



**REPORT, PURSUANT TO SECTION 103 OF THE GARDA SÍOCHÁNA ACT (2005),
INTO ALLEGATIONS OF PROVISION OF ALCOHOL TO CERTAIN GARDAÍ
AND RELATED ISSUES**

BACKGROUND

GSOC received two complaints, in October 2013, from partners in a company, which alleged that they had supplied alcohol, on behalf of another organisation, to garda stations in Co. Mayo in 2005, 2006 and 2007. The complainants said that they had reported the matter to the Garda Síochána in 2011, as a complaint of non-payment by the other company, and alleged that it had not been investigated properly by the Garda Síochána.

ALLEGATIONS MADE

The allegations contained in the two complaints to GSOC were, in summary, that:

- Members of the Garda Síochána at Belmullet Garda Station, and possibly other locations, accepted gifts of alcohol, delivered by the complainant company, in December 2005, December 2006 and December 2007.
- Members of the Garda Síochána failed to correctly address or properly investigate these matters, since they were reported to them by the complainant company in 2011; and failed to respond to requests for update on their inquiries into the matter.

INVESTIGATION

GSOC has conducted a thorough, independent investigation into the allegations, which has now been completed. The investigation included the following steps:

- Request of specific information to support the allegations;
- Interview of the complainants;
- Interview of staff from the organisation that the complainants alleged had requested the supply of the alcohol;
- Review of that organisation's internal investigation into the matter;
- Identification and interview of garda members mentioned either by full or partial name;
- Review of garda investigation into the matter; and
- Numerous other lines of enquiry.

The investigation began with numerous contacts with the complainants in Autumn/ Winter 2013, by phone, e-mail, and in person at the GSOC headquarters on two occasions. The investigation process was outlined to the complainants, including the need to retrieve documents from them, such as proofs of purchase, bank statements, vehicle hire records, company phone bills and/or any other documents which would provide evidence to substantiate their claim. It was explained that this must be done before approaches were made to any Garda members about whom they had complained. Shortly after the meeting on this subject, the company indicated by e-mail that they would no longer be cooperating with the investigation.

Nevertheless, GSOC proceeded with its investigation, trying to establish if there was other evidence that might support the allegations.

Detailed interview of a senior officer at the organisation alleged to have requested the supply of alcohol was undertaken. This organisation had also been contacted by the complainants and had undertaken an internal investigation into what they categorised as alleged bribery and corruption, two years previously. Findings of this investigation, including the request of corroborating documentation from the complainants, the interrogation of personal computers of staff members and servers, interview of staff members, and an independent audit of invoices, were reviewed.

Interviews of garda members mentioned by either full or partial name in the complaints were carried out, including confirming whether they were stationed at, or had dealings with, the garda stations in question in December 2005, December 2006 and December 2007, when the alcohol was allegedly accepted. The allegations were put to garda members and official statements were taken. A review of the garda correspondence with the complainants was undertaken.

OUTCOME

No evidence of the purchase or delivery of alcohol to garda stations, nor of any misconduct of garda members, has been found as a result of the investigation.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

These complaints and allegations have been made public and had the potential to undermine public confidence in the Garda Síochána, as well as affect the reputation of others. We hope that publicly explaining the proportionate, fair and independent investigation of this matter will promote confidence of members of the public and of the Garda Síochána in police oversight in this country.