographical distribution of complaints received in 2009.

Allegations (2009) per division, except Dublin Metropolitan Region

No. of Allegations



Allegations (2009) per division in the Dublin Metropolitan Region

No. of Allegations

