



## **An-Exploration of Performance Management in**

**An Garda Siochana**

**Patrick Burke**



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# **An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana**

**Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the B.A. (Hons) HRM**

**National College of Ireland**

**Supervisor: Mr Serge Basini**

**Author: Patrick Burke**

**Date: July 2009**

### Declaration

I certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment as part of the programme of study leading to the award of B.A.(Hons) HRM has been created by me personally and is as a result of my own personal study and research.

Signed: Patrick Burke.

(Patrick Burke)

Date: 20/7/09.

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## **Abstract**

### **An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana**

**Author: Patrick Burke**

This dissertation is an exploratory study of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana. The study has been divided into five chapters.

Chapter one introduces the topic and sets out the industrial context of the research, the background to the study and the research objectives.

In chapter two the literature relating to Performance Management in organisations in the macro environment, in international Policing organisations and in An Garda Siochana is reviewed.

Chapter three sets out the methodology used to conduct this research. It discusses the research tools utilised and outlines how the data were analysed.

Chapter four outlines the findings, using the research objectives to structure the salient themes, which emerged through analysis and interpretation of the raw data.

Conclusions are drawn from these findings and indicated in Chapter 5. In addition recommendations flowing from these conclusions are proposed in this chapter.

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**



## **1.1 Introduction**

The topic of this dissertation is: An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

## **1.2 Industrial Context**

An Garda Siochana is the National Police Service in the Republic of Ireland. The organisation was established in 1922 and has been managed for the duration of its existence within a unitarist, command and control style framework.

From an operational perspective, An Garda Siochana is divided into geographical regions known as Divisions. There are a total of 28 operational Divisions in the country, each under the command of a Chief Superintendent. Each Division is further subdivided into Districts with a Superintendent in charge of each.

There are a total of 112 Garda Districts in the country, thus giving an average of 4 Districts per Division. The Superintendent is the operational commander and manager of each District and typically has an Inspector, a number of Sergeants and a large number of Gardai in addition to civilian support personnel within his/her District.

The organisation has experienced unprecedented change in the past 3 years. As identified by Conroy (2006) the challenges and dynamics of our policing environment coupled with the significant changes in the Garda Siochana Act 2005 necessitate a significant programme of reform and modernisation as a critical enabling aspect of the Garda Siochana Corporate Strategy 2007-2009.

Entitled 'A Time For Change' An Garda Siochana's Corporate Strategy 2007-2009 identifies high performance in key areas as being central to the delivery of an unprecedented change and modernisation programme in order to realise its strong and far reaching vision. It posits a performance paradigm for the delivery of change within the lifetime of the strategy and beyond.

As Ireland continues into deeper economic recession however, and as evidenced by widespread media coverage, there is an increasing demand from across the social and economic spectrum for radical reform of the public sector. Cowen (2008) while addressing the national conference of the Institute of Public Administration on the issue, asserted that we have to make sure people have the discretion to operate to provide good services on the ground; we are not interested in compliance alone; we want to encourage creativity and innovation.

Speaking at the same conference, Secretary General to the Government, Dermot McCarthy (2008) said that management and unions faced a challenge in the next phase of reform in dealing with under performance by some staff. Additionally, he indicated that internal public service surveys had shown that one of the sources of greatest frustration was the tolerance of underperformance.

This frustration is mirrored in the private sector, as identified by Gilmartin (2008) when she asserted that many in the private sector see the public regime as a bloated and inefficient entity that is costing the country millions at a time when Ireland really needs to rein-in spending; and they want an end to what they see as a culture of entitlement where the Government shield State workers from the realities of recession that are increasingly apparent in private business.

In the face of such strenuous public demand for enhanced performance and accountability in the public sector, the author is of the view that An Garda Síochána can expect the performance bar to be continually raised in the coming years from that as set by Conroy's Corporate Strategy.

Against this backdrop, the author seeks to explore performance management in An Garda Síochána with a view to establishing the position pertaining to the research objectives as outlined hereunder.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research are established as follows;

1. To explore views on Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.
2. To explore how performance is managed at District level in the organisation.
3. To explore the challenges experienced in managing performance at District level in the organisation.
4. To explore any observations related to Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

The author is of the view that insights gained from achieving these research objectives will facilitate an enhanced understanding of the position pertaining to performance management in An Garda Siochana.

# **Chapter 2**

## **Literature Review**

## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will seek to establish what is meant by performance management. It will outline definitions of the concept as defined by theorists writing in both the macro environment and in the context of police organisations on an international level. Finally the chapter will examine organisational literature in An Garda Síochána in relation to performance management.

### **2.1 Performance Management in the Macro Environment**

Armstrong and Baron (2006) outline that the term Performance Management first came into use in the HR field in the early 1990's. They further identify that although objective-setting, assessment and review and performance related pay were common prior to that time, it was not until the late 1980's that organisations started to become concerned with the management of individual performance in a holistic way.

Armstrong and Baron (2006) go on to identify that the overall purpose of performance management is to contribute to the achievement of high performance by the organisation and its people and that 'High Performance' means reaching and exceeding stretching targets for the delivery of productivity, quality, customer service, growth, profits and shareholder value. Specifically, they say, it is aimed to make the good better, share understanding about what is to be achieved, develop the capacity of people to achieve it, and provide the support and guidance people need to deliver high performance and achieve their full potential to the benefit of themselves and the organisation.

Armstrong and Baron (2006) identify that performance is often regarded simply in output terms, ie the achievement of quantified objectives. They go on to assert that, more than this, it is the outcomes of activity and endeavour that matter. These can be assessed qualitatively by reference to standards of performance or quantitatively as targets or goals expressed against projects or tasks. Additionally they assert that performance is not only a matter of what people achieve, but how they achieve it; and that high performance results from appropriate behaviour, especially discretionary

behaviour, and the effective use of the required knowledge skills and competencies. Performance management must, therefore examine how results are attained, because this provides the information necessary to consider what needs to be done to improve these results.

Armstrong and Baron (2006) indicate that it is not a surprise that the first investigation into performance management carried out by the Institute of Personal Management in 1991 concluded that performance management was about making sure managers manage properly, that they clearly and consistently communicate to their staff what is expected of them and give them the means to meet that expectation.

The aforementioned Research Project, conducted by the Institute of Personnel Management in 1992 produced the following definition of performance management;

*A strategy which relates to every activity of the organisation set in the context of its human resources policies, culture, style and communications systems. The nature of the strategy depends on the context and can vary from organisation to organisation.*

Bach and Sisson (2000) identified that performance management has a variety of meanings and has been used to describe just about any HR initiative. Lowry (2002) sees performance management as the policies procedures and practices that focus on employee performance as a means of fulfilling organisational goals and objectives; with the key aims being to measure effectiveness, identify training needs and promote motivation through feedback.

Mabey et al (1998) see it as establishing a framework in which performance by individuals can be directed, monitored, motivated and refined; whereas Armstrong and Baron (1998) propose performance management as a process of aligning or integrating organisational and individual objectives to achieve organisational effectiveness, with development, as the prime purpose.

Marchington and Wilkinson (2002) identified that it is clear that horizontal and vertical integration are key themes in HRM and nowhere is the concept of integration more

important than in the management of performance. They go on to say that performance management aims to link together individual goals, departmental purposes and organisational objectives, by incorporating issues that are central to many other elements of HRM such as appraisal and employee development, performance-related pay and reward management, and individualism and employee relations. Additionally they assert that performance management is synonymous with the totality of day-to-day management activity because it is concerned with how work can be organised to achieve the best possible results.

### **2.3 Performance Management in International Policing Organisations**

In building on the work of researchers into performance management in organisations in the macro environment, a number of writers have undertaken research on the topic in police organisations. Some of the most up-to-date literature relating to performance management in police organisations is discussed hereunder.

Flemming (2008) identified that the notion of 'performance' is a contested concept as the variety of stakeholders who are affected by an agency's ability to deliver services will have different views and perspectives about what constitutes it. She goes on to say that adapting a private sector solution for public sector problems presents difficulties when we consider how the public sector agency might measure success as, unlike the private sector that relies on profit, market gain and return on investment et al as performance indicators, the criteria for success in the public sector are often varied, contested and controversial.

In observing that New Public Management techniques in the United Kingdom have come to drive police budgets and management agendas within an emerging paradigm of community policing, pro-active and problem solving policing, she says there is an expectation that the police will 'work' with the community to prevent crime. Against this backdrop, Flemming (2008) identifies that the many writers on the subject of performance management in police organisations agree that 'one size does not fit all' and asserts that police managers need to ensure that performance management systems are sensitive to the local context.

Fundamentally, Flemming (2008) says that the era of managerialism has made it clear that police organisations are expected to deliver value through the socially and fiscally responsible allocation of resources and ensure effective service delivery.

Flemming and Scott (2008) in an article entitled 'Performance Measurement in Australian Police Organisations' acknowledge that most police organisations are trying to develop performance management frameworks that will acknowledge the professionalism of their employees and reduce the ambiguity of the process.

They identify, that heretofore, performance management has been largely focussed on the numerical measurement of outputs and assert that this tends to reduce the complexity of an agency's work to one dimension due to the fact that while numerical performance management in police organisations can capture critical data such as overall arrests, clearance rates and response times it is not so good at capturing the quality of the work involved and the many important contributions the police make to a community's quality of life. The output measure, they say, in effect ignores the process.

The writers identify proactive and problem-solving activities such as reassurance policing, building relationships with communities and working with other agencies as intangibles which are difficult to measure and which may be the first casualties when limited and diminishing resources dictate specific types of activity.

They have identified three unintended consequences of failing to acknowledge such intangibles as being;

1. Attention to quantity may reduce attention to quality;
2. Pressure to achieve results may be a stimulus to strategic behaviour or process corruption;
3. Innovative ideas or activities are deemed risky as quantitative performance management rewards the constant reproduction of the existing.

In counterbalance to this, Flemming and Scott (2008) discuss the notion of Process Measurement as developed by de Bruijn (2002). In this approach, process is defined as the way in which outcomes are achieved. It is measured qualitatively with a view to



revealing the process involved in effective policing and providing a closer link between output (eg No of Arrests) and outcome (eg Safer Streets)

De Bruijn (2002) proposed that for the professional practitioner the process is an important aspect of the job and that for management the outcome may be given greater weight through process measurement. The process, he says, therefore gives meaning to the statistics and in order to develop a broader picture, the interaction between process and product must be recognised. This, he says, does not mean that process takes precedence; merely that it can be used to understand more fully the outcome or product.

Flemming and Scott (2008) in considering De Bruijn's proposal indicate that including process measurement in performance management provides the following benefits;

1. It provides additional meaning to measurement figures;
2. It does justice to the complexity of professional activity;
3. It acknowledges the range of actors within a policing environment;
4. It reduces the need for constant improvements and refinements in statistical measurement;
5. It establishes a stronger relationship between the measurers and the measured.

Critically, Flemming and Scott (2008) go on to say that process evaluation can go some way to providing a fuller picture of an organisation, thus improving learning and decision making; and that it may also provide the staff involved with more incentive to be innovative, secure in the knowledge that their professionalism and intangible activities are being acknowledged.

It is interesting to note that this observation resonates with Cowen's (2008) call for more innovation in the public service, as discussed above.

In discussing the policing of domestic violence Neyroud (2008) cites research that indicates that response to arrest for this crime varies between socio-economic groups by having a strong deterrent effect on some groups; while in others it may be more likely to act as a spur to retributive violence against the victim or law enforcement personnel.

In such instances, Neyroud says, a performance indicator that measures the number of arrests against the number of cases would be likely to conceal a significant number of cases in which an arrest was made, even though this was not the most effective response. He provides this as an example which reinforces the message that outcomes are more important than process and that outcomes have to be measured by a number of measures ranging from victim through to wider public satisfaction.

Neyroud (2008) goes on to cite research into public satisfaction with the handling of minor crimes which indicates that detection is just one element of a satisfactory service; and that people's satisfaction depends upon receiving a personal service throughout the criminal justice system, from the initial contact with the police through to detection, the court system and after care.

Neyroud concludes that a performance framework must attend to the whole process; from prevention to initial reporting of offences and right the way through to the finalisation of a case and aftercare in order to measure the overall effectiveness, not just of the police but of all the criminal justice agencies.

It is interesting to contrast Neyroud's view to that of Flemming and Scott's in relation to outcome measurement as opposed to process measurement.

Shilston (2008) in considering Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Of Constabulary report of 2001, in which it was stated 'the current over focus on crime figures as a substitute measure for police performance will not lead to greater public confidence' cites this as a direct challenge to the perceived wisdom of the time: that crime figures reflected police performance and that reductions in crime would therefore lead to increased confidence in police from the public; and of positing the question that if crime figures are not a substitute for police performance, what is a genuine measure of it?

In answer to this, Shilston suggests that the answer in part lies in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Of Constabulary's statement in that public confidence itself is the ultimate and authentic measure of police performance. He expanded on this by saying that crime rates, detection rates, response rates et al are mere outputs; the desired outcome is

positive public perceptions of service delivery; and this needs to be addressed and assessed.

He cites a 2004 Home Office White Paper as the beginning of a move towards addressing the proposition when it spoke of 'the need to make changes to the way police performance is measured and inspected so that it reflects the priorities of the public and their views about the policing they have received'.

Conclusively, Shilston (2008) asserts that what really matters in maintaining and building public trust and confidence in police seems to be not those elements captured in traditional police performance indicators nor in the views held by those who have no contact with the police and whose support can reasonably be assumed in most cases, ie 'citizens'; but in those who have been direct and recent recipients of police services, ie 'clients'.

Shilston (2008) further indicates that a wide range of studies conducted over a long period of time have concluded that public trust and confidence in legal authorities, including the police, is not a product of the outcome of an intervention, but of the perception of procedural fairness involved in reaching the outcome. The good news for the police in this, asserts Shilston, is that even when they are not in a position to deliver the outcome a member of the public may desire, that is of secondary concern to the way in which the client has been dealt with.

In discussing recent developments in police performance management in France, Roche (2008) asserts that performance is multidimensional, so therefore its measurement must be as well. In augmenting this assertion Roche went on to say that the clearance [detection] rate is not a meaningful measure of police effectiveness. Its variations are dependant not only on the numerator (the number of crimes cleared) but also on the denominator (the number of crimes recorded by the police). Because the number of crimes recorded varies with a large number of co-factors, it makes the result of the division a function of these co-factors. Indeed the clearance rate can increase while the number of cleared cases declines (which equals a decrease in police productivity).

Critically Roche (2008) argues that not only should the clearance rate not be selected as an indicator because it can be statistically misleading, but also because it can be easily manipulated. He argues that when a strong emphasis is placed on efficiency in the management of police performance by numbers and statistics, a temptation to cheat can arise. This, he says, results in 'bad' cops getting a sanction and 'good' ones a bonus.

In summary he asserts that this attitude is at the expense of real change in police performance management as a means to increase police efficiency against crime, adaptation to their local environment, and legitimacy in the public arena.

In an article entitled Investigative Practice and Performance Management: Making the Marriage Work, Stelfox (2008) concludes that performance management should be enabling the police to deliver the level of service required by society, so it is an important component of the overall approach to criminal investigation. But, he says, it seems that where it is poorly managed or where it is implemented with insufficient understanding of the ways it will impact on the practice of criminal investigation, it can have a dysfunctional effect.

Stelfox (2008) indicates that it is the view of the Police Federation of England and Wales, based on evidence gathered through extensive interviews with officers working in Criminal Investigation Departments, that this dysfunctional effect is widespread.; and that it has created a culture where achieving performance targets has become the sole objective of many managers. This pressure to achieve targets, he says, leads to ever diminishing investigative capacity.

This view is supported by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (2008) who states that an emphasis on detection levels has undoubtedly produced the unintended effect of officers spending time investigating crimes with a view to obtaining a detection, even when that is clearly not in the wider public interest.

Stelfox (2008) in discussing his 'dysfunctional effects' in depth emphasises the danger inherent in a focus on achieving a limited range of targets which is not counterbalanced by other considerations such as capacity development. He concludes that the 'dysfunctional effects' are not the result of performance management per se, or that they

are an outflow from the effect of targets or process re-design; but that they are the result of the pressure some managers feel under to deliver in these areas.

This view would seem to be supported by the Chief Constable of Surrey, Bob Quick, who in October 2007, as Chief Constable of the statistically best performing police force in England and Wales, declared that serious criminals were escaping justice because the police and criminal prosecution service were focussing on 'soft targets' and 'sure fire' prosecutions to boost productivity. For him, the skewing of activity away from what local communities wanted meant that the police were 'at risk of claiming statistical success when real operational and resilience issues remain to be addressed'.

In summary Stelfox (2008) asserts that what the police service needs is not necessarily good investigators who turn to management, but rather competent managers who are able to harness through dialogue the skills and enthusiasm of those who understand the process of criminal investigation; and that we need to remember that good management and good professional practice are as much about building for the future as they are about dealing with each day's difficulties.

## **2.4 Performance Management in An Garda Siochana**

The functions of An Garda Siochana, as established in section 7(1) of the Garda Siochana Act 2005, are as follows;

1. Preserving peace and public order
2. Protecting life and property
3. Vindicating the human rights of each individual
4. Protecting the security of the State
5. Preventing crime
6. Bringing criminals to justice, including by detecting and investigating crime
7. Regulating and controlling road traffic and improving road safety

From a consideration of the above it is clear that An Garda Síochána performs an extensive range of duties and operational activities in order to meet its obligations to carry out these functions.

In pursuit of these functions, the Garda Síochána Corporate Strategy 2007-2009, developed within the provisions of section 21 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, establishes the following six Strategic Goals for the organisation;

1. To maintain National and International Security
2. To Significantly reduce the incidence of crime and criminal behaviour
3. To significantly reduce the incidents of fatal and serious injuries on our roads and improve road safety
4. To significantly reduce the incidence of public disorder and anti-social behaviour in our communities
5. To provide equal protection and appropriate services to all ethnic and cultural groups while nurturing mutual respect and trust
6. To build a Garda service that reflects the needs and priorities of the people of Ireland

To deliver on this Corporate Strategy, and within the provisions of section 22 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, An Garda Síochána publishes an Annual Policing Plan. The Policing Plan 2009 establishes a number of Performance Indicators in respect of each Strategic Goal. These performance indicators are too numerous to re-produce hereunder, but an example in respect of each Strategic Goal is as follows;

1. No Terrorist Attacks occurring within the State
2. Detection Rates for illegal firearms increased
3. The number of fatal and serious road collisions reduced
4. Incidents of public disorder reduced
5. Enhanced data on racist incidents with a view to increased detections
6. Targets appropriate to An Garda Síochána as set out in National Youth Justice Strategy achieved

A number of similar performance indicators are established in respect of each organisational goal. As can be seen, these performance indicators are primarily quantitative in nature. They are utilised to provide an organisational performance indicator in respect of each strategic goal.

Performance in respect of each strategic goal is monitored and evaluated on a District basis throughout the organisation via daily and weekly accountability meetings within the Garda Siochana Accountability Framework.

The Garda Siochana Accountability Framework was established pursuant to section 46 of the Garda Siochana Act 2005. The daily and weekly accountability meetings held within the framework are chaired by the Superintendent in charge of each district within the organisation.

Basically the framework provides a structure to ensure the monitoring and responses to the broad range of ongoing operational incidents occurring in any given Garda District and to ensuring that ensuing investigations are conducted in accordance with law and organisational procedures.

Within the framework, it is clearly established that the Superintendent in charge of each District is responsible for monitoring performance within their District for the current year in relation to;

- The implementation of the policing plan
- The performance of the Garda Siochana's functions
- The achievement of performance targets established by the Minister
- The implementation of directives laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas during the year
- Any other matter the Garda Commissioner thinks fit

In addition to daily and weekly accountability meetings at District level, operational performance is monitored by Chief Superintendents in charge of Divisions and Assistant Commissioners in charge of Regions on a quarterly basis. Each Superintendent attends

these quarterly meetings to account for their District performance for the previous quarter.

The Garda Siochana Code is the Code of Operating Processes and Procedures for members of An Garda Siochana. It establishes a set of rules and procedures to be complied with by each member of the organisation when presented with a range of operational or internal process situations.

The Garda Siochana Code is the employee handbook within An Garda Siochana. It is published in two volumes and extends to 60 chapters. There is no chapter within it in relation to performance management in the organisation.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in conducting this research. In addition this chapter will outline the procedures utilised to analyse the data obtained in the primary research.

From the outset the research philosophy was that of interpretivism. An exploratory, inductive approach was adopted, utilising qualitative methods of data collection. The research strategy was survey, with the research choice being mono method in that it was by way of in-depth, unstructured, interviews with respondents.

The research stance is practitioner-researcher, with the researcher currently employed as a practitioner in the organisation of choice. There was no difficulty in negotiating access to the respondents.

The research time horizon was cross sectional. Interviews were conducted with respondents who were in position at the time of the research and sought to explore the research problem with them at the point in time during which the interviews took place.

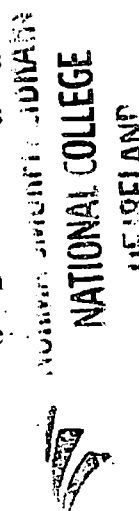
### 3.2 Research Problem

As identified by Domegan and Fleming (1999) a research project is first concerned with the correct and proper problem definition; and once this has been correctly identified and the information needs and objectives established, the research task gains momentum and starts to unfold.

The definition of the herein research problem is: An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Síochána.

The objectives of the research are;

1. To explore views on Performance Management in An Garda Síochána.
2. To explore how performance is managed at District level in the organisation.



3. To explore the challenges experienced in managing performance at District level in the organisation.
4. To explore any observations related to Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

### **3.3 Research Design**

Having considered the three primary research methods of Observation; Experimentation; and Survey Research, as identified by Baker (2001) from the perspective of the research problem vis-à-vis the basic structure, advantages and disadvantages of each method, the Survey Research method was chosen as the most appropriate for this research.

The primary research was therefore qualitative as opposed to quantitative as it focused on determining the intrinsic views, norms, challenges and related observations in relation to performance management within An Garda Siochana.

In considering the three kinds of survey as identified by Mayer (1965) in being factual, opinion and interpretative; the interview research was both opinion and interpretative in that it proposed to elicit respondents views on the topic and sought to establish why they hold these views.

In recognising the advantages of surveys as identified by Alreck and Settle (1985) as being: comprehensive, customised, versatile, flexible and efficient; and of their disadvantages as identified by Hart (1987) as being: the unwillingness of respondents to provide the required data; the ability of respondents to provide data; and the influence of the questioning process on the respondents; Baker's (2001) view *that it is clear that surveys can be used to gather data on virtually any problem which involves the attitudes of behaviour of people in either their individual capacities or as members of various kinds of social and organisational groupings* was taken as having significant relevance to the research problem; and was therefore a solid foundation on which to base the decision to utilise the survey research method to explore it.

As identified by Domegan and Fleming (1999) exploratory research aims to explore and discover issues about the problem at hand because very little is known about the situation. Malhotra and Birks (2000) asserted that the main function of exploratory research is to provide insights and understanding.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) went on to say that if respondents can express a view about something quickly, in that the question does not need deep reflection as the answer is to the forefront of their minds, the research design can allow for self reporting and the design tends to be conclusive. If, however, the issue is more sensitive and the respondents need to be more reflective and dig deeper in order to draw out ideas in a relaxed manner the design tends to be exploratory.

Domegan and Flemming (1999) posit that it is the researcher's responsibility to choose an appropriate research design for the study and in the absence of a formula, they suggest that it is really a question of which is best suited to the problem at hand.

In considering this vis-à-vis the absence of organisational literature on Performance Management in An Garda Síochána, it was decided that an exploration of the topic within the organisation would require respondents to dig deeper into their unconscious minds in order to express their views and observations in relation to it as it was felt that respondents would not have their views and observations to the forefront of their thoughts and would therefore not be in a position to self-report them. The nature of the information required, therefore, was exploratory.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) identify that exploratory research can be defined as either qualitative or quantitative. Exploratory research is often equated with qualitative techniques. Crask et al (1995) indicate that qualitative research refers to research in which the results cannot be statistically analysed because of the limited amount of data or type of data collected.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) go on to say that the qualitative approach encompasses a variety of methods that are flexible to enable respondents to reflect upon and express their views and that it seeks to encapsulate the experiences and feelings of respondents in their own terms.

### 3.4 Justification of Qualitative Research

Berg (1999) outlines that historically qualitative methodologies have not predominated in the social sciences but he highlights that certain experiences cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers. Given this historical perspective, a justification for qualitative methods is necessary.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) provide a set of circumstances in which fully structured formal methods would be unsuitable, as follows;

- With subconscious feelings, respondents would probably be unable to provide accurate answers to questions that tap their subconscious as rationalisation and ego would protect answers at that level from the outside world.
- With sensitive information, respondents may be unwilling to give truthful answers to questions that invade their privacy, embarrass them or have a negative impact on their ego or status.
- With complex phenomena, respondents may find it difficult to explain or describe their feelings in a structured questionnaire.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) asserted that with qualitative research, the researcher is able to gain a comprehensive and complete picture of the whole context in which the phenomena of interest occurs and this allows them to understand and describe as much as possible about it. It also allows the researcher to discover the interrelationships between the various components of the phenomena under study.

Berg (1999) further asserted that many researchers believe that the social sciences have depended too much on sterile survey techniques, whether or not the technology is appropriate for the problem.

Hakim (2000) indicated that the great strength of qualitative research is the validity of the data obtained; in that individuals are interviewed in sufficient detail for the results to be taken as true, correct, complete and believable reports of their views and experiences.

### 3.5 Assumptions in relation to Qualitative Research

Merriam (1988) provides the following assumptions in relation to qualitative research methods;

- Qualitative researchers are concerned mainly with process, rather than outcomes or products.
- Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning, how people make sense of their lives, experiences and the structures of their worlds.
- The qualitative researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data are mediated through this human instrument rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or machines
- Qualitative research involves fieldwork. The researcher is interested in process meaning and understanding gained through words and pictures.
- The process of qualitative research is inductive, in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypothesis and theories from details.

Further assumptions, provided by Janesick (1994) are;

- Qualitative design is focused on understanding a given social setting, not necessarily in making predictions about that setting.
- Qualitative design demands an amount of time conducting analysis equal to the amount of time spent in the field.
- Qualitative design looks at relationships within a system or culture.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) established that qualitative procedures can be defined as either direct or indirect, depending on whether the true purpose of the project is known to the respondents. As the purpose of the herein research was made known to the respondents, the procedure can be classified as direct.

Malhotra and Birks (2000) defined in-depth interviews as unstructured, direct, personal interview, in which a single respondent is probed by a skilled interviewer to uncover underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes and feelings on a topic.

Hakim (2000) proposed that the in-depth interview is a flexible, accessible, intelligible, and at its best highly illuminative of important and often hidden aspects of human behaviour and belief.

### **3.6 Identification of Research Participants**

The organisational structure of An Garda Síochána sees its 'departments' divided into 28 Divisions; which are further divided into 112 operational Garda Districts. Each District is managed by a Superintendent, and as identified in organisational literature, the Superintendent is responsible for managing performance in his/her District. Having considered how best to gain qualitative insights to performance management within the organisation, it was decided to select one Division within An Garda Síochána and conduct in-depth unstructured interviews with the Superintendents in this Division.

The author is concerned with the set of assumptions concerning human nature, as identified by Gibson and Burrell (1979) and in particular the relationship between human beings and their environment, and the perspectives as identified by them in which they discuss the concept of human beings responding in a mechanistic fashion to the situations encountered in their external world, vis-à-vis the perspective that human beings have a much more creative role in their environment; being the controller as opposed to the controlled.

It is interesting to consider this concept in the context of performance management and especially from the perspective of Superintendents in An Garda Síochána; when one considers that they are in charge of their Districts, and theoretically are assumed to be in charge of performance in the said Districts; while simultaneously being part of a bureaucratic organisation and subject to the rules, regulations and norms within that organisation.

The author was of the view therefore, that exploratory research conducted with participants at Superintendent level would provide insights into performance

management within the organisation and would give indications as to the organisational view on the topic.

### **3.7 Profile of Research Participants**

The respondents were all at Superintendent Rank in An Garda Siochana and their level of organisational experience is as follows;

- Participant 1: 31 years experience
- Participant 2: 34 years experience
- Participant 3: 36 years experience
- Participant 4: 32 years experience
- Participant 5: 32 years experience

While responding within their current role within the organisation, respondents also reflected on learning gained throughout their careers. Given the level and range of their experience, the author considered the respondents to be critical subject matter informed, and therefore used the research opportunity to gain key insights to their knowledge.

### **3.8 Ethical issues regarding Confidentiality and Anonymity**

Easterby-Smith et al (2002) as cited by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) in considering the issue of the interview-based approach to primary data collection within an organisation discuss the likelihood of participants indirectly identifying the person responsible for raising a point, which in turn may lead to harmful repercussions for the person, whose openness allowed you to identify the point for exploration. They assert that in such instances, great care needs to be exercised in maintaining each participant's right to anonymity.

From this perspective each participant was guaranteed anonymity from the outset and this guarantee has been honoured throughout all stages of the research process.



### **3.9 Threats to Reliability and Validity**

Being mindful of the assertion of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) that what is important is not the label you attach to a particular research strategy, but whether it will enable you to answer your particular research question and meet your objectives; careful consideration was afforded as to the best approach to the research and to undertaking it in such a way as to not present a threat to the participants, to the researcher as one of their peers or to the organisation.

From this perspective a Participant Information Sheet was prepared by the researcher and provided to each participant in advance of the research interview. A copy of the participant information sheet is as outlined at Appendix A.

Following this, each participant was provided with a document entitled Interview Discussion Topics which outlined the topics for discussion during the interview. A copy of this document is attached at Appendix B.

Further to this, each participant was requested to sign a consent form, indicating their consent to voluntarily participate in the research. In advance of signing the consent form each participant was advised that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time, as was outlined in the consent form. A copy of the participant consent form is attached at Appendix C

The range of ethical issues as outlined in the Participant Information Sheet were observed during the research. Copies of participant consent forms, as signed by each participant, are held in the possession of the researcher and may be inspected by College supervisors at any time.

### **3.10 Research Setting**

As identified by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) the research setting is of vital importance when conducting unstructured interviews. In this regard, participants were given the freedom to choose the place and time of the interview.

Contact was made with each participant during May 2009, during which they were informed of the nature of the research and invited to voluntarily participate in the research project. They all readily agreed to voluntarily participate in the project, and it was agreed that the proposed interviews would take place during June. In early June the respondents were again contacted in order to arrange specific dates, times and settings for interviews. In each instance the agreed setting was in the office of the participant at a time when their work day was over.

### **3.11 Conduct of Interviews**

The unstructured interview approach was adopted with a view to keeping discussion topics open and encouraging conversation. The author was of the view that these discussion areas would generate a conversation on the subject area, out of which subsequent questions, and qualitative insights would emerge.

As identified by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) the main reason for conducting qualitative interviews was the necessity for the author to understand the attitudes and opinions of the research participants. This approach was found to be useful in probing answers with a view to having interviewees further explain or develop their answers. In some instances, this approach lead the interview into areas not previously considered by the author, but which were significant in providing an understanding which helped to address the research objectives.

In being cognisant of Sekaran's (2003) advice, as cited by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) in relation to conducting face-to-face interviews, great care was exercised to avoid over zealous questioning and pressing the participant for a response.

The interviews were conducted in June 2009 and transcribed them in the days following the actual interview. These transcripts are attached at Appendices D to H inclusive. Original audio recordings of the interviews have been retained for audit and accountability purposes.

### **3.12 Data Analysis**

After the interviews were conducted and transcribed, the data analysis was conducted using the Categorisation, Unitising and Proposition Testing process as identified by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007).

The categorisation process involved the development of labels under which to group the data. This was guided by the purpose of the research, and the labels used were the research objectives.

Following this, the data was unitised, so as to facilitate a more selective process of analysing it. This procedure saw units of data added to each appropriate category and it was rearranged into a more manageable and comprehensible form.

Within the research objectives, themes and patterns emerging from the data analysis were highlighted with a view to developing generalisations, so as to allow for interpretation of the data and recognition of relationships between the data.

The appearance of apparent relationships between the data was tested so as to allow for propositions at a later stage. Following this, alternative explanations and negative examples were sought so that the process of moving towards valid conclusions could be undertaken.

Following the testing and validation of propositions emanating from apparent relationships between the data, conclusions were drawn.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Research Findings**

## 4.1 Introduction

As previously outlined, this research project was based on four objectives, as follows;

1. To explore views on Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.
2. To explore how performance is managed at district level in the organisation.
3. To explore the challenges experienced in managing performance at District level in the organisation.
4. To explore any observations related to Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

This chapter presents the factual findings in respect of each research objective.

## 4.2 Findings in respect of Research Objective 1: To explore views on Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

Respondents were requested to provide their views on performance management in the organisation. A general view that emerged was that there is no structured performance management within the organisation. The following extracts illustrate this;

**R1:** *You would say to me performance, so the first thing we have to look at is – what performance is expected; and then what performance is measured? and I would be very strongly of the view that over the years what wasn't measured; and we ran away from it ourselves was Community Policing, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Alert; all of that. Having meetings is okay but how really did we measure our engagement with those people [we were meeting].*

**R2:** *It is not structured and it is not managed but I think there is some structure coming into it that wasn't there before, with the review of performance indicators in the Policing Plan. PULSE is a measure but it's not really a true*

*measure of everything that is done but if people record everything on PULSE that they are doing, it is some measure.*

**R3:** *I think that the problem with the Garda at the moment is that you are not allowed use the word performance. Okay Superintendents and Chief's may use the word performance at review meetings in relation to performance indicators in the Policing Plan, but if you are talking to a Guard a Sergeant or an Inspector you can not use the word performance and that is part of the culture of the job and it has been fostered by the Associations in order to cover for the person, in my view the person who is not doing a tap, and they are covering this because you cant talk about individual performance.*

**R4:** *Have we a structure to manage performance; not at the lower levels no, and I have discussed this myself in the Degree Course that I did and we went through performance management and performance development. Whether we like it or not we are definitely stymied by the Associations, they are totally against any type of performance development indicators of measuring people of doing anything of that sort. The Policing Plan is one thing, but it doesn't go below District level.*

**R5:** *I don't think we are anywhere near getting to grips with performance management within the Police.*

The common theme emerging from these data is the view that there is a distinct absence of a Performance Management for individual employees in the organisation.

The literature review revealed the presence of District Performance Indicators in the Annual Policing Plan. This is evident in responses, especially those of R2 and R3.

Notwithstanding this, R1's response indicates a strong view that what has not been measured over the years is the organisational outcome of Community Policing, Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert.

#### **4.3 Findings in respect of Research Objective 2: To explore how performance is managed at District level in the organisation.**

Within this objective, it was sought to explore how performance is managed within the organisation. A variety of approaches were identified

**R1:** *The good performer, what I can do is when vacancies come up I can encourage them to go for them. When transfers come up I can recommend them highly for them. When an opportunity comes up for overtime or special duties you can look after them. When an opportunity comes up for local events you can give them suitable locations. And you can write on files "well done, this was a good job, good presented file, good investigation".*

**R2:** *People that are performing; you reward them, put them in Drugs Unit or in the Detective Unit get them car courses and most members aspire to that and they try to get on the rungs and if you can encourage them to do the promotion exams and try and get them promoted. Let them see that by good work they will be rewarded..... If a person is not performing really there is no sanction that you can impose on them..... The member that really wants to operate with a low performance there really is not a lot you can do with them..... If a member doesn't want to perform it is hard enough to get them to.*

**R3:** *I find in order to get the job done I should be closely monitoring the Sergeant but where is that going to get me. The Sergeants will turn against me, they will do nothing to help me and the next thing is the job is not done so it's a totally balancing thing all of the time because we have no performance management.*

**R4:** *I am trying to use the return of work as a lever, not to put fellows under pressure, trying to get fellows to do a little bit more for the community out there and I don't want them going out hammering people with FCPS and Summons and stuff like that. I want them to do the job that we are getting paid to do which is crime prevention and crime detection..... It brings you*

*around to the question of rewards which is another strong plank of performance development; how do you reward guys? What do you give them, if they are consistently coming back with a high performance and then they go for a position within a drugs unit or a surveillance unit and they don't get it? ..... So maybe something like a car course or a van course or a motor cycle course, because they know the positions of plain clothes don't come up that often but what I have done is I have created extra positions in plain clothes whereby I rotate the plain clothes every six months.*

**R5:** *How do I manage it? I make sure I know what is going on. I actually make sure I know what they are doing and I have a view or perhaps a vision of how I want this place policed and I try and manage all the people to delivering on that. Now I would be obviously very strong in Community Policing, Community contentment; Community stability. That is where I would put most of my effort in, because I think that is important..... I have a Sergeant who isn't performing and I was very specific in that, it's what I got him to do. I made it clear that he is not on the A Team and he does not want to be on the A Team but he is not going to swan off either. Because I am paying him in theory he is going to do something for me. And I have enough mundane jobs to be doing that I can absorb three or four people like that and what that does is that nobody wants to be in the sin bin.*

It is interesting to note the congruence in responses with regard to rewarding good performers in that a common theme links how all respondents dealt with good performance through nominating individuals for development courses or recommending them for promotion etc.

A strong factor emerging from respondents was the lack of a structure to manage poor performance with one respondent indicating that *there is little or nothing you can do with them*. A general sense of frustration is evident in the responses relating to the absence of a structured framework to manage the poor performer.



#### **4.4 Findings in respect of Research Objective 3: To explore the challenges experienced in managing performance at district level in the organisation.**

Within this topic, respondents were requested to discuss challenges experienced in managing performance.

The key challenge identified was the absence of an Individual Performance Management System and the power of the Staff Associations in maintaining this status quo.

**R1:** *Now measurement of Guards, how do we do it – first of all I am not satisfied that Senior Management want to be in a position of measuring because they are afraid of the Organisation and Associations, they are afraid of the GRA, they are afraid of AGSI all because they have numbers and clout. The reality is we had a situation here a number of years ago where we wanted to measure certain things, not alone a Station model but a Unit model and down to the Member. We were told no: 1 - you move away from the Member; 2 - you move away from the Unit; and 3 – its okay for the Station. Collective responsibility.*

**R2:** *It is difficult to have a system of appraisal for the Guards. It was tried with the PD&R but again it was resisted by the Associations and there was never anything done but I would say if we had stuck with it we might have some better appraisal system at this stage. Appraisal as well as performance you need to have both. Make sure they are sticking with it..... AGSI and the GRA; they don't want performance appraisals on individual. That is agreed that there won't be performance appraisal. What I find with AGSI or the GRA; I really don't deal with them unless there is a complaint about the way I deal with things or the way I haven't dealt with something; I find their input negative more so than positive and it comes in the form of a complaint.*

**R3:** *I can't say to the Sergeant what is so and so doing on your Unit, because the answer I will get is; and when I tried it to find out individual returns for Guards even though I could look them up on PULSE but I wanted to make the Sergeant aware that I was interested in what he was doing about the staff*

*under his control; he goes to AGSI and a snotty note comes from AGSI back to me telling me did I not read the HQ Directive..... That I wasn't entitled to ask [the Sergeant] about individual performance about the Guards under his control.... Now I was as a Unit, I could find out about them, but in actual fact it was the Sergeant's performance I was interested in because he knew about the people that he had that he was supervising; and how effective he was as supervisor..... I got my answer.*

A recurring theme emerged from the analysis that the respondents viewed the two main Staff Associations, The Garda Representative Association (GRA) and the Associations of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) as wielding an inordinate level of power when it comes to performance management, especially in relation to the individual.

As evidenced in the passage from Respondent 3 there is a sense of frustration at the absence of a performance management system and the power wielded by the staff associations to prevent him doing something about it.

#### **4.5 Findings in respect of Research Objective 4: To explore any observations related to Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.**

Under this heading, respondents were asked if they had any related observations to the area of performance management. The key observations offered was in respect of what performance management should be in the organisation.

Respondents offered insightful observations as to what performance management should be within the organisation, as highlighted in the following data;

**R1:** *Performance should be an A to Z of what a person is obliged to do in the occupation they are in. And you know maybe we are not good enough at pointing out to them that this is the way were going to do our business.*

- R2:** *I suppose the best thing would be if everyone knew exactly what they had to do and when they do it; but the nature of our job is that it doesn't work like that, you can go out and be very proactive and do an awful lot and you can go out and you need not do anything at all or if there is not much happening around you won't have much to show where as if there is something you deal with that and some will respond more so than being proactive.*
- R3:** *There should be some way of monitoring but at the moment there is absolutely nothing..... If people understood from the start that the criteria was result based and we needed results every day you went out – you should be working towards a target; I think we would have a better job and maybe even with my own Rank, with every rank, what would be wrong with it. If I was the Commissioner, that is what I would try and introduce now, and a different approach to the supervisory ranks as a start. These are things that have been tried in other Police forces and they appear to be working I can't see why they don't try them here..... We don't reward initiative enough either. People show a bit of initiative, we should be saying that's performance and rewarding it but we need a structure in place to measure performance, it has to come in. A good honest honourable structure.*
- R4:** *We need a proper system in place whereby everybody knows where they stand and there is none of this kind of cajoling and putting fellows under pressure, you know where you stand..... I know the argument that is being put against us all of the time:- hang on a sec you can't put the Guards? Yes you can, the people down through the years have said how do you measure crime prevention? I would say you can measure it very easily if we do fifty patrols a week, next week we should strive to try and do sixty. That is crime prevention; that is high visibility on the ground. Why can't we measure it; of course we can. We don't want to measure it because it doesn't suit some people to measure it and I think that is the big thing, to change this culture that is there about performance development, that it is something that everybody should be terrified of because it means that they are going to be looking over your shoulder measuring everything you do and if you don't do it, it is like time in motion studies years ago..... I wouldn't like to see it solely being measure in*

*Summons, Charge Sheets, FCP's, I would like to see everything being measured, everything that we possibly could measure and what I said to you earlier on about school visits, community visits the work done by individuals with clubs, everything should be measured. It should not be solely a production line measurement because if you do that you play into the hands of the detractors who say that this is just to get more money out of public and it is more persecution where as if you look at it in a broad base and say measure everything, the guy that does community work and voluntary work the people that work outside of the Organisation..... So I would definitely say that whatever system we do introduce down the road, it should measure the whole community aspect of the Guards which to me is kernel to do the job that we have to do.*

**R5:** *If people could define what the role of the Guard is, if that could be defined, and since I joined the Police it has changed a few times..... You have to have a flexible performance management tool where some stuff is measured; some of the straight forward rules that there is no way out of – you should be in work on time, you should be smartly turned out, you should not be rude to the public. That is straight forward performance management and to look after those p's and q's it's a bit like the broken window theory, you will improve things; and then you have to go and look at the role of the team and realise that your book man is looking at the same amount of prisoners as the fellow who goes after shoplifters or whatever like that.*

It is interesting to note the prevalence of the viewpoint that a proper system of performance management, with clearly defined targets, and within which everybody knows where they stand in relation to what is expected of them, is seen as being a requisite for the organisation.

## 4.6 Unexpected Findings

The research identified three unexpected findings, as follows;

### 4.6.1 Culture of accepting Poor Performance

There is evidence that a cultural mindset of accepting poor performance has existed traditionally in the organisation and pervades to this day.

The following passage from Respondent 1 is particularly noteworthy in respect of this view;

**R1:** *The thing is like the vocation is totally gone, we have become a very selfish imprison type Organisation*

**I:** When you say imprison, what do you mean?

**R1:** *In the sense that we are only thinking about ourselves and our focus is, we have a job for life irrespective of what happens we are going to be extremely unfortunate if we are dismissed out of an Organisation such as the Guards. We don't have to do anything but what we have to do is nothing well. For example I got advice from the Sergeant when I joined the job and he said "the most important thing I will tell you in the job, when I was active the same as you were in relation to policing", he said "you would be better off doing nothing and do it well".*

**I:** How long ago is that?

**R1:** *1979, I was a year in the Service at that time.*

**I:** You joined in 1978

**R1:** *I joined in January 1978.*

**I:** That's what he said to you then.

**R1:** *Ya, he said "do nothing and do it well".*

**I:** That's thirty-one years ago. Do you think anything has changed?

**R1:** *Nothing has changed much except that nobody has expressed it as deliberate as that. But this was a Sergeant who was telling a recruit Guard as I was at the time how I should go through my service in this Organisation.*

**I:** He was senior at the time, was he?

**R1:** *He was a very senior Sergeant.*

**I:** So he would have joined twenty years earlier.

**R1:** *Starting off in life and being told that if you weren't a waster you'd get into trouble, a person would fall under that.*

The following extract from interview with R4 is also noteworthy in this regard;

**R4:** *It is all performance, but we call it return of work, call it what you want, as I said to you earlier on if you are working on an actual control line inside in Dell you have to have an output you have to have a return, that is your return of work and I mean would an employee in Dell or an employee in any of these big Companies get away with four or five zero's at the end of each month?*

**I:** That is the key question. I don't think Michael Dell would stand for that do you?

**R4:** *They would not get away with it, they would be told in no uncertain terms, listen you are doing absolutely nothing, I can't afford to pay you. The Guards seem to think they have to tolerate this, just because a fellow turns in for work*

*at six o'clock in the morning and sits on his rear end and does absolutely nothing, that we should tolerate it.*

#### **4.6.2 Emerging trend of personnel not living in the area they work in.**

There is a concern that the emerging trend of employees not living in the area in which they work is having a detrimental affect on their performance.

A number of respondents identified this as follows;

**R1:** *If you have a situation in a provincial town where people are not going to be living in that town you are going to have a problem straight away. These people are not taking ownership of the job, you cant take ownership of a job and be living at home in a job like the Guards because it is whether we like it or not its more than a job, it's a vocation. So if you take people who are here from two to ten and they are gone at ten. Their inter connecting skills with the stakeholder are nil, not only that but even with their other Units in the Station, they are not even meeting other Units, socially or informally or anything. Now if they were I feel living in a town they have to take ownership of their policing needs for the simple reason they will be categorised as being one of their own and if you don't have ownership of your own job in your own place why would you really be too concerned, because if you are living in a place a distance from where you are stationed, you are gone at ten o'clock, do you really care what happens when you go out the door.*

**R3:** *I have them commuting from as far away as 60 or 70 miles - how can these people be doing their job. I mean performance; this inhibits performance as well because there is no great interest in the place they are working in, it's only an old job like. Whereas in our day the job was a way of life and it was a vocation to some degree and you would never like to see a gouger getting away. You would always try and catch them but now if it doesn't happen on their shift it doesn't matter. You ask someone there about a crime and they say 'oh so and so is dealing with that' like but surely you should know about*

*it. You should know everything that is going on, you are a detective. If a civilian asked you about something you feel kind of stupid if you didn't know about some serious thing that happened in the town. That is the attitude I get from Sergeants as well to be honest about it.*

#### **4.6.3 Traditional view of Police work being a vocation.**

An interesting theme that emerged was the notion of a career in An Garda Siochana being a vocation as opposed to a job; with the attending observation that police people who were perceived as having a 'vocation' were very effective in their performance.

The following quotes are noteworthy;

**R1:** *These people are not taking ownership of the job, you cant take ownership of a job and be living at home in a job like the Guards because it is whether we like it or not its more than a job, it's a vocation.*

**R3:** *In our day the job was a way of life and it was a vocation to some degree*

In addition, the hereunder extract from R2 is particularly noteworthy;

**I:** What is it about a Sergeant that makes them a good Sergeant?

**R2:** *Commitment; it was always commitment, totally commitment and they minded the Station like they minded a house, or their parish; it was their District and they did not want anything going on in their District and not be aware of it.*

**I:** That is a good word – "their Parish".

**R2:** *Yes, like a vocation for them.*



#### **4.7 Summary of Research Findings**

The following is a summary of the research findings;

1. Performance in An Garda Síochána is managed through the measurement of District performance against performance indicators established in the annual Policing Plan.
2. There is no structured performance management system to manage the performance of individual employees in An Garda Síochána.
3. In the absence of structured performance management system within the organisation, performance of individuals is managed on an ad hoc basis from District to District.
4. There is evidence that the absence of a structured Performance Management System to manage individual performance within the organisation is presenting considerable challenges in managing performance at District level.
5. There is evidence of a viewpoint amongst respondents that the staff associations wield too much power over senior management in relation to individual performance management; and that, as a consequence, District Managers are not getting the requisite support from senior management in relation managing individual performance in their Districts.
6. There is evidence of a culture of accepting and tolerating poor performance from some employees.
7. There is evidence of a perception amongst respondents that performance of individual employees is linked to where they live; with a view that performance is improved if they live in the area they work in.

8. There is evidence that respondents view police work as a vocation as opposed to a job; and that their perception is that this viewpoint is not shared by younger employees.
9. There is evidence that respondents would welcome the development of a structured performance management system to manage the performance of individual employees in An Garda Síochána.
10. There is evidence that respondents have considered the topic and are in a position to provide recommendations as to what facets of operational activities should be included in any performance management system that may be developed in the future.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

## **5.1 Introduction**

The aim of this research project was to explore Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

As previously outlined, this research project was based on four objectives, as follows;

1. To explore views on Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.
2. To explore how performance is managed at District level in the organisation.
3. To explore the challenges experienced in managing performance at District level in the organisation.
4. To explore any observations related to Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.

This chapter will outline the conclusions flowing from the research findings in respect of each research objective.

In addition, recommendations ensuing from these conclusions will be proposed.

## **5.2 Conclusions drawn from findings in respect of Research Objective 1: To explore views on Performance Management in An Garda Siochana.**

A summary of the research findings in respect of this objective is as follows;

- Performance in An Garda Siochana is managed through the measurement of District performance against performance indicators established in the annual Policing Plan.
- There is no structured performance management system to manage the performance of individual employees in An Garda Siochana.

The overall purpose of performance management, as identified by Armstrong and Baron (2006) is to contribute to the achievement of high performance by the organisation and its

people and that 'High Performance' means reaching and exceeding stretching targets for the delivery of productivity, quality, customer service, growth, profits and shareholder value.

Being cognisant of this, it may be concluded that an organisation without a structured performance management system for its employees will not reach and exceed stretching targets for the delivery of productivity, quality and customer service. This being the case, it may be further concluded that An Garda Síochána is presented with a significant challenge in becoming a high performance organisation.

From the perspective of managing performance in police organisations, as discussed by Flemming and Scott (2008); Shilston (2008) Neyroud (2008) Stelfox (2008) and Roche (2008) in relation to process; outcomes; contributions by the police to quality of life; and police management of how their 'clients' are dealt with; it may be concluded, in the absence of a structured Performance Management System, that An Garda Síochána is behind the curve in relation to other international police organisations when it comes to the management of these facets of performance.

### **5.3 Conclusions drawn from findings in respect of Research Objective 2: To explore how performance is managed at District level in the organisation.**

A summary of the research findings in respect of this objective is as follows;

- Performance in An Garda Síochána is managed on a District basis through measurement of District performance against performance indicators established in the annual Policing Plan.
- In the absence of structured performance management system within the organisation, performance of individuals is managed on an ad hoc basis from District to District.

Armstrong and Baron (2006) identify that performance is often regarded simply in output terms, ie the achievement of quantified objectives. They go on to assert that, more than

this, it is the outcomes of activity and endeavour that matter. These can be assessed qualitatively by reference to standards of performance or quantitatively as targets or goals expressed against projects or tasks. Additionally they assert that performance is not only a matter of what people achieve, but how they achieve it; and that high performance results from appropriate behaviour, especially discretionary behaviour, and the effective use of the required knowledge skills and competencies. Performance management must, therefore examine how results are attained, because this provides the information necessary to consider what needs to be done to improve these results.

An Garda Síochána has set clear goals and objectives in its Corporate Strategy and Annual Policing Plan without putting in place the structures to manage individual personnel in the achievement of these goals, or indeed in how they achieve these goals.

A conclusion that may be drawn from this is that the organisation is inhibited in establishing how results are attained or how they may be improved. A further conclusion is that the absence of a performance management system within the organisation undermines the managerial legitimacy of District managers.

#### **5.4 Conclusions drawn from findings in respect of Research Objective 3: To explore the challenges experienced in managing performance at District level in the organisation.**

A summary of the research findings in respect of this objective is as follows;

- There is evidence that the absence of a structured Performance Management System to manage individual performance within the organisation is presenting considerable challenges in managing performance at District level
- There is evidence of a viewpoint amongst respondents that the staff associations wield too much power over senior management in relation to individual performance management; and that, as a consequence, District Managers are not getting the requisite support from senior management in relation managing individual performance in their Districts.

Marchington and Wilkinson (2002) identified that it is clear that horizontal and vertical integration are key themes in HRM and nowhere is the concept of integration more important than in the management of performance. They go on to say that performance management aims to link together individual goals, departmental purposes and organisational objectives, by incorporating issues that are central to many other elements of HRM such as appraisal and employee development, performance-related pay and reward management, and individualism and employee relations. Additionally they assert that performance management is synonymous with the totality of day-to-day management activity because it is concerned with how work can be organised to achieve the best possible results.

Bearing this in mind, vis-à-vis the position as reported by respondents it may be concluded that the power leveraged by the Staff Associations is inhibiting managers in executing the totality of day-to-day management activity.

A further conclusion is that, in the absence of a structured performance management system in the organisation, performance can only be managed in an ad-hoc manner from District to District and this significantly inhibits organisational effectiveness.

#### **5.5 Conclusions drawn from findings in respect of Research Objective 4: To explore any observations related to Performance Management in An Garda Síochána.**

A summary of the research findings in respect of this objective is as follows;

- There is evidence that respondents would welcome the development of a structured performance management system to manage the performance of individual employees in An Garda Síochána.
- There is evidence that respondents have considered the topic and are in a position to provide recommendations as to what facets of operational activities should be included in any performance management system that may be developed in the future.

These findings support the view of Mabey et al (1998) who see performance management as establishing a framework in which performance by individuals can be directed, monitored, motivated and refined; whereas Armstrong and Baron (1998) propose performance management as a process of aligning or integrating organisational and individual objectives to achieve organisational effectiveness, with development, as the prime purpose.

A conclusion drawn from these findings is that there is an imperative need to develop an integrated Performance Management System to support and motivate employees in the achievement of individual and organisational objectives and the enhancement of overall organisational effectiveness.

## **5.6 Conclusions drawn from Unexpected Findings**

A summary of the unexpected findings of this research is as follows;

- There is evidence of a culture of accepting and tolerating poor performance from some employees.
- There is evidence of a perception amongst respondents that performance of individual employees is linked to where they live; with a view that performance is improved if they live in the area they work in.
- There is evidence that respondents view police work as a vocation as opposed to a job; and that their perception is that this viewpoint is not shared by younger employees.

The culture of accepting and tolerating poor performance is identified as being long standing in the organisation and it may be concluded that significant improvement is required in the area of performance management to address it.



The perceptions that the performance of employees is directly linked to where they live and that the job is a vocation are interesting, especially from the perspective of the psychological contract and how much employees are willing to contribute to the communities they serve in their off duty time.

A conclusion that may be drawn from these findings is that a significant cultural mindset exists in relation to link between the psychological contract and individual performance in the organisation, and this being the case, it may be further concluded that a significant shift in cultural mindset will be required in tandem with the development of a performance management system in order to improve organisational performance.

### **5.7 Summary of Conclusions**

A summary of the conclusions drawn is provided hereunder;

1. An organisation without a structured performance management system for its employees will not reach and exceed stretching targets for the delivery of productivity, quality and customer service and, this being the case, it may be further concluded that An Garda Síochána is presented with a significant challenge in becoming a high performance organisation.
2. In the absence of a structured Performance Management System within the organisation An Garda Síochána is behind the curve in relation to other international police organisations in this regard.
3. An Garda Síochána has set clear goals and objectives in its Corporate Strategy and Annual Policing Plan without putting in place the structures to manage individual personnel in the achievement of these goals, or indeed in how they achieve these goals. A conclusion drawn from this is that the organisation is inhibited in establishing how results are attained or how they may be improved.
4. The absence of a performance management system is undermining the managerial legitimacy of district managers.

5. The power leveraged by the Staff Associations in relation to individual performance management is inhibiting managers in executing the totality of day-to-day management activity.
6. In the absence of a structured performance management system in the organisation, performance can only be managed in an ad-hoc manner from District to District and this significantly inhibits organisational effectiveness.
7. There is an imperative need to develop an integrated Performance Management System to support management in supporting and motivating individual employees in the achievement of individual and organisational objectives and the enhancement of overall organisational effectiveness.
8. A significant cultural mindset exists in relation to the relationship between the psychological contract and individual performance in the organisation and a shift in this mindset will be required in tandem with the development of a performance management system in order to improve organisational performance.

## **5.8 Recommendations**

Armstrong and Baron (1998) assert that the whole ethos of performance management rests on the assumption that if you can raise the performance levels of individuals, better organisational performance will follow.

In light of this and the conclusions drawn from the findings of this research, the following recommendations are proposed;

1. Senior Garda management should seriously consider developing a structured and integrated performance management system within An Garda Síochána which takes account of the full ambit of organisational and societal complexities associated with delivering a policing service in the modern context.

2. In pursuance of this, extensive research should be undertaken within the organisation in relation to the subject area and the views of District managers should be taken into consideration in this research.
3. The situation pertaining to the perceived power of the staff associations in relation to individual performance management should be addressed in this research process with a view to redressing the perceived imbalance.
4. Extensive research should be conducted into international police organisations with a view to identifying best practice performance management systems in place within them and building on their experiences to augment the development of a performance management system for An Garda Síochána.
5. Any consideration afforded to the development of performance management within the organisation should take cognisance of the cultural phenomena identified in the unexpected findings of the herein research.
6. In pursuance of the above recommendations, cognisance should be taken of Flemming's (2008) tenet that when it comes to performance management in police organisations, 'one size does not fit all'; and any performance management system developed for An Garda Síochána should be sensitive to the Irish and the local context.

These recommendations are proposed with a view to developing the Human Capital Advantage of An Garda Síochána through improving the competence and capacity of the organisations Human Resources within a structured and integrated performance management paradigm.

In cognisance of Armstrong and Baron's (2006) assertions, they are specifically, aimed at making the good better, sharing understanding about what is to be achieved, developing the capacity of people to achieve it, and providing the support and guidance people need to deliver high performance and achieve their full potential to the benefit of themselves and the organisation.

In cognisance of Flemming's (2008) assertion, the recommendations are formulated with a view to providing An Garda Síochána with an effective framework via which to meet the increased public expectation for the organisation to deliver value through the socially and fiscally responsible allocation of resources and ensure effective service delivery to the communities of 21<sup>st</sup> century Ireland.

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## **List of Appendices**

- Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet.**
- Appendix B: Interview Discussion Topics.**
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- Appendix D: Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 1.**
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- Appendix F: Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 3.**
- Appendix G: Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 4.**
- Appendix H: Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 5.**
- Appendix I: Glossary of Organisational Terminology.**

# **Appendix A**

## **Participant Information Sheet**

**National College of Ireland**  
**BA(Hons) HRM(F) 2008/2009**  
**Student: Patrick Burke**  
**Student No: 03247597**  
**Module: Dissertation**

**Research Project**

**Working Title:**

**An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana**

**Participant Information Sheet**

**Research Purpose?**

*To explore the experience of operational commanders at Superintendent Rank in An Garda Siochana in relation to performance management.*

**Who is undertaking this research?**

*Above named student, Patrick Burke.*

**Is it funded or sponsored by anybody?**

*No.*

**Who is being asked to participate?**

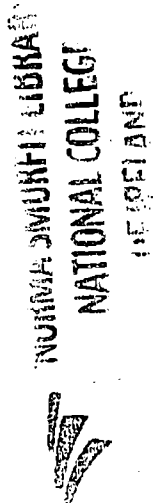
*Superintendents in a selected operational Division in An Garda Siochana.*

**What type of data will be required:**

*Experiential reflections of participants.*

**How will these data be collected?**

*By personal interview.*



**How much time is required?**

*Approximately one hour.*

**Target Dates to conduct research?**

*June 2009.*

**Is participation voluntary?**

*Yes.*

**Has participant right to decline to answer a question or set of questions?**

*Yes.*

**Has participant right or control over voice recording of their response?**

*Yes.*

**Can participant withdraw at any time?**

*Yes.*

**What are the consequences of participating?**

*Positive consequences are the opportunity to contribute to the research project and enhance the academic and experiential learning of the researcher. No negative consequences are anticipated.*

**What assurances are provided in respect of participant anonymity and data confidentiality?**

*In writing up of dissertation and research results participants will be identified solely as 'Respondent 1 or Respondent 2' as the case may be. For accountability and validity purposes the names of each respondent will be kept confidentially in the sole possession of the researcher and will only be disclosed to College supervisors in the event of an accountability or validity audit. In the event of such an audit the participant will be advised in advance. Data collected will be kept confidential within the ambit of this research project and within standard research ethics.*

**Who will have access to the data collected?**

*College supervisors.*

---

**How will the results of the research project be disseminated?**

*Through inclusion in dissertation for submission to National College of Ireland within the above programme.*

**How will assurances about anonymity and confidentiality be observed at this stage?**

*Through standard College policy in relation to anonymity and confidentiality.*

**What will happen to the data collected after the project is completed?**

*It will be retained by the researcher as archival evidence of the research.*

**Where data are to be preserved, what safeguards will be built in to safeguard the future anonymity and confidentiality of participants?**

*Data security measures as outlined in best practice Data Protection principles will be observed in relation to it.*

**Contact person for this research project?**

*Patrick Burke, Garda Central Vetting Unit, Thurles, Co Tipperary. Phone: 0504 27375. Email: [patrick.j.burke@garda.ie](mailto:patrick.j.burke@garda.ie).*

**End.**

# **Appendix B**

## **Interview Discussion Topics**

**National College of Ireland**  
**BA(Hons) HRM(F) 2008/2009**  
**Student: Patrick Burke**  
**Student No: 03247597**  
**Module: Dissertation**

**Research Project**

**Working Title:**

**An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana**

**Participant Interview**

**Key Areas for Discussion**

- 1. Your views on performance management in the organisation.**
- 2. How you manage and monitor performance in your District.**
- 3. Challenges you face in managing performance in your District.**
- 4. Any other related observations.**



# **Appendix C**

## **Participant Consent Form**

**National College of Ireland**

**BA(Hons) HRM(F) 2008/2009**

**Student: Patrick Burke**

**Student No: 03247597**

**Module: Dissertation**

**Research Project**

**Working Title:**

**An Exploration of Performance Management in An Garda Siochana**

**Participant Consent**

**I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.**

**I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving reason.**

**I am aware that while every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of the information I provide, this can only be offered within the limitations of the law.**

**I agree to take part in this research project.**

**Name of Participant:**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date:**

**Name of Researcher: Patrick Burke.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date:**

# **Appendix D**

## **Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 1.**

## Transcript of Interview with Respondent No 1.

**I:** I want to have a conversation with you about your views on performance management within our organisation generally and in particular how you manage it within your District, the challenges it presents to you, and any other observations you may have in respect of it.

**R1:** *Well, see the whole idea is that prevention is better than cure, so if we look at the prevention side of things our total focus should be on the prevention and secondly our focus should be on detection, because when detection has to be made we are just too far behind then because something has happened. So our emphasis should be in relation to Community Policing and in relation not to being a response agency but being a pro-active agency.*

**I:** Pro active rather than reactive.

**R1:** *Absolutely, yes. So if you take what we are doing across the Six National Goals, up to now what we had there, and you are aware of it, we had percentages of increases in measurable targets. For example we needed ten percent in drink driving, we needed ten percent in no insurance section, we needed ten percent in phones but in actual fact the reason we went that way was because it was measurable. But in actual fact being measured wasn't really helpful at all. If we increased our Force which we did by fifteen hundred or two thousand which ever it was, what we should have received as result of that was high visibility patrolling which actually would prevent these offences being committed in the first place. You would say to me performance, so the first thing we have to look at is – What performance is expected?; and then What performance is measured? and I would be very strongly of the view that over the years what wasn't measured, and we ran away from it ourselves was Community Policing, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Alert, all of that. Having meetings is okay but how really did we measure our engagement with those people [we were meeting].*

**I:** Is what you are saying; were the meetings being effective.

**R1:** *Yes, we will just say if I said to you we have seventeen Community Alerts and perhaps seven Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the District whichever it is. What does that mean to you as a person, it means we have established these but how were they being reached and how were they being actioned.*

**I:** Do you mean how were they being measured and what was their effectiveness.

**R1:** *Yes, so my first focus at daily accountability every day is – what Estate patrols are we doing today, what funerals are we covering this evening and all that kind of area. What inspections of Licensed Premises are being carried out to find out that we haven't drunken people on the*

*premises, that we are going to deter people from going out and drink driving because if a Guard goes into a pub and says hello to the person behind the bar and there is somebody in there with three or four pints now they are going to have to think and say the Guards are very near us now so its all about how we can prevent.*

**I:** So you are talking about perceptions of prevention as well.

**R1:** *Yes, and the thing is that we can measure it [prevention] but how is our performance management. Can we ask individuals to account for themselves. They tell you yes but the answer is no.*

**I:** You don't think we can [measure it].

**R1:** *No, not at the present time because this new accomplishment model where they are trying to reach out and get rid of the performance development and review and leave that in the background where it should have been left, that was measured on statistical values but nothing else. So for example if I have a Unit of seven people and you have some of them involved in Traffic that's not to say that there are some people in those Units who are very good Community inter-connecters and why don't we employ those people at that. You take for example now a member here with us, very sick man, came back to work. We have him interested in Schools we have him dealing with Communities; we have him dealing with the public at all angles. He loves that and there is no better man to do the job. But ask him to go out and detect drink driving, it's a different ball game so what we have is horses for courses but we are not dealing with the horses.*

**I:** When you say not dealing with them, what do you mean?

**R1:** *Like we are looking at everybody, if a return is required tomorrow morning it won't be that type of return that will be required or looked at.*

**I:** And do you think it should be. Has it ever been?

**R1:** *No because we never actually sat down to say this is the way we do our business. You said earlier we should be pro-active rather than reactive but most of our policing is reactive. At one stage there all we needed was cars with sirens on them. Nowadays we should be going away from all of that and being in areas such as the side roads along there. Like we don't want to be meeting winos on the river wall but we will meet them if we don't patrol them. But not alone that, it will be the result of somebody being attacked out there or robbed with their money taken off them to buy the drink. So we should be in these areas and working with those people all the time. Now measurement of Guards, how do we do it – first of all I am not satisfied that Senior Management want to be in a position of measuring because they are afraid of the Organisation and Associations, they are afraid of the GRA, they are afraid of AGSI all because they have numbers and clout. The reality is we had a situation here a number of years ago where we wanted to measure certain things,*

*not alone a Station model but a Unit model and down to the Member. We were told no: 1 - you move away from the Member; 2 - you move away from the Unit; and 3 - its okay for the Station. Collective responsibility.*

**I:** That's for outputs and all of that.

**R1:** *Absolutely, outputs and outcomes.*

**I:** Where did that come from, Senior Management?

**R1:** *Absolutely. Yes. We were told that when the Associations met with the Chief on that occasion the Chief told me to back off that he wanted it as a big Station thing, a big return. But this return is as useful as nothing. The reality is if you don't get down and put individual responsibility on the shoulders of everybody you won't get an individual response that will make up a collective response. For example if you have seven people and you want to harness them with tasks then you come back and say "ah well everything is going well", how well did they do and what the task he was asked to do. You know if you go into private industry everybody has a job to do and they are measured on that job. But in actual fact we are telling them its okay and everything will be okay and what we find then is that the Superintendent and the Sergeant if that person is not a good to delegate and a responder then to get results the whole thing then falls flat on its face. We often see now with HRM or whatever directives or approaches you have nowadays, the reality is - please nominate the Superintendent to take charge of this, please nominate an Inspector to take charge of this or please nominate a Sergeant but you never nominate a Guard to take charge of anything. And they are individual members of the Force the same as you and I are.*

**I:** ...Who are going to be the future of the Force

**R1:** *Yes.*

**I:** Because people at Superintendent level will be moving on.

**R1:** *Yes, but we got totally clouded with the Associations. There is no Organisation that you know outside of the Statutory Public Agencies that aren't measured. For example you have people out sick and you have a situation where the Chief Medical Officer is saying he is fit to go back to work and suddenly you have a letter from the local Doctor who is living forty miles away, just because he is a good Doctor and he challenges, the Chief Medical Officer backs off*

**I:** That's a huge problem isn't it because how can you measure his performance? Performance is everything. What do you think performance should be?

**R1:** *Performance should be an A to Z of what a person is obliged to do in the occupation they are in. And you know maybe we are not good enough at*

*pointing out to them that this is the way were going to do our business.*

**I:** So what you are saying is we have the blue book, the Garda Code, which says we shall do this and we must do that but it doesn't say how and what you are after saying is how?

**R1:** *But it's worse than that because if you look at our Code ninety five percent of it is written negatively. Its not what you can do it is what you shan't do. Now if you go to a person in a job and say you can't do this and you can't do that what happens is that person gets frightened because they don't have the capacity to know well what can I do.*

**I:** That is a very good point.

**R1:** *You look at the Code and how it's written.*

**I:** That's a key point.

**R1:** *Somebody says to you in your workplace, your staff cannot do this, they cannot do that and then suddenly somebody asks a question, well what can they do. So when you take all the cant's out of it would you be better off telling people, this is what you can do, this is what you should be doing. And don't mention the negative at all and what you cannot do because if you are doing what you should do, the should not doesn't come into it.*

**I:** So really what you are talking about is setting standards of performance.

**R1:** *Yes, if we have a Guard who is interacting well with people and you want something done, a simple thing like moving a car on a match day, that car was there last night where it was entitled to be, and you knock on the door and you say "you shouldn't be parked here don't you know it's a match day" instead of saying "look at I am sorry to disturb you we have a match on today would you mind moving your car". Totally different, you are going into the positive as distinct from saying well you should not be here today. The other thing about it is the people who are doing good work how well rewarded are they.*

**I:** That's a key one isn't it.

**R1:** *You know it all over the years. People who worked hard got more work to do. People who worked less got less work to do. And when it came to accommodation, transfers etc, there was no distinction made between the good worker and the poor worker except that I could add that the good worker, nobody wanted to loose them because they were a good worker but when it came to the poor worker they recommended them for out because they wanted to get rid of them.*

**I:** That is a very good point. I have experienced that and you have experienced it.

**R1:** *You and I have often talked about it over the past number of years where we should be looking after the good people. To show as an example to others well if you want to be good enough you will be looked after but the idea is if you want to be poor enough you will be looked after also.*

**I:** Is the problem then that they are on the same grade so they are on the same pay structure.

**R1:** *Probably more, because you take the situation that you are not going to ask the people that do good quality work because you feel that they won't do it not because they are not able to do it but because you feel that there is another person out there who has a good work return as is going to be better to do the job and of course you as a Manger are going to say "well I need the best results so I am going to get the best people to do it". What happens then is you send people out on a post and they sit on their backsides for eight hours, they claim an hour and a half overtime, three quarters of an hour each way and they get a full eight hours Sub Allowance. So who is being rewarded?*

**I:** The person who is back here trying to manage Traffic, Accidents, Public Disorder and the whole lot, what about them?

**R1:** *These are the people who provide the Core Policing services and now they are getting less than the people who we feel are not being competent to carry out their duty.*

**I:** So are you saying that the less effective person is getting the best reward?

**R1:** *Can be the most financially rewarded, absolutely. Now whether they are within themselves conscious of that fact is hard to know. They have to have some conscience. You take people who are on sick leave, or injured on duty. They are highly rewarded in the Guards. To the point that if they come back on light duties nine to five they are penalised because now they are not getting their Allowances so what is the incentive to bring that person back to work.*

**I:** Why has it become this way, why can't we seem to get to grips with this.

**R1:** *I think we were stronger in the older times. I think we were stronger and the Sergeant had real clout in our Organisation. Not only does the Sergeant not seem to have it now, none of us seem to have it because if anything goes up along and it may cause an embarrassment for the Association or the Commissioner or for the Assistant Commissioner or Chief's they will run away from it and they will give the credence to the Associations who are making the representations because they don't want an upheaval in the Associations. But at the same time you and I are going to be left trying to deal with an impossible situation.*

**I:** When you say the Associations do you really mean the GRA and AGSI?



**R1:** *Absolutely where the numbers are. If you take our Organisation, the Superintendents, we have no clout whatsoever. It's too small. They will really outweigh us because they know that no.1 we are productive, no.2 we are progressive and no.3 they know well we are not going to rock the boat. It's all about a numbers game.*

**I:** Do you really think that the balance of power lies with the Associations?

**R1:** *Yes, I think that when it comes to a crisis and when you are trying to get support for what you are doing for example if there is a vote of no confidence in the Superintendent, is it ever explored is the vote of no confidence in the Superintendent because he wants to change things around here and get better outcomes or is it because he is incompetent? Now if he is incompetent he should not have been promoted and the Organisation promoted him. But the reality at the end of the day if there is a vote of no confidence they [management] will side with the Associations and try and get the Superintendent to bow down a bit in his expectations; which is wrong. You are coming from strength of numbers and every Organisation is afraid of numbers but we shouldn't be afraid of numbers if we are trying to accomplish something that we feel is part of our Organisation. For example if we expect a person to do a particular job and get a particular pay surely it beholds that person to do that and for us to see that it's done. And that we should not be running around on a daily basis inspecting things, a Sergeant should do that and even if the Sergeant was never around the place the Guard should be performing on his own.*

**I:** Do you feel that you have to do that at the minute, as a Superintendent that you have to inspect them?

**R1:** *Well, I am having to continually at daily meetings remind people what are we doing today, you know, if I didn't ask the question what actually are we doing today, things may or may not be done, I don't know. I said at our daily accountability meeting on this very date that I wanted to know what estate patrols were being done, I was told three and four. I asked the question when number three was being done, 2pm – 5pm; number four, 7pm – 10pm. I told the Sergeant today I am going to be inspecting those two now I have no doubt they are going to be done because I issued that kind of a directive. So I put them on notice, but the reality is we should not have to put people on notice to be in work on time and go home on time. The reality of the situation is we have to do it because we have no clock in/clock out system.*

**I:** There is your starting point – no clock in/clock out system.

**R1:** *Why would a person be in at eight o'clock when they can come in at twenty past eight?*

**I:** That's performance as well, turning up in time for duty is performance.

**R1:** *Not alone turning up for duty, being ready for duty at the appointed time. You have people coming in for 2 o'clock who are just coming in the door when in actual fact they should be ready to go out the door at 2 o'clock.*

**I:** *Those kinds of minor hygiene problems of people turning up late for work, not being ready at the appointed time, how are you managing that? What challenges do you have in managing that?*

**R1:** *The challenge we have is two – no. 1 make them aware that this necessity, this is a part of our work. It's like reading the paper in the control room and all these places. This is a workplace not a reading newspaper place. Then we have Sergeants who are young who are dealing with Members who have probably twice their service and there are difficulties there if they don't change to become the Sergeant. On top of that if you have a Sergeant that is doing their job and the Superintendent doesn't support them, when the Guards go complaining then you have an actual gap in the system. But the gap in the system is suiting the non performer.*

**I:** *It's suiting the non performer you think?*

**R1:** *Yes, what we need to do collectively is support the Sergeants and make sure they are doing their work and ensure that they are praised. That is another issue. You don't necessarily have to give a person a commendation or a gold medal every time he does something good. What you are expected to do is to reward them by saying well done. And we are very slow to do it, we see files there every day and we see great work done and you see on them "however, the Member should do this or that" instead of saying this was excellent work by all concerned. It's all down to getting people to take ownership of their own responsibilities. Irrespective of – if you have a Sergeant for example and they are tough on staff the very minute the Sergeant is gone on a days leave or gone on other duties the thing falls down and that's not a good balance that you must have a Sergeant there, they should be willing to operate without the Sergeant.*

**I:** *Why do you think that is?*

**R1:** *First of all you see if you take our Garda people coming from the College at the present time. Every one of them wants to be accommodated near home. I begin to wonder is it the Garda Síochána they are joining or is it a job near home they are joining. If you have a situation in a provincial town where people are not going to be living in that town you are going to have a problem straight away. These people are not taking ownership of the job, you can't take ownership of a job and be living at home in a job like the Guards because it is whether we like it or not it's more than a job, it's a vocation. So if you take people who are here from two to ten and they are gone at ten. Their inter connecting skills with the stakeholder are nil, not only that but even with their other Units in the Station, they are not even meeting other Units, socially or informally or anything. Now if they were I feel living in a town they have to take*

*ownership of their policing needs for the simple reason they will be categorised as being one of their own and if you don't have ownership of your own job in your own place why would you really be too concerned, because if you are living in a place a distance from where you are stationed, you are gone at ten o'clock, do you really care what happens when you go out the door. You take our young people and they are insistent on living forty or fifty miles away. What are we doing about it as an Organisation? We are accommodating it. If people are sent further away where they can't travel there is a transfer application in before they come out of the College almost and before we know where we are we have appointed them to within forty miles of their home place. And now they are living at home.*

**I:** I'm not in operations at the moment, is this bad around the Division?

**R1:** *The majority of people in every big town, over fifty percent of them are travelling over a distance of one hour, two hours a day to work, one before and one after.*

**I:** I didn't realise that.

**R1:** *That is causing major, major problems. Not only for us as Superintendents but as Sergeants who are trying to keep the whole show on the road, it's impossible. Because if you need a person to work overtime for you, they are not going to come forty miles to get three hours overtime. The thing is like the vocation is totally gone, we have become a very selfish imprison type Organisation.*

**I:** When you say imprison, what do you mean?

**R1:** *In the sense that we are only thinking about ourselves and our focus is, we have a job for life irrespective of what happens we are going to be extremely unfortunate if we are dismissed out of an Organisation such as the Guards. We don't have to do anything but what we have to do is nothing well. For example I got advice from the Sergeant when I joined the job and he said "the most important thing I will tell you in the job, when I was active the same as you were in relation to policing", he said "you would be better off doing nothing and do it well".*

**I:** How long ago is that?

**R1:** *1979, I was a year in the Service at that time.*

**I:** You joined in 1978

**R1:** *I joined in January 1978.*

**I:** That's what he said to you then.

**R1:** *Ya, he said "do nothing and do it well".*

I: That's thirty-one years ago. Do you think anything has changed?

R1: *Nothing has changed much except that nobody has expressed it as deliberate as that. But this was a Sergeant who was telling a recruit Guard as I was at the time how I should go through my service in this Organisation.*

I: He was senior at the time, was he?

R1: *He was a very senior Sergeant.*

I: So he would have joined twenty years earlier.

R1: *Starting off in life and being told that if you weren't a waster you'd get into trouble, a person would fall under that. The other thing in relation to our performance and performance management. We have far too many types of Leave. We have Maternity Leave, we have Parental Leave, we have Force Majeure Leave, which I call miracle leave. Then on top of that they have this Term Time and when they apply for it and we refuse it due to the exigencies of the Service, for example we have people applying for it now who are going to be refused in this District. Because it's in the middle of the summer all this Term Time leave and at a time when everybody needs to be accommodated with some kind of holiday leave. Now these people are extremely selfish. But when they are refused they appeal it up the line and they are granted it.*

I: Granted it from where?

R1: *HRM, unless you can show a very stern case they will give them the leave.*

I: How does that effect you then, you are an operational Superintendent and you have all these types of leave to deal with.

R1: *Well you take it on a Unit where you have one person on Term Time leave it deprives that Unit of their allocation of leave in the Summer because unfortunately some people have to come to work, while it seems to be okay for other people not to come at all.*

I: You are trying to deliver a twenty-four hour service.

R1: *And the other thing about it is you take Maternity Leave and all of that. In our Organisation there is no replacement. If you have it in Civilian Land, civilian employees you will get replacements. I am not too sure if you will get them now. They were FAS driven before that but there is no way you can replace a Guard with a Guard because you just don't have them and you cant just bring somebody in off the street and say well you will replace the Guard here. So that is causing major moral problems for people who are on Units.*

I: And for people who are probably good performers. It is not a pretty

picture you are painting.

**R1:** *We have to get back to basics.*

**I:** When you say that what do you mean.

**R1:** *The basics are that everybody has responsibility to a job and to be held accountable and by that I mean that there has to be returns made on people. How we draft up that to measure it is a different thing. There is no problem drafting it up and measuring it, it's just that by the time you have it measured up and all you will get no support from Management.*

**I:** Do you really think that is the nub of the problem?

**R1:** *It is because if you take the Performance Management Review, there was aches and pains in it but it wasn't as bad as all that. The reality is the Associations wiped the floor with Senior Management and got rid of it.*

**I:** Was that piloted or what did they do with it?

**R1:** *It came in my time here about 1986 or '87. The idea was you called in each one of your staff; you agreed certain things with them and scheduled a meeting to review it. Before the next meeting was on; PDMR was gone out the door. There was pains and aches with it, you were talking about putting people in a position for three years and if you put a person down as a divisional clerk or Sergeant in charge and they weren't promoted they automatically went on to Unit Sergeant status because somebody else got into their shoes. That was a morale problem for the person who was holding the position but there was no guarantee that they would be promoted that time, but for example the Sergeant here could find himself as a Sergeant in a smaller station. The Sergeant from the small station could find him based here, and him living outside in the official accommodation of the small station. And all because he could only occupy the Sergeant in charge position of that area only for that limited period of time.*

**I:** So it got into a bottleneck before it took off.

**R1:** *It did, and I am not too sure how well it was thought out because Human Resources should not have had an issue with it. What they should have done was measure people for what they worth and promote people for what they are capable of*

**I:** Have you seen, in that thirty-one years have you seen us measuring people, measuring individuals at all?

**R1:** *No, we are not measuring individuals. The only hope you have that an individual is measured as is at a very local level. If I ask for the Sergeant to tell me how John or James is getting on, they don't have to tell me. The Organisation has told me they are not entitled to that. What*

*are we not entitled to or what are we entitled to as Superintendents in the Organisation. I will be held accountable for everything that happens in the District. However, when I try to float that accountability across and look for a measured response, I can't even look to see if it's there.*

**I:** You know the new Section 39 of the Garda Siochana Act where you can ask people to account, is that any help to you.

**R1:** *You can ask people to account but if you ask people to account for what they are doing, that's very micro, because in an ideal life what about all the other issues that collectively make up a Guard.*

**I:** Or collectively make a good tour of duty over an eight hour period.

**R1:** *You run that over a period of a Roster which is twenty tours of duty when you look at it in the macro end of it what are you really getting.*

**I:** You can't be asking everyone to account for every minute of every day anyhow.

**R1:** *Exactly, because if you start doing that you become micro yourself and before you know where you are you are going you get totally bogged down and you will never be in a position to empower anybody to do anything. As a Chief I knew once said; there are two people in the job I don't like, people who will only do what they are asked to do and the people who won't do what they are asked to do. Really what he meant was that the first people will only do what they are asked to do, they won't go beyond that. And the other fellow of course will do nothing. That's okay you can deal with him. The reality is when you want a person to do more than you think they should be doing there shouldn't be confines on that person. In other words that person should be empowered enough to say "look at I am old enough here I am a Guard I should be able to get out of the car and do a checkpoint without being told on a duty sheet it has to be done".*

**I:** Do you feel you have to tell the Guard? I never felt that I had to be told when I was on the ground.

**R1:** *The reason you didn't feel that way was because you didn't have to be told or I didn't have to be told, but you know people in Stations who will only do what is written on the duty sheet. Or might even have difficulty in doing what is on the duty sheet. But you hopped out of your car and you stopped four cars or you stopped twenty cars and maybe the sun was shining again and you hopped out and done another ten cars but that's the empowerment of people. I firmly believe that either people have it or not. Another issue we have today is people who are failing in relation to their Phases on their training. They are failing their Dissertation twice which was an out. Never happened! Now what we have facing the Organisation today is people who are in that category who are outside in Districts and are causing mayhem and are extremely useless people in relation to where policing is concerned and we are doing everything*

*possible under Regulation 16 and the whole lot to hold onto these people instead of saying "look you are not suitable". We have situations where on the other hand you have people who are failing Dissertations and are excellent workers outside and a case may be made to hold onto them. But why are we making a case for a person who has double failed their Dissertation which is a mandatory to go forward, why are we just not getting rid of them there and then. We often talked about where we would have a difficult person and we would comment on how they got through their probation. They got through their probation because either people ignored it or people would not allow other people to get rid of them. Why are we in the Organisation keeping people who are not qualified or are not qualifying themselves within the mandatory required?*

**I:** Because you know, if they are not fit to do their Dissertations will they be fit for anything?

**R1:** *If you had a person and they were training to be an Electrician and after year three they failed, they might get an opportunity, they just may get an opportunity to repeat their phase, I am not saying they will but they might. Certainly would not be going onto Phase four unless they had Phase three completed. So why are we in the opposition now, do we think that we are an Organisation who have to be so humble to people and so accommodating that we are going to hold onto everybody. Those same people will be saying to us in two or three years time "what are ye doing about these people".*

**I:** Have you had a few of those and how are they performing for you, how are you managing them.

**R1:** *One of them who has failed twice is an excellent member and doing great work. The other person has no intention of fulfilling the obligation of the Gardai and as recent as this week I called her in again and the reality is she is living fifty miles away. I said to her look why aren't you living in a local place. She said "oh I am I am living locally staying with friends who have given me the box room". I said how often are you occupying that bed. She said on the changeovers. I said you are accommodating yourself you are not accommodating your position. If you are finished at six o'clock in the morning and back on at two the same day you are just using that facility for that. I said you are not using it in the interest of the Organisation. I asked why she was going home and could she not see a need in the position she was in now, that her job was on the line. The reply was "well I can more or less live where I want". So it tells you something that even people who are in difficulty within the Organisation aren't prepared to go with the Organisation and try and sell themselves, even in probation to try and get them out of a rut. But they are getting extensions and extensions.*

**I:** How do you manage them then?

**R1:** *Would you hold onto a plumber who wasn't qualified or would you hold*

*onto a haulage driver who is not competent to drive a truck.*

**I:** Do you feel we are holding onto poor performing Guards?

**R1:** *We are holding onto people first of all who have major discipline issues, we are holding onto those people and we are holding onto Probationers that we don't seem to know what to do with.*

**I:** You obviously have a couple of those with you.

**R1:** *I was promoted in 2003 and over that time there would have been ifs and buts about people.*

**I:** How are you managing them, what support are you getting in the Organisation?

**R1:** *The only Management of them is through the Sergeant on the Unit and then if the Sergeant on the Unit tries to help them out there is an issue that they are being bullied or harassed in the workplace. And then the Sergeant pulls back because that Sergeant does not want to become an issue. Then everybody becomes an issue except the person who should be an issue. So what they are very good at is shifting the responsibility and blame as to what Management are or are not doing for them. But at the same time they have no intention to improve their own performance to meet the needs.*

**I:** You say there they have no intention of improving their own performance, when you see that have you any mechanism to make them improve?

**R1:** *You take that lady with a drink driving file, twenty-two reminders on the file.*

**I:** Twenty two reminders?

**R1:** *Verbally and written and we have sent that up as part of our justification that this person is not suitable for retention in the Garda Síochána. Within four days her extension was up and we got down a service notice, please have this served on the Member – extending her probation again.*

**I:** Are you saying really that you are not getting any support?

**R1:** *There is only support for one person, that's the person who is the crisis but they don't see it that way, or neither does the applicant.*

**I:** When you say they don't see it that way, who is it?

**R1:** *HRM.*

**I:** So the poor performer that you have that you say that's in crisis, who's not performing, that is holding on to files with twenty-two reminders on



them, you are recommending that they not be retained in the Organisation or not retained in your District and they are being supported and you are not.

**R1:** *Not alone do I recommend that they not be retained but I think it's an injustice holding onto them because they are always going to be problems. If they are in problems as probationers where they are being watched very closely what are they going to be like when they are out of probation. Not alone that what are the other people on the Unit thinking about all of this.*

**I:** That is my contention all the time and I don't want to influence you but I have always been this way, what are we doing for the good performer?

**R1:** *How can we accommodate the good performer and say well done, and we have a person who is not doing anything. They are doing a job well done according to them and they are getting away.*

**I:** How do you feel you manage the good performer?

**R1:** *The good performer, what I can do is when vacancies come up I can encourage them to go for them. When transfers come up I can recommend them highly for them. When an opportunity comes up for overtime or special duties you can look after them. When an opportunity comes up for local events you can give them suitable locations. And you can write on files "well done, this was a good job, good presented file, good investigation".*

**I:** That is you that are personally doing. Have we anything in the Organisation that recognises that for them.

**R1:** *No, you have the EPW I's but everything is not worthy of an EPW I. How a person deals with a domestic, how a person goes out and deals with a fatal accident, how people communicate bad news, they are not worthy of the EPW I's.*

**I:** Or how they turn up in time for work.

**R1:** *How they turn out, how they connect with people, how they empathise with people, they are not really EPW I's but they are worthy of accreditation of some sort.*

**I:** Do you feel that we are accrediting that?

**R1:** *No, because we are not good at praising people and it goes back to what I said about the Code, it is written in a negative by people within the Organisation but in actual fact we have become negative people and the reason is that sometimes when we don't want to be negative it goes up along and we are defeated by people in HRM or whatever the case may be and then you say "sure why bother the next time". Especially if you are putting a lot of effort into people and then you find well what are we*

*getting out of this, you are looking for anything personal out of it but you are looking for people to be acknowledged. So the same thing with drink driving, you go to Court, a person makes a fatal flaw in presenting the case in the Court or whatever and we don't get a conviction; what do we end up doing, trying to discipline these people instead of saying, "look only for you that person would have been driving continuously on the road that night and may have killed somebody, you had a quality intervention, you brought somebody in, you made a mistake, look you made a mistake but for the next time just think". That person will not make the same mistake.*

**I:** There you have it, you have a middle line there you have a good person who goes out and arrests their drunk driver, goes to Court and makes a mistake in their evidence and next thing the Organisation wants to discipline them.

**R1:** *Here we are condemning these people and sending out notices as to why they didn't attend Court instead of calling them up and having a chat with them, finding out what happened first of all before we start condemning at all and then say "look it can happen to anyone, however it is important with quality cases; and you have done great quality work up until now but it is important that we turn up in Court". The reality is a person who is doing their work we should not be trying to prevent them doing their work. It goes back to what the Sergeant said "do nothing and do it well" you will never get into trouble.*

**I:** Do nothing and do it well and you will never get into trouble – Thirty one years later it hasn't changed.

**R1:** *I have people here from 1996 and they have never got up off their backsides and are the best financially rewarded in the Organisation.*

**I:** If you were Commissioner in the morning how would you change it?

**R1:** *I think that you have to call in the Associations and say there is a crisis here; we have responsibility under the Garda Siochana Act to be accountable that doesn't just extend to Management, it extends to everybody in the Organisation and we are going to have a performance measurement capability and we are going to be driving on with it. You will be sitting around the table with us but there will be an agreement that there will be a performance management framework at the end of it not only collectively but individually.*

**I:** Do you think it is a crisis?

**R1:** *Oh it is yes.*

**I:** If that's not done where do you see it going in a few years.

**R1:** *I think what you are going to have is as a result of what is happening now due to the present financial climate and what's being heaped down*

*on particular individuals who are held individually responsible be it the Sergeant or the Superintendent you will have a massive exodus in a very small number of years and you will be left with very young people to try and cater for this Organisation.*

**I:** We are starting to see a huge exodus already.

**R1:** *Yes and if you were honest and meet those people who are good workers they would say to you one of those things that really annoyed them was people who were beside them and getting the same money and not being held accountable because if people are held accountable they won't be running to the Sergeant and Superintendent and saying oh that's great you are doing a great job but silently they are saying to themselves that's great now these people are being held accountable now. They won't go around shouting about it.*

**I:** That's the good performer.

**R1:** *The best people, who know what is going on in the Organisation are the people who are serving side by side with them. When we meet these people they will all be great at talking to justify what they are doing but you put the person who is working side by side with them if they are coming forward and going to tell you honestly they will tell you very fast who is doing the work.*

**I:** What is the percentage of poor performers, could you estimate?

**R1:** *I would say it would probably in and around the thirty percent. So if you take a Unit of six there would be two people you wouldn't be very anxiously looking for a terrific response.*

**I:** That puts a huge burden on the others if you have a Unit of say seven and you have two that are not performing.

**R1:** *But if you touch them as a Manager in relation to their entitlements they will be at your door.*

**I:** That whole thing you are after touching on another area, entitlements.

**R1:** *You even frown or even think about taking away any entitlements even though you didn't intend it, by the time you are in your office they are there waiting for you making a demand for their entitlements and their rights and their privileges. It's a bit like when you change people's duties or rosters to accommodate the service the first thing they say to you is my flexibility is gone out the door. The flexibility who did it favour in ninety percent of the cases.*

**I:** Who do you think it favoured?

**R1:** *The person themselves, not the Organisation. When I was in another Station we had two Detectives and no roster. I said to the Superintendent*

*there these people are going to be rostered and I was told by the Superintendent well now at the same time I will want them there. I said they are not there they are only there when it suits them to be there. I brought in a roster and we never had to look beyond the roster and if they were looked for beyond the roster they got overtime. The reality is these members should be there at eight o'clock in the morning, not when it suits them to get up or maybe six o'clock if they want to be finished early so you are better off to have a very concise way of dealing with people in every way of timing or duties and this flexibility generally speaking it only works on one avenue and that is towards the person who is looking for it.*

**I:** How do you find good performers when you try to do something like that with them?

**R1:** *Good performers generally speaking if you speak to them on a one to one or a one to team basis and you tease it out with them and you say look this is why we are doing this, its not good enough to write to members and say we are doing this you need to explain fully why this is necessary. For example we have a national Community Policing model and I see a great need to have the two area administrators in my area, but we are losing a Sergeant and two Guards to a new division being set up. If I want any kind of a model outside of my District Headquarters I need eight people and a Sergeant. I think the way you sell things is you must sell things on the basis that you are not getting at people, you must sell it on the needs of the Organisation and the objective must be that the Organisation will be a better Organisation as a result of it. That you are not out to punish people, its all about rewarding the Organisation first and building whatever you have to do to do that.*

**I:** The way we measure our outputs, you started out by saying the Policing Plan and that ten percent here and there; do you think it is adequate the way we are measuring that?

**R1:** *Policing is not an exact science and because of that it is not as measurable as a production machine, for example if you decided that you want to produce one hundred crates of butter today and you only do ninety tomorrow somebody is going to ask the question well what went wrong with the machinery here, what went wrong with the staff. It is not as ideal as that, it is inexact. I think there are ways of measuring how effective people are, if you have a person in a country area the first measurement that I have of measuring if that person is effective is no complaints, if I have complaints it is because the Guard is missing or absent. If the public have trust and confidence in that person they'll go to them with their problems, if they don't have they are going to be ringing you or me. So that is the community person. Then if you look at the town end of things it is a totally different type of policing. People are out and about and there are estates and the whole lot. If the estates are going to be patrolled and patrolled properly then whoever is patrolling those areas should know every Tom, Dick and Harry in them. If you have that and you have a crisis tomorrow morning, they are not coming*

to you with a problem, they are coming to you with the same problem but the reality is you have made this connection with them that they are entrusted to answer the needs rather than having a reaction with going out and they not really knowing well what sort of a person is that, can we trust that person to tell them a, b and c. So it's all a matter of developing a very good response with our people and connecting well with them. And as they do they will trust you for it and they will discuss it with you and they may break your heart coming in on top of you day and night but at the same time we are an Organisation and our main focus is people. We are totally Human Resourced inside and outside. We don't need that much machinery to do the job we have. We have physical resources alright, vehicles to get us there. What you are talking about is face to face communication or face to face lack of communication and when a problem arises in an area that is not the time to be calling the Guards because you are at nothing if you haven't built a trust inside in that community; and that is where this National model is coming from. It will have its aches and pains but the reality is it is up to every District to adjust it to suit them.

**I:** Any other observations on performance?

**R1:** *We are talking since the time of 1922 of being out in the Community, high visibility patrol, out of cars and all of that. What has changed, it is a complete continual drive to get people out of cars, to get them to walk the beat, to get them to talk to people. The reality is it should be the simplest thing and as you know it is the nicest duty of all. You are up there meeting people what could be a better day's work.*

**I:** Really what you are saying is that the function of policing hasn't changed in eighty or ninety years, the basic bottom line foundation.

**R1:** *We should have our people out walking and talking and if we had we would not half the complaints we have because we are not meaningful in relation to our connection with people.*

**I:** How would you achieve that?

**R1:** *I think it has to be down to training and maybe to be more selective about that. Whether we like it or not the police is politicised in the sense that we are totally told you are going to get three hundred Guards or three thousand this year and what happens is then in some years you are overly staffed and under developed because we are not able to cater for massive numbers in the way we would like to. If you talk to any Superintendent they will tell you that with the increase in recruiting we ended up with people that were not suitable. The other thing is maybe the constitution of our interview boards will have to be looked at again. We have no Garda person on our recruitment board except a retired person.*

**I:** So our selection procedures, you would improve those?

**R1:** *Perhaps think about them and I suppose even going back further than that in relation to Secondary and Primary education. Are we educating people for life or are we educating people for points. If we are educating people for points that is one thing, it is a very clinical way of educating people but if you are educating people for life you will end up with a better candidate.*

**I:** And if we did get the selection right, performance and managing it?

**R1:** *If you get the selection right you still have to deal with the people who are already selected, who are in the system. When you have Mothers and Fathers coming in complaining of the attitude of the Guards what does that do for you. It frightens us because we associate ourselves, how could this happen in what we call a professional Organisation because we are always talking about how professional we are; but how professional are we? If you have people going out and they are issuing tickets or whatever they are doing and they do it in a very non professional way, that ticket is a waste. We still can do the very same thing and do it with a smile on our face.*

**I:** Is what you are really saying that it's not what we do its how we do it?

**R1:** *People are very fast to speak up at how we are doing our business, if you have a person out reacting to a fire and all he is interested in is pointing to the three stripes on his shoulder, what does that tell you about the Organisation. We have become a power based Organisation and we want to be very careful because if we alienate ourselves much more from the public we are going to be in crisis because that is what happened in the North of Ireland and it didn't take too long to do that.*

**I:** So what you are really saying is we are heading towards power rather than service.

**R1:** *In the way we do our business. If a person is stopped for speeding and it is bad enough for them as they are going to get two points but if it is explained to them for example that nineteen people have died on secondary roads in the past year and wouldn't it be unfortunate that as a result of speeding that you became that statistic. I don't think they would have any great difficulty in taking the fine on the spot. But if you say to them "for Jesus sake what are you at". The wife and children are in the car. You really embarrass the father. We are not a talking down shop, we should be level with people and say the reason we are doing this is because of a, b and c. But it's all down to good communication skills.*

**I:** If you were to identify three things to improve our performance, including in your District, what would they be?

**R1:** *I would say: live in your Community; be more effective in your communication; and gain the trust of the people.*

**I:** The three of them go hand in hand really don't they?

**R1:** *Yes.*

# **Appendix E**

## **Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 2.**



## Transcript of Interview with Respondent No 2.

I: This is basically a conversation with you about your views on performance management in the organisation generally, how you manage it in your District, the challenges it presents to you, and any other observations you have on it.

R2: *Fine.*

I: To begin with, what service do you have now?

R2: *I joined in October 1975.*

I: Thirty four years service.

R2: *Thirty four years yes.*

I: Did you spend most of it in this Division.

R2: *Mainly yes, I gave nine years as a Guard, fifteen years as a Sergeant and four as an Inspector and now a Superintendent I am in my third year. I started off in a different Division, and having moved to this Division, served at a number of stations in it over the years. I gave ten years as Sergeant in charge. Eventually I went to Dublin when I was promoted to Inspector. I did well in Dublin, it opened up a whole new world to me. Back to an adjoining Division then and from there back to this Division, where I'm still serving.*

I: What do you think of performance in the Organisation and how we are managing it?

R2: *It is not structured and it is not managed but I think there is some structure coming into it that wasn't there before, with the review of performance indicators in the Policing Plan. Pulse is a measure but it's not really a true measure of everything that is done but if people record everything on Pulse that they are doing, it is some measure.*

I: In relation to our annual Policing Plan, do you know when it comes out every year, with our performance indicators, what is your view on that? When it says we have to reduce road deaths by five percent, for example.

R2: *That's a measure of the District, the District is the smallest Unit on the Policing Plan so you don't go into what is in Sub-Districts or Stations or what members are doing. The measurement there stops at the District and at the Superintendent.*

I: That is precisely why I am interviewing Superintendents about it. How do you feel about that as a measurement; do you feel it is valid or good enough?

**R2:** *Well it is good to measure for the District and the Divisions and Regions but it doesn't measure what is going on in small stations within Districts.*

**I:** And it doesn't measure the individual?

**R2:** *Definitely does not measure the individual. You will have some very high performers and they cover for the lesser performer and it is all rolled into the District performance.*

**I:** How do you feel about that as a Superintendent here in this District?

**R2:** *Managing people takes up an awful lot of time, managing their absence and their sickness. There is an awful amount of work involved if you are to do it in accordance with the Code. Even visiting members on sick leave, meeting them when they return off sick leave, its all time consuming.*

**I:** Do you think it is adequate what we are doing, do you think the systems that we are using to manage their performance, say right across the board from good performers to bad performers is adequate. How do you do it in your own District?

**R2:** *If a person is not performing really there is no sanction that you can impose on them. People that are performing; you reward them, put them in Drugs Unit or in the Detective Unit get them car courses and most members aspire to that and they try to get on the rungs and if you can encourage them to do the promotion exams and try and get them promoted. Let them see that by good work they will be rewarded. But the member that really wants to operate with a low performance there really is not a lot you can do with them.*

**I:** That seems to be coming through from everyone and that is as long as you and I are in the Guards isn't it. Do you see it changing at all over that period of time?

**R2:** *No it really hasn't changed much and until there is some kind of performance appraisal for the individual I don't think it will change.*

**I:** Are you and your Sergeants able to manage them here?

**R2:** *Here we have a lot of Probationers and from the time that they come here they are being monitored and their work is being measured and they are conscious of that and that tends to continue when they go out of probation but for the seasoned campaigners it is hard to deal with them.*

**I:** Do you have examples of any of them you are trying to deal with? Do you feel you are getting any support or how does the issue of AGSI and the GRA affect it?

**R2:** *AGSI and the GRA; they don't want performance appraisals on individual. That is agreed that there won't be performance appraisal. What I find with AGSI or the GRA; I really don't deal with them unless there is a complaint about the way I deal with things or the way I haven't dealt with something. More so than coming with something positive. I find their input negative more so than positive and it comes in the form or a complaint. I had a problem here with sickness of individuals and at one stage; I had eight on long term sickness and that was out of a District Staff of forty. I found that the GRA complained about what I did or what I didn't do more so than something about getting them back to work.*

**I:** So no help at all?

**R2:** No.

**I:** Going on to the fellow that is at work and that is not performing, what are the challenges in it; what is the biggest challenge you find with it?

**R2:** *Well if you can try and get an outlet for them. I have one member here and he certainly does not perform well but I put him into Community Policing and he has no problem going out and walking around estates and walking around the town and talking to people. That is a good service to the people if there are complaints he will come back and relate them onto other members for intelligence. The thing is we are all not the same and you have some very enthusiastic people and they never stop working and when you combine the whole thing the good with the bad, you get a good finish. Maybe that is a good reason for having a District performance rather than an individual performance. If a member doesn't want to perform it is hard enough to get them to. But another thing is there is so much left to the discretion of the member when he is out on duty; he can deal with a thing in so many ways and deal with it by caution or a warning. Not saying that you would want to measure their performance on prosecutions. But really what it comes down to is Sergeants and supervising a situation where the members are briefed when they are going on duty and they are told you do this, this and this and when they come in at their break have you done this, can I see the result. Just say someone is detailed for files for the day; really the Sergeant should look for the files at the end of the day, can I have the files. If the member is eight hours on files there should be something to show.*

**I:** Do you find that they are doing that?

**R2:** *Again it is a matter for the Sergeants. I watch the duty sheet to see who is on files and I raise it at the meetings in the mornings, what did you get at the end of the day? Really the daily meeting is a good way of me communicating with the Sergeants and finding out what is going on.*

**I:** Within that meeting do you find that you are the one having to drive it all

of the time?

**R2:** *I have some excellent Sergeants, you will have Sergeants that are good at one thing and not good at other things. The Sergeant needs to be the Sergeant and keep the members in no doubt about that. He or she doesn't need to be heavy handed but just let everyone know and be assertive about it. Then another thing is if you were working in a factory environment, bank or office you know the Manager is there and people are constantly being supervised or there is some level of Management there, whereas in the Guards operatives seem to be allowed to work unsupervised. I have a situation here on days where there would be no Sergeant working, or no Sergeant working in the morning or no Sergeant working in the evening or at night and you have Guards out working unsupervised and I think that is not good I think you need constant supervision. The budget constraints don't allow that.*

**I:** It happens from people taking leave possibly and going on courses?

**R2:** *With a District like here you won't have Sergeants working around the clock. You will have a Sergeant somewhere in the District but you won't have one in every town and village.*

**I:** What you are saying is you won't have a Sergeant with all of the people that are out all of the time. Do you think that causes problems?

**R2:** *It does cause problems; I think the members prefer to have a Sergeant. It is security if they come up against a problem, they can run it past the Sergeant and I think for ourselves and for our Corporate image it is good for us to have a Sergeant. If I know there is a Sergeant working I am confident that things will be dealt with and that I will be notified and it will be brought to my attention if it needs to be brought to my attention. I will get the phone call whereas if you don't have a Sergeant working the Guards may not ring anyone and you find you have a problem and you are mopping up then and that all takes time.*

**I:** If you were Commissioner in the morning how would you improve performance? What would you like to see for you as the District Manager?

**R2:** *I suppose the best thing would be if everyone knew exactly what they had to do and when they do it; but the nature of our job is that it doesn't work like that, you can go out and be very proactive and do an awful lot and you can go out and you need not do anything at all or if there is not much happening around you won't have much to show where as if there is something you deal with that and some will respond more so than being proactive.*

**I:** So they are reactive rather than proactive?

**R2:** *Yes. It is difficult to have a system of appraisal for the Guards. It was*

*tried with the PD&R but again it was resisted by the Associations and there was never anything done but I would say if we had stuck with it we might have some better appraisal system at this stage. Appraisal as well as performance you need to have both. Make sure they are sticking with it. I had a Sergeant that came down from Dublin and he brought excellent ideas with him. He monitors the members very closely and what they are doing and what they are not doing and with the Sergeants that we have here we don't have enough to work around the clock. While again it is not heavy handed but he will work night duty and he is here at six in the morning he is meeting both Units.*

**I:** He has the commitment you see.

**R2:** *Absolutely he comes in at any stage and he has no need to tell the lads what he is doing.*

**I:** What is it about a Sergeant that makes them a good Sergeant?

**R2:** *Commitment; it was always commitment, totally commitment and they minded the Station like they minded a house, or their parish; it was their District and they did not want anything going on in their District and not be aware of it.*

**I:** That is a good word – “their Parish”.

**R2:** *Yes, like a vocation for them.*

**I:** Do you think that Sergeant you have down from Dublin, does he have that quality.

**R2:** *Yes, they will ring him at home if they have a problem. If he is not working and his Unit is, they will still ring him at home and get his advice.*

**I:** I remember Sergeants and they were never off duty, you never knew when they were going to come in or not, you never knew when they were off. If it was a Court case or a community meeting or a Coroners Court the boys were around, is it really that bit of a throw back to the old Garda is never off duty that you need Sergeant's like that?

**R2:** *You do yes, you need total commitment from the Sergeants.*

**I:** So really leadership is what you are talking about.

**R2:** *Leadership, yes definitely.*

**I:** What about the younger people how are you finding them as a group the last figure I heard was forty-two or three percent of people have less than 5 years service.

**R2:** *They are very enthusiastic and what you need there then is the Sergeant leading and supporting them.*

**I:** Are you finding them committed?

**R2:** *They have a very high level of commitment, most of them, any we have here we have no problems with them and any of them that are falling short of the mark it is not lack of commitment; it is nervousness or fear.*

**I:** Supposing we had a structured performance system where a Guard had to come in and do x, y and z and a, b and c. Supposing we had that for everyone and you were sitting down measuring them and ticking a box would that be a better system than not having a structured system and having a good Sergeant with them. Which is the best system?

**R2:** *Well I suppose people need to be individuals as well and deal with things the way they deal with them. A lot of stuff we deal with is not to do with Law enforcement at all and then one member can go and settle a situation and another member can go to the same situation and ignite it. We have a lot of hype about major events and we put a lot of planning into it. But if you have a first Communion day or a Confirmation day in a small community, that is a big event out there and really there should be a Guard out there just to be there meeting the people and supporting them. It was always done in my time if you were on the beats in the morning you went up to the Church and if there was a funeral on you stood around and when the hearse was moving off you held the traffic and waved it out but you don't see that at all now. People acknowledged that.*

**I:** Really what you are saying is the Guard themselves should do it.

**R2:** *Yes it comes down to the individual absolutely. You would be on in the morning at six and you would drive around to the funeral home and see if there was a death but I don't think you have that now in the younger Guards, they are not curious about things like that?*

**I:** Why do you think that is?

**R2:** *I don't know we are definitely living in a different era. When we were reared there was more emphasis on people dying and going to a funeral. Now if you go to a funeral you just go and pay your respects and you don't even go to the church or mass. You just do it out of duty. Society is changing.*

**I:** What you are saying really about the Good Guard, really are we wrong in trying to compare Guards to other people at the first operation level in any other employment?

**R2:** *And then you can't compare the Guard in a village to the Guard in a large town or the Guard in city station. Different scene; different Guard.*

*The Guard in the village has to be part of the community.*

**I:** He is the local Sheriff and that is it.

**R2:** *If he doesn't put down wrongdoing when it happens he won't be thanked either; they have to deal with the wrongdoers as well. You lose a lot of face by not dealing with things or ignoring wrongdoing or breaches of the Law.*

**I:** Are you happy enough so with performance in the District?

**R2:** *Well the District is going well and now that we have the members back from long term sick leave that is a huge relief. Time is a big thing; personally I spend a lot of time in Court. Court is a huge thing and it is difficult to manage a District and be in Court. If you are in Court you leave in the morning at half nine and may not be back in the evening until half six. It is the whole day gone and not contactable either. When you are in Court you can not answer the phone. The entire night before is spent reading files and actually I think it is something that could be done by Sergeants because in Dublin they have the Court presenters and a lot of what we are doing is the same as what the Court presenters are doing because if you are looking for adjournments etc. but if there are cases contested by all means get them into a day and have an Inspector or Superintendent or the State Solicitor. I don't see what the State Solicitor could not come down from Dublin.*

## **Appendix F**

### **Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 3.**



### Transcript of Interview with Respondent No 3.

**I:** So basically I want to have a general conversation with you in relation to the whole area of performance in the organisation.

**R3:** *I think that the problem with the Garda at the moment is that you are not allowed use the word performance. Okay Superintendents and Chief's may use the word performance at review meetings in relation to performance indicators in the Policing Plan, but if you are talking to a Guard a Sergeant or an Inspector you can not use the word performance and that is part of the culture of the job and it has been fostered by the Associations in order to cover for the person, in my view the person who is not doing a tap, and they are covering this because you cant talk about individual performance. Whereas in the Policing Plans there is District performance.*

**I:** It doesn't go below the District?

**R3:** *Well you can talk about Unit performance to a certain degree but basically if you have a slacker on a Unit and you have ten fellows on a Unit and two or three doing nothing and the other seven or eight doing all the work you can't call them in over their performance. You can get them for not dealing with an individual file or something like that.*

**I:** What you are trying to do then is get them for neglect of duty?

**R3:** *Something to that effect but you can't call them in regarding their performance or you would put yourself into a certain amount of jeopardy if you did that you know bullying and all this sort of thing.*

**I:** Do you think they are resorting to that, bullying?

**R3:** *Oh they do ya. I had one case where a Sergeant tried to up a guy's performance but he went about it the wrong way and took on an aggressive attitude towards the member and it wasn't good and the member came back with a grievance procedure against him. I was able to talk the thing down and we didn't go down that route but I spoke to the Sergeant and I was able to point out to him how he should deal with the matter more diplomatically sooner than being the bull at the gate thing even though I knew the man was frustrated with the guy that he was trying to deal with.*

**I:** The guy he was trying to deal with was just a poor performer was he?

**R3:** *He was a poor performer but knew the culture and knew that nothing could be done to him.*

**I:** Is that really the reality out there, do you think as a Superintendent that nothing can be done.

**R3:** *Only if you go down the road of discipline and whether it is informal resolution or go to full discipline enquiries you have no other recourse and if you do that then you lose their confidence and then maybe you go along and say well if I have sixty percent of the staff doing a good bit sure maybe I can afford to have the slack at the forty percent. You may go for an easy life as well you know. You could go along and say I'll kick ass but it will get you nowhere. It doesn't really at the end of the day.*

**I:** That is a good valid point that it will get you nowhere.

**R3:** *That's the problem, even if you go down the discipline road all you do is get a disgruntled workforce and I have never seen anyone achieving a whole lot by it. The problem is if we could inculcate a mentality among the workers where they would realise a job has to be done and it is done by a team and everyone on the team has to pull, but the Guards doesn't work like that because the individual works for promotion because he doesn't really care about what the slacker is doing because his goal is to get promoted whether it is a lateral promotion or an upward promotion or even a transfer and he is happy with that and he doesn't really care and some of them are workers and they want to work and they just like doing it. With the slacker he is not challenged, he is not challenged at his own level, he is not challenged at the supervisor level and if management challenges him the management are afraid that they may be seen to be unable to manage if they challenge them because you have to bring in the discipline regulations everything becomes too big. And it becomes that whole discipline thing is mired in paper, procedure and time consuming. Bringing other people in to look at you and no one wants that either.*

**I:** So the next thing you feel you are being investigated?

**R3:** *It's the last card on the road really when you have to bring in the discipline regulations but if there was some kind of a performance management situation like when they were going to bring in the PD&R years ago. Something I didn't mind at the time. I was a Detective Sergeant at the time and I didn't mind whether it came in or not. It was 1994 but other people didn't want it, other Sergeant's didn't want it because they felt they were being put under a microscope as to how they were managing their Units so the whole. We have to get some kind of a performance monitoring situation where maybe we get paid on performance but there is no doubt about it there is no two people on this earth alike in so far as their work rates are going to be the same or whatever so maybe there has to be room for the good worker and the slow worker. The slow worker is performing to the best of his ability and maybe that is acceptable too. There should be some way of monitoring but at the moment there is absolutely nothing. Except the good worker for the most part gets promoted and is recognised by his authorities and they say let him on there and that is the only way you can look after*

them.

I: What service have you.

R3: *Thirty six years.*

I: In all of that and specifically in your time as Inspector and Superintendent what do you think, off the top of your head is the percentage of poor performers in your District.

R3: *I would say you are talking about twenty percent, maybe a little more but twenty percent definitely that do not perform to justify their wages.*

I: That is a good way of putting it, so if we could develop something along the lines of how the civilian one goes. Every year an assessment sheet has to be satisfactorily completed before they get their increments.

R3: *Something like that yes, where we are losing it in the performance area is that we are tolerating it now and we have a training procedure this competency based thing you know and people are passing through the system without, I know we have the interviews and sometimes we go hard on certain people but really most of these youngsters know how to conduct an interview and prepare for the interview but what we need to do is the day the person applies for the Guards and we see the enthusiasm that they have to be police people and then we find that in two years time fifty percent of that enthusiasm is gone – what happens is police culture takes over and this attitude of 'ah don't be doing that because you are only brining notice on the rest of us, you are doing too much there, you are giving out too many tickets, what are you doing that for, Jesus Christ the more you do the more you will be caught for the more you do the more trouble you get into'. That Ombudsman crack if you do something they will get you so do nothing and do it well and that seems to be the culture. And then you have a new Health & Safety culture that your health & safety is number one and your job is number two. That may be right but in my experience I never put myself in jeopardy but then that is what you are paid for to a certain degree in the police. That is what the public expect from you and we are trained. I have youngsters arriving and I said to them have you ever done a checkpoint on your own – No sure Health and Safety wouldn't allow me to do that. Where does that say in Health & Safety regulations that you can't do that. But we were told that in the College not to do a checkpoint on your own.*

I: It never stopped you or I doing it. But you did not do it in an unsuitable area.

R3: *You go up to a housing estate and you do it up there in a nice quiet road, we are not going to ask them to stop them on a motorway. I am not going to ask them to go to a criminal area or a tough area on your own and do it but in a nice rural scene or in a housing estate. Why can't you*

do it. And they would say 'we didn't think of it like that'. So they are being told in the College by some people who have no real experience of the outside world themselves. But definitely this enthusiasm that they have when they join; after two years a lot of it is gone. And I find that a lot of them join the job and they find that it is such a paper based Organisation and they have no interest in it and find it very difficult and they get so fed up in writing, doing their dissertation, doing this that and the other, their training that they just, have a total blank to the paperwork.

**I:** That is something that nobody else has said to me but it is a very good point actually. I have the same problem, they're not finishing PULSE Records and that is what is killing us. It is the same type of process.

**R3:** *You would think that youngsters coming into the job, most of them are very technologically advanced compared to us and that they don't take any of the full advantage of PULSE. They put out a new Portal System on the PULSE machine which is fantastic. I have to personally ask those youngsters have they opened Portal. What do you think of Portal. Their answer is: 'what's the Portal Super?' I had a young fellow come up to my office the other day and he had a problem with something or other, he had some prisoner in. He asked me a legal question. I said why are you asking me. He said you are the Super. I said what about Portal. He said what do you mean the Portal. I said Portal on the PULSE. He did not know anything about it. Oh he says 'I heard about it alright but where I come from I am more used to driving a tractor than driving a computer'. Well of course I used my best English then: 'you are now in the Guards in 2009 that is your lifesaver PULSE Portal, to think that a young member of your service, I cannot believe what I am after hearing coming out of you'. That there tells you everything and you have to move on from digging spuds in Castlecomer to being a policeman and PULSE is the way forward, you have to have it. Go back down and spend ten minutes and ring me up and tell me what you found. Google the Act that you want and press enter and it will come up for you. They won't do it themselves. They won't use their skills or imagination because the older fellows are telling them 'leave that thing aside, bullshit' - a lot of that attitude.*

**I:** Do you remember the attitude that was there ten years ago when Pulse was coming in.

**R3:** *Oh ya, people didn't want it.*

**I:** Does that still prevail, do you think?

**R3:** *We are not using it to its extent that it could be used. Some people are fantastic on it. I am not that literate on it, I use it as I need it but if I was a young person with a receptive mind I would be taking it all in.*

**I:** That Portal that you mentioned, I think it is the best thing that has come

into the Guards. The amount of stuff that is on it all the Law all the HQ Directives and Regulations.

**R3:** *They don't want to use it. I would ring them in the mornings about eight especially if I was going to a meeting and say how are things going and this person would have been Station Orderly from six. They would not have had PULSE open at that stage so they hear the temperature rising and then 'oh yes Super there was one burglary last night' and such and such. I would ask and what is the story with another District and another District and it totally throws them. They never push it out a little bit because they have no interest. They are coming and going now. When I was a young fellow I used to hang around the station when I was off I was always interested in what was going on. They come in now and give eight hours and they are gone.*

**I:** You say they come from a long way away.

**R3:** *Oh ya. I have them commuting from as far away as 60 or 70 miles - how can these people be doing their job. I mean performance; this inhibits performance as well because there is no great interest in the place they are working in, it's only an old job like. Whereas in our day the job was a way of life and it was a vocation to some degree and you would never like to see a gouger getting away. You would always try and catch them but now if it doesn't happen on their shift it doesn't matter. You ask someone there about a crime and they say 'oh so and so is dealing with that' like but surely you should know about it. You should know everything that is going on, you are a detective. If a civilian asked you about something you feel kind of stupid if you didn't know about some serious thing that happened in the town. That is the attitude I get from Sergeants as well to be honest about it.*

**I:** This is the type of stuff that I am looking at because I am hugely interested and I want to stay interested. I was never that way and you were never that way. There are a whole lot of people that we know that were never that way but there seems to be a cohort out there who are and it seems to be when you are trying to manage them at Superintendent level that you really get to see it. Because when you are a Guard or a Sergeant with them you know they are that way but you are not getting their answers that the Super gets.

**R3:** *The big problem is that in order to enhance performance, get performance, I find that I have to level out the Organisation. I have to take over the Sergeants role. I have to be the Superintendent, Manager I also have to be the Supervisor. I got a phone call today from a young one doing a file and I left a message for her to get things done so she rings me back. Her Sergeant should be dealing with that; it is a serious file there is a fellow charged with a serious assault, the file is going to the DPP but she was ringing me. I shouldn't have to speak to her about that file until it is finished. The Sergeant should be picking up on it. I find in order to get the job done I should be closely monitoring the*

*Sergeant but where is that going to get me. The Sergeants will turn against me, they will do nothing to help me and the next thing is the job is not done so it's a totally balancing thing all of the time because we have no performance management. Because I can't say to the Sergeant what is so and so doing on your Unit because the answer I will get is and when I tried it to find out individual returns for Guards even though I could look them up on PULSE but I wanted to make the Sergeant aware that I was interested in what he was doing about the staff under his control; he goes to AGSI and a snotty note comes from AGSI back to me telling me did I not read the HQ Directive instead of telling the Sergeant will you cop yourself on and find out what the Super wants.*

**I:** So you went to a Sergeant to find out what his Guards are doing individually and he went to AGSI and they wrote back to you to tell you?

**R:** *That I wasn't entitled to ask about individual performance about the Guards under his control. Now I was as a Unit, I could find out about them, but in actual fact it was the Sergeant's performance I was interested in because he knew about the people that he had that he was supervising; and how effective he was as supervisor. I got my answer.*

**I:** So, one thing out of that, who is running the job then?

**R:** *That is the problem. You take there is 181 Superintendents I mean they can all talk but how many of them are managing performance in their Districts and Sections. Very little. This new system that we have in place now of daily meetings and weekly meetings is going some way to managing performance of investigations but not individual members. If some incident occurs we need a file on it and I will be able to go back and say I need that file for such a date and that is managing investigations.*

**I:** There is a huge difference there. What is your view on AGSI and the GRA within this whole performance thing?

**R:** *Well I do see that there is a huge need for AGSI and the GRA as part of industrial relations groupings within the job and I do have great faith in the good will of those people however I think that especially the GRA do understand but don't want to take on board what management needs in order to run their Districts and the commitment they need from the members and the job has moved on so far and so fast in the last ten years especially with Donegal and all that, we need to be all rowing at the same time in the boat because if we have slackers or people out of step the boat is not going to achieve anything. But having said that, from a performance point of view the GRA is more protective of the slacker than they are of the worker and they don't really care if you are a worker or a slacker once you are a member of their Organisation. They don't differentiate but I think this goes down further, where you have this tenure policy, and it was a good idea if a person was in a job whether performing or otherwise in that job it didn't really matter like but having*

said that some people were using the jobs for the purpose of being promoted and they were working that extra bit harder. But why I think that failed it never got off the ground I know it was brought in as a great idea by the Commissioner at the time, Management liked it to some degree but the GRA or AGSI didn't like it because they never pushed people out of the jobs. You were a Sergeant in charge or a Detective or a Juvenile Liaison Officer and you were slacking in the job; you had Joe Blogs who was doing his best who could never get off the beat because the Detective jobs were filled up and he never got an opportunity; but the GRA or AGSI never helped him. The Associations should have been pushing that and that would have been a certain amount of performance enhancement in so far as the Associations would have been seen to be pushing people and if you are pushing people and they are moving on and changing and they want to show off they will get recognition. But definitely the Associations they don't do a whole lot, they do little or nothing in my view to enhance performance in the job. I won't say they are negative to that extent but they won't meet about performance. But they you have to look at performance; I had a man retired and he went around the town and met with different groups and though the man never did a whole lot the people were delighted with him because he played a certain role in the town.

- I: I was going to go onto that; you were saying earlier in relation to an individual performance thing, it seems to me over the length of my time that most Community Organisations out there want to see the Guard on the beat and have we even started to grapple with the Guard on the beat or how are we measuring that?
- R: Well the big problem is that its not seen as cool – now you have Traffic Corps, you have Scenes of Crime, The Regional Response Unit, the Drugs Unit - you have all these different jobs; and no one wants to be the Guard on the beat because there is no recognition for what you do. But the thing is outside in public the people think you are the greatest thing since the sliced pan, but within the job people have no regard for it at all. I personally would have regard for it but when it comes to promotion I would like to see a fellow show a bit of initiative in something else as well as being on the beat. That he be involved in Community this or that and that he get a few detections drugs or crime but the worth of the Guard on the beat from a Community perspective of An Garda Siochana is like bars of gold. They love to see the Guard on the beat. There is nothing they like to see more whether it is the roughest estate in town or the best estate in town whether it is the main street or a country road they want to see a uniform Guard and it makes them feel happy it makes them feel content and above all it makes them feel safe in their houses. You can't buy it. Every time I have a meeting with the Chambers of Commerce, the Urban Council or the Joint Policing Committee the call is for Guard on the beat, that is all they want, they don't care where the crime is solved because once the headline is over it doesn't matter to the public, maybe a murder might. They want to see this Guard on the beat that it makes them feel safe in their house. A sense of security.

I: Do you think we are catering for that in the Organisation or measuring it?

R: *We are not and we are not catering for it. I can only speak for a Superintendent in my District where obviously a Unit would have a Sergeant and five Guards on it. That Sergeant may or may not be working as he may be at something else. Each of them have different functions as well as their core functions they have different portfolios which can take them to meetings here or there and my Garda strength; we have a tolerance of two for annual leave and that leaves three and if one of those goes sick or has to go to a Course or unforeseen things, I might have one Guard in the station and one out on patrol and that is it. And that Guard is out driving the car, and I can't take the Guard out of a Rural Country Station because why should the people in the Country be deprived of a Garda presence.. So the problem is that in our situation it is a manpower resources issue. I think we should be changing a bit. I gave two members to the Drug Unit off my staff and they were not replaced. I gave two or three members to the Traffic Corps now a couple of those were replaced. But should my Guards be so concerned about drugs now, should they be so concerned about traffic, should they not be concerned with patrolling in uniform in community and doing community Garda work which seems to be where a great cry for Garda presence is.*

I: Every paper you pick up and every news item on t.v. or radio; it seems to be that people want to see Guards on the street.

R: *They want to see Guards on the street, yeah.*

I: And yet as you say we are not measuring it.

R: *We are not measuring it, if we can afford to put them down there we will put them down there because you can see I have to man the public office and I have to man the patrol car and I have such a limited pool of people that I can't put people on the street all the time. If I try to change shifts then I put people on valley periods and the next thing something happens on a valley period then take people off valley periods put them on in busy times and something happens in a valley period and there is war, why did you take the people off it. It is impossible to put people on the streets. There was an incident in the Town recently, after the St. Patrick's Day parade. The parade was policed and when it was over there was only the ordinary compliment of Guards on the town because there was only ever one arrest in ten years for public order on St. Patrick's Day. But there was need to have the policing for parade because the Parade with ten thousand cars a day going through the town you had to have it policed and from a public order perspective and a safety perspective where you had children running out in front of vehicles. There was trouble a few hours after the parade the biggest outcry from the people was 'where were the Guards'. The ordinary compliment of Guards were there, it is just impossible from the budgetary restraints and from the complements of each town or district to have this police presence every day on the*



*street or beat it is just impossible.*

**I:** It is because if you take your complement of people in the Station they are broke up into four Units and then your D/Branch?

**R:** *You take I have one girl trained as a specialist Child Interviewer she is going to be gone from me regularly now. She won't be with me for months. She is going to spend most of her time away. You are losing people all the time and nobody coming in you know. But we don't measure. And they want you to have the Guard on the beat and the big perception is of the Guard on the beat: he is just not on the beat and the resources and measurement of it isn't there. It is a non-entity really.*

**I:** If you were Commissioner in the morning how would you address issues relating to Performance taking into account your thirty six years experience.

**R:** *It is hard, I would have to become tougher with the Associations. I would have to instil a performance culture in the recruiting, in the training, at that low level. The very same as a child going to National School in the first six months or weeks they know what they are going to be like in Leaving Cert. We should be able to do that with people and move in and spend a bit of time with them. Where one of the biggest problems is in the Force and it has never been addressed and it is getting worse and worse every day, and I said it to you earlier on, is that we have levelled out the Organisation. Superintendents are directly dealing with Guards because of the inability or inactivity of Sergeants doing the job that they are paid to do; and that is supervise and they are just not doing it and whether they are not being paid enough but they are too close to the Guards and there is no big separation between Guards and Sergeants. Sergeants want to be Guards with three stripes and I find that is where the big problem lies and they don't rock the boat. Another one of the biggest areas we have in the job for problems is the fact that there is nobody now residing in towns they are all commuting several miles to their work, they haven't got the interest of the town or the people at heart it is only a job and we have a lot of cultural changes to do we have to change the recruit and his mentality to doing a professional job and we have to change the attitude of the Sergeant to be a front line supervisor. Now everyone is not like that there are some great Sergeants but the majority of them don't want to do the job they get paid for and if there is a huge rift between Sergeant and Management and even this daily conferences is not in my view bridging that rift.*

**I:** I think you put your finger on it earlier: that it is managing investigations not managing performance.

**R:** *It is managing investigations. Another thing about it is that maybe the job has got so busy and so big. Take your section for example: it has got massive and five years ago it wasn't there and the same with everything. We are taking on too much. I remember at a RAPID meeting recently*

they are handing RAPID over to the Guards because the Guards are the only people who can drive it on but the poor Guards are flat out. We can't become Social Workers we can't become Community Developers and if we go too much into Community Policing I don't know are we losing our knife edge you know. Maybe some would say that I know we have to be in the Communities but we have to be there as policemen not as Community workers. I have had difficulty with a Sergeant recently over one of our Youth Diversion Projects; he wanted the Guards down in it full time and I said no I want them there occasionally, I want them to show an interest and I want every Guard to be interested and to pop in and out if they are on the beat but I am not paying them as Social Workers. He was telling me of this particular female Guard who the young ones have great time for because she sits down there drinking tea and listening to their problems. That is not what a Guard is paid for. What about a fellow who is breaking into a house out the road while she is sitting in drinking coffee. Or the fellow who is doing a hundred miles an hour going to kill somebody. We have to know what our role is. I see a lot of people going into Community Policing and they give up being policemen or policewomen; all they become is community workers and it's great. Oh the Guard is great he brings all the kids to the seaside or he is in the over 50's or over 80's club or whatever and he is a great fellow. That is grand and there is a place for that but is that Guard doing anything as a policeman. Is he fighting crime. I know he is making people happy that day and they think he is a great and for the image of the job it is great but is it a core function? But there is more thought of him than the Guard that is breaking his ass every day down in the Courts trying to catch this one or that one for breaking the law. I have seen these fellows being praised above the fellow that is slogging it out every day trying to get a car course or a gun course and he is not getting it.

- I:** Really what you are talking about there is prioritising the value of work.
- R:** Definitely yes, there is a need for everything but just where we are going with it? It's too big. Now we are going to these joint Policing Committees and these people are going to be wanting us to do more.
- I:** Do you think they are going to eat up time and resources?
- R:** Where are they going to get us at the end of the day; we haven't got the resources, we haven't got the manpower to be delivering and we are caught with these budgets. 2007 and 2008 the budgets were colossal; I remember in 2007 every business person in every Town in Ireland were singing the praises of the Guards because there were Guards everywhere. There were Guards outside Supermarkets directing traffic at Christmas, there were Guards outside Credit Unions there were Guards nearly bringing auld ones shopping and it was all overtime and now the expectation is they are going to have the same as what was there before and the money isn't there. So I don't know; prioritising public expectation, prioritising what we are about. I almost get confused but I

would like to think our first priority would be keeping the Country a safe place, that is by active patrolling, recognition for active patrolling, recognition for crime detection, active crime detection and crime prevention. Now that takes in Community Policing, all of those things but what actually we should prioritise – you might set out today to prioritise certain issues in a town and the next thing you would have an incident and that blows it all out of the water. That seems to be happening more and more and what happens then is in order to investigate that serious issue its taking up all your overtime resources and all your manpower resources for nearly a week and at the end of the day you have to go to Court with it. That is taking up all your overtime resources again and taking up your manpower again for nearly three weeks so it is very hard to deliver a service now in the modern world to satisfy everybody, to satisfy especially the public and with them now on these policing committees it might even be harder. Some say they will know what our resources are and they will be more tolerant. Having said that each of them are going to be individually trying to get as much out of the police for their political campaigns like 'oh I know so and so I will get him to sort that out for you' and come and pressurise me to get something sorted out in an estate from vandalism to whatever you know. It is very hard to know it is getting tougher. It is becoming very tough to give this service.

I: If we had some sort of performance management system would it be a help?

R: Oh definitely but everyone will have to buy into it and it would have to do with money and be about achieving your increments and all of that type of thing, because it is no good having a performance appraisal if there is no teeth in it and the teeth to have to be biting the fellow who is doing nothing and also veered at the person who won't recognise the person who is doing something; he has to be looked after; he has to be kept in order. I know Sergeants who were promoted in the last couple of lists there and I would not have them in the job as Guards. I remember when I was young in the job one night I got a special job to do station patrol around the Town and I went missing off it. I was inspected twice by a Sergeant, and when I arrived back in about ten to six in the morning and I arrived back into his office, he kicked my ass so hard verbally that I was never missing and I never done anything again. I remember sending in a file one time on a traffic accident to a Sergeant and it coming back with more red marks on it than a Cork mans jersey and it taught me. They were the men who formed me; not the fellow who said 'ah, you're great crack'. Told me not to do that again, do it again and I will sack you. They are the fellows you want; you need people who have the gumption to carry the ranks that they are in and we don't have them. We don't have them definitely at Sergeant rank and a lot of Inspectors now are going the same way and from what I am hearing that Inspectors in the Country are one hundred times better than Inspectors in the DMR because most of the Inspectors in the DMR are only Sergeants with a red pip instead of the stripes and are basically Sergeants and the Sergeants

are Corporals. There is no gumption – then they try to discipline and that creates sour taste and if people understood from the start that the criteria was result based and we needed results every day you went out – you should be working towards a target; I think we would have a better job and maybe even with my own Rank with every rank what would be wrong with it. If I was the Commissioner that is what I would try and introduce now, and a different approach to the supervisory ranks as a start. I would bring in that Performance and that tenure policy because we all need movement. People are stagnant in jobs and they are just doing what they want to do to survive they don't want to do that extra bit. These are things that have been tried in other Police forces and they appear to be working I can't see why they don't try them here. You have the workers then and there are some great workers in every rank out there, there are some great youngsters. When I see people getting courses and you have great workers and they are not getting them I would sooner give a course to a person who I knew would make something of it. I think its only sometimes to fill the course, send someone up and the next thing they send a junior fellow and there is a fellow there with more service that might be mad to do a course and it is good for his self esteem as well, and sometimes if you look after people they know you are treating them well and they give you that extra bit as well. It is not getting easier and we are not an honest Organisation when it comes to our endeavours because I think there are seventy or eighty percent of the force carrying thirty percent, maybe even more. I would be afraid to say there is more but some would say, and I was talking to a business man lately and he reckons in the Guards that there is about sixty percent carrying forty percent. If that's the case we are a failure as an Organisation because we are so tolerant of the non performer that we have given up on him and I feel we have nearly given up on him. I remember I was being appointed D/Sergeant and they asked me about the non performer there and they were nearly afraid to give me the job because they thought that I would kick ass to the extent that it would cause problems but I didn't all I did was I personally supervised him. I was working with him all the time and I got great return out of him. You can't personally work with everyone. Definitely I feel that we have done nothing about this performance thing, management has shied back from it because we are afraid of the GRA and AGSI and I think that we could do an awful lot more. We don't reward initiative enough either. People show a bit of initiative, we should be saying that's performance and rewarding it but we need a structure in place to measure performance, it has to come in. A good honest honourable structure. In private sector – we all think that private sector is all bells and whistles and it is not either there is an awful lot of non performers in the private sector too, who bosses have to keep, they don't want to rock the boat too much because if they rock the boat you are in a situation where it brings discontent and they will drop tools and drop output. The first job I ever worked in when I was fourteen and I was late for work one morning and I got a kick in the ass from the foreman and I was never late again. We say we kick ass but we really don't.

# **Appendix G**

## **Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 4.**

#### Transcript of Interview with Respondent No 4.

**I:** This is a discussion about your views on performance management within the Organisation, how you are managing it in your District and the challenges you are having from it.

**R4:** *I am trying to use the return of work as a lever, not to put fellows under pressure, trying to get fellows to do a little bit more for the community out there and I don't want them going out hammering people with FCPS and Summons and stuff like that. I want them to do the job that we are getting paid to do which is crime prevention and crime detection.*

**I:** You are right there as there seems to be some sort of a feeling abroad that if Guards have to perform that they have to persecute the people.

**R4:** *That has been there for a while but as well as that, it is being used by individuals to hide behind for years, that actually do not want to do their job because doing their job means that they are going to have to do a file and they are going to have to go to Court and they are going to have to do something that doesn't suit them.*

**I:** How do you get around that, how are you getting around that here?

**R4:** *As I said we spoke earlier on about the old return of work book that was there years ago, and you remember it and I remember it and the Sergeant took down the return of work book down in Pearse Street and said listen here Guard I am not happy with your performance this month you have had three summons and four charge sheets; that time there was the sightings on the Collators system and whatever else went on, normally the giving out of tickets and things like that. You were shown where you stood in the line up and then you were shown the guy that was doing very well whom you knew anyway because he was in Court more often than you he had more summons than you. That kind of generated a sense of professional competitiveness between fellows; they would say well I am not going to be the bottom of the pile here. It's terrible to think a fellow has come onto the Unit, he is two year junior to me and he is looked upon as being a better worker than I am because I think most of us in the background would come from having a very good work ethic and that work ethic is there going back to your childhood from your parents and I think that is where you get it and everybody has it but what I see has crept in is this laziness; that fellows will get away if they think they will get away with it, they will push the boat to the very limit of doing absolutely nothing so what I have introduced here is that I have a monthly review of return of work. I don't like using the term 'return of work' because you would like if you could use something else because it isn't return of work; it is just to see what fellows are actually doing and I have it under a number of headings. I have Summons and Charge Sheets I have entries on the Collator System, I have FCPS, and I take it down to*

*small things like the fellows who I have employed on the bike patrols how many estate patrols they do; the people that are employed on Community Policing, how many talks they gave to schools, how many community groups they went and met. I have broadened it out so that it is not solely seen as being something as a persecution nature against the public; tickets and summons.*

**I:** Quite rightly, two things I suppose number one why do you feel you have to call it a return of work? The second thing is all of that stuff is work.

**R4:** *It is all performance, but we call it return of work, call it what you want, as I said to you earlier on if you are working on an actual control line inside in Dell you have to have an output you have to have a return, that is your return of work and I mean would an employee in Dell or an employee in any of these big Companies get away with four or five zero's at the end of each month?*

**I:** That is the key question. I don't think Michael Dell would stand for that do you?

**R4:** *They would not get away with it, they would be told in no uncertain terms, listen you are doing absolutely nothing, I can't afford to pay you. The Guards seem to think they have to tolerate this, just because a fellow turns in for work at six o'clock in the morning and sits on his rear end and does absolutely nothing, that we should tolerate it.*

**I:** Are you saying really the Garda Organisation seems to think we should tolerate it?

**R4:** *Well the Organisation as you know at our own Rank there is performance development and we are held accountable aren't we? We are getting paid well enough to be held accountable but unfortunately as it drops down at Garda level there doesn't seem to be any accountability and I have spoken to the Sergeant's here about it and to be fair to my own Sergeant's here they agree with what I am doing in relation to it because they are sick from hammering their heads off a stone wall with some fellows and the only way they feel that fellows are going to sit up and listen is if the fellow at the top, if they can say I am compiling figures here for the Superintendent for review at the end of the month and it looks like you have done absolutely nothing for this month, would you tell me what am I going to say to him when he says to me "Sergeant that man has done nothing for the month". And this is what I told them to go back and to say to fellows; listen what am I going to say to the Boss man when he says to me "listen this fellow is doing nothing, what's your excuse, where were you, were you hiding under the table, look at that other young fellow there" and we can put figures into PULSE and it is obvious that there are some fellows carrying others.*

**I:** That seems to be coming through from others I have talked to, what percentage would you put it at?

**R4:** *I suppose on a Unit which I have here I would have five, six, seven, on a Unit you definitely have on some of the Units you would have two fellows doing absolutely nothing.*

**I:** Out of how many on the Unit?

**R4:** *Thirty percent and they are doing it in every respect. They are the ones that have the highest return of sick, they are ones then if they get any sort of a minor bump at all they are gone, it just seems to be that they come from this culture of no return of work and compensation if they can get away with it.*

**I:** You have just said a Culture of that. What service have you?

**R4:** *I joined in 1977; I have thirty two years service this June just gone by.*

**I:** How did the culture get to be that way from all your experience of those thirty two years do you think?

**R4:** *Well I suppose you have to look at the individuals involved, some of the individuals have gone forward for positions that they didn't get and have said you know well I am not appreciated so I am not going to do anything and they kind of wrongly perceive that they have been wronged within the Organisation and their reaction to that then is to do nothing or to do as little as they can get away with. I have seen cases and I wont mention names of fellows who were on sick tours of duty for two or three years and nobody was doing anything about it and then along came a certain Superintendent and said right I am not going to tolerate this so he looked and he did something about this fellows sick and he was asked why he was on sick and he was disciplined and he lost his job and he appealed it and he came back and he is now back at work four years and he has not missed one day because he realised that he was going to lose his job from the way that he was behaving and I think if fellows are made to see that they are not going to get away with the way that they are behaving they will sit up and say well I better start doing a bit of work because there is a Superintendent or an Inspector above him that is not going to tolerate it. If we tolerate it and the Sergeant's tolerate it and the Inspector's tolerate it then it's going to continue.*

**I:** Just on that point of tolerating it, what are your views on performance, have we a structure within the Organisation to manage it, how do you feel?

**R4:** *Have we a structure to manage performance; not at the lower levels no, and I have discussed this myself in the Degree Course that I did and we went through performance management and performance development. Whether we like it or not we are definitely stymied by the Associations, they are totally against any type of performance development indicators of measuring people of doing anything of that sort. The Policing Plan is*



one thing, but it doesn't go below District level. But I mean I don't see anything wrong with what I do on a monthly basis or two monthly basis of measuring fellows performance because that is what I am doing. Can somebody tell me that I am not carrying out a Management function?

I: When did you start that?

R4: *We started it going back a couple of months ago and we have only now put proper structures in place in so far as we have taken items out and put items in to make it so that it's not solely a Summons, FCPS, Charge Sheet that type of thing; so that there are other things measure as well and that is not just trying to cover anything that is just to be fair to everybody because there are certain individuals who do very good work in the Community and who may not have the same level of Court appearances, have the same level of Summons as other people and you have to give them due recognition as well for what they do, they are doing fantastic work. You take examples here of both Sergeants and Guards who will come in on their own time and they will work at a funeral in town and they will do point duty and stuff like that – they are not even asked to do it, that all has to be recognised.*

I: I agree with you because that type of stuff is what the public see. How are you finding the Associations are responding?

R4: *I must say the Associations have never given me any grief over any of the initiatives that we have tried to introduce and it is possibly like everything else before we introduced anything I sat down with the Sergeant's and I discussed it with them and I said look at the moment I am thinking of doing X, Y and Z. What do you think? The majority of them came back and said I think that's a good idea and that's no harm and then they would name certain individuals and say well I know one fellow he deserves to get a kick in the rear end and I have been trying to cajole him along and it just takes maybe a little bit of pressure from higher up to make him realise that he can't continue like this. In general they were in agreement with it and then I asked them to go back and discuss it with the fellows on the Unit and say "listen the Super is thinking of introducing a review of return of work" and some of them went "oh shit I haven't had this or I haven't had that" and some of them who were good workers had fallen behind and they worked very hard at one stage and two of them in particular because they wanted to get into a certain Drugs Unit, a surveillance course that was coming up but once they got that they fell back. It's like the guy we all know for years that gets into the plain clothes and once his probationary period is up he sits back and does absolutely nothing. But nobody ever challenges him.*

I: How did you find that since you brought this in now, you were saying that the Sergeants went and spoke with the Guards about it?

R4: *The Sergeant's went and spoke to the Guards and then the Sergeants came back to me and I said ok I am going to go ahead with it. As I said*

*it is only in its infancy and we have only had one review of it. I think the end of July will be the full review of it in so far as each Sergeant is going to sit down and the Inspector and myself have worked out a template for each Unit so that the Sergeant's can go in and fill in the boxes and they can do that gradually, they can see then at a glance from month to month where they stand on a template and we can do the same thing. I mean I am hoping, and it is not being brought in out of any vindictive or maliciousness on my behalf, I just want to make sure there are young lads down there on the Units that are working very hard and I just want to ensure that the fellows who stand side by side with them are at least doing if not as much are doing a little bit better then what they are doing at the moment.*

**I:** What is the reaction so far to it?

**R4:** *I think the reaction from the Sergeant's is good because I think the way the Sergeant's see it is well "I am not on my own now, the Superintendent is going to be taking over the responsibility here and he is going to be cracking the whip and that is going to make my job more easier". I think that is the way they have looked at it. I think I will find out in due course what the lads think.*

**I:** Have you had any feedback from the Associations on it?

**R4:** *No because you see the Associations wouldn't still view it as being anything of a threat because of the way it is being introduced. I have basically referred back all the time to the old return of work that used to be kept years ago and I said if it was kept years ago and the Associations had no problem with it well this is just another form or a return of work expect it is kept in a different format and it maybe has an additional few items onto it.*

**I:** When did that Return of Work Book disappear?

**R4:** *I don't know. When I left to go into plain clothes back in the 80's it was still there. I don't know when it left, but it left and it was never replaced and it was a good system.*

**I:** Yes, it was kind of a diary wasn't it, a log book.

**R4:** *A diary and every members name was in it and you had your Summons return, you had your Charge Sheet returns, you had your ticket returns and you had your Collator entries, which were all vital. It's just that I think that its the old term of performance development: what gets measured gets done. I don't want to be throwing the likes of those quotes around but if fellows realise that look tomorrow morning if I go out there and I conduct a checkpoint and I have twenty Collator entries I mean that is going to go well for me. If for nothing else but their own self satisfaction. I just can't understand how some fellows can go out there for a full month or a full year and see absolutely nothing.*

**I:** In your experience have you people like that; that have been performing that way?

**R4:** *Absolutely. I have guys that go out in the same car together and the guy that is driving the car will have 150 Collator entries for the period where the fellow that is with him sees nothing, how can that happen? What he is doing is of course he sees what is going on and of course he has the same thing but he knows that your man is doing it so he is not going to bother his tail end doing it. And that is a big problem we have all the time; you have half of the job jumping on the back of the other half. If every fellow in this Organisation that we have had a small bit of pride in what they did and just did enough I tell you we would have some Organisation. There would be no criminals getting the better hand on us. Definitely would not and we would be solving a lot more serious crime than we are solving at the moment. We would be far better respected within the Community because of the amount of work. When you look at the Trojan work that is being done by certain Guards within the Communities that they work in, involved in hurling matches, funerals, talks in schools, community groups and you look at other fellows and they won't even talk to the shopkeeper. Why is that? Is it the individuals themselves or is the people above them don't push them hard enough?*

**I:** What is your view on that, which do you think it is?

**R4:** *Well you see everything is about immediate supervision and just to take it away from the Guards for a second if you go back to your production line and you are producing X Y and Z and your immediate supervisor is either working on the line with you or he is at a check stand or somewhere you look straight to him, he is the man that looks straight to you; so I mean if he doesn't do what he is supposed to do well then definitely you are not going to do it and then you take it two or three removed up from that and the people who are up at that level and if they are not putting the pressure on the guy who should be putting the pressure on the fellow on the production line well then you are not going to get anywhere. So I think an awful lot of what has happened in our job is I think we have taken our eye off the ball slightly in relation to definitely Sergeant's and I was a Sergeant long enough myself and I have met some very good Sergeants but we have a lot of Specialist Units and an awful lot of good people have been taken out and you have probably a lack of supervision at that level of Sergeants and that is not good if supervision on a unit is falling back to the Senior man. That is not good and then like everything else you have some very good supervisors and some very poor supervisors. I think our job as Inspectors and Superintendents is to ensure that we do our job and make sure that they are supervising properly and that is where I maintain coming in one morning at seven o'clock and making sure that everybody is on the Unit, that the patrol car is out that the s/o is working, that what is supposed to be done is being done on nights, that any crime investigation files are being followed up that checkpoints are being carried out as they should*

be carried out and a lot of people would say "well that's not a Superintendent's job" but it is; it's everybody's job and that is the problem we have all made these compartments for ourselves and going back years ago a Superintendent didn't leave his office and now we are trying to change it around and we are saying well the Superintendent should do so many patrols every month. Should he have to be told to do them? I am in here most mornings and the first thing I do is go straight into the Station Orderly and sit down and ask them what is on PULSE, did anything happen overnight? When I started that they didn't know what was on PULSE but now they know that if I come in at eight o'clock in the morning the first thing I am going to ask is what is on it, so the first thing a Station Orderly does when he takes up is go into PULSE and he finds out what is on it; so I mean that is developing good habits and good procedures. That is obviously the way we have to do it, it is the way things have gone that we have to keep putting pressure on and I see the good Units I have and the Units you could hold up as a model, they always have a Sergeant who is a good Sergeant and puts pressure on the Unit and does not let them away with much, if their tie is not on properly, he brings everything to their attention and you find that there is far more respect for that type of a Sergeant than the Sergeant who tries to bury his head in the sand and hope that no trouble is going to happen on his tour of duty and get out the door as fast as he can.

**I:** I think what you are saying there with what you are doing and what the skippers are doing for you, it is about setting standards.

**R4:** We have to set standards and we can't let standards slip and I suppose even talking about the first thing I said to the Inspector when he came here I said I am not going to talk about anybody, I am going to let you find out for yourself what fellows are like and you come back to me and we will discuss it. I said one thing; if you walk through the public office or you walk into the DDU office and you see a fellow sitting inside in a public area wearing no tie or epaulettes, or his shoes are dirty or his trousers are not as they should be, I said don't ignore it, deal with it there and then and say right it's not good enough, and you will bring up the standards slowly but surely.

**I:** Is he doing that?

**R4:** Absolutely I would not have to tell him to do that because he is coming from the Garda College, and the standards would have to be there.

**I:** How are you finding that staff are responding to that?

**R4:** Well they know bloody well that if I pass in or out or if you pass in or out they are going to be challenged about it and if they are going to be challenged about it the standards are upped. I think go back to the driving standards on our roads there are not as many people drinking and driving as there used to be. Why? Because the checkpoints are being carried out there is someone going to catch them.

**I:** Is that a key to it then, what you are doing here, you are developing your own performance management within your District?

**R4:** *Without anybody knowing about it.*

**I:** Yes I was going to ask you that; does the wider Organisation know about it say does the Chief know about it or the Region know about it?

**R4:** *No I didn't discuss it with the Chief, I don't think it is something I should have to discuss with the Chief but I mean its like everything else if it works for us I suppose after a while there should be no problem in us saying look we have a system, this is the way we do it. It is like another system I developed there recently – a culture had developed about people going to a call and what was happening was they would go to a call and they would take down the names and addresses, we will just say for argument sake it was a burglary, and they take down the details and they come back and they put it on PULSE. You see the big thing was it has to be put on PULSE. So they put it on PULSE but what did they do after that with it? Nothing. So I started a file for every headline crime and I insisted that every file would have to contain X, Y and Z. The first thing it would have to contain was the details of the incident, any witnesses, injured party. The second thing it would have to contain was the statements; and vitally the statement from the injured party, number two was any witness statements and number three was what scenes of crime were examined and number four would be results of scenes of crime and down through it. I would review those files probably every two or three months or whenever I got a chance with the Units to ensure that the files were being progressed. Up to that there was no file and these things would just be put on PULSE and fellows were getting away with not even taking a statement.*

**I** So nobody monitoring it?

**R4:** *There was nobody watching it because it was kind of ah we will go out and once we go to the crime we can record it on PULSE and we can forget about it after that. There was no investigation or even worse they were throwing it over to the plain clothes fellows and saying that is an investigation for plain clothes. I said we are all Guards, you went through the Garda College and you are getting paid to investigate it, why can't you investigate it? Are you telling me you can't take a statement from an injured party or a witness, you can't follow up a crime and nominate a suspect? You can't follow it through and if there is a suspect nominated, arrest him and bring him in and interview him.*

**I:** Absolutely they have the same powers.

**R4:** *The thing was, a culture had developed that they didn't have to do it and what happened then when the new lad came and he got into a car he was told don't be bothered we will go to this call, the most important thing*

now is put it on PULSE because the Super will check it and once he sees it is on PULSE you don't have to worry about it any more.

**I:** How did that work out for you?

**R4:** *It is still ongoing. I bring up the Sergeant here every month or every two or three months and I go through the crime files for the Unit and some times I will go through them at the once weekly meetings that we have here with the Units. It works fine and I will take a number of the files and I will run through them myself I will go through the injured party's statements and more importantly has any contact being made with scenes of crime. Did any prints turn up and is there any suspect. It works fine, I mean it is another paper trail that I wish we didn't have to do but unfortunately we do have to do it.*

**I:** Maybe it is a necessary having to do thing?

**R4:** *It is a check, it's a balance and a check that you have to do and I suppose like everything else if we don't check, again, what's measured gets done, if we measure it and we check it then fellows are going to do it, if we don't well then they won't do it. It's all time consuming. Everything you do is time consuming. Every meeting you organise I just got off the phone to a woman there who wants to meet me in relation to anti-social behaviour and I said to her you now have twice the amount of Guards and Sergeants you had this time last year but she didn't appreciate that, she said we still have anti-social behaviour. I said you have anti-social behaviour everywhere. So the standards for the Guards have gone up across the board, the public expect more of us, the individual whose house has been broken into expects more of us, the person who has had his quad bike taken expects us to do something about it and they nearly expect miracles and the likes of those Committees in small towns they will go for the Guards all the time and they will never ask a question on the HSE they will never ask a question on the Co. Council housing development why they are putting so many of these families with criminal backgrounds in together, they will never ask a question of the local County Councillors it is always the Guards. So the standard is getting higher and higher all the time.*

**I:** And we are getting busier and busier.

**R4:** *But I think we – I always make a point at any of these meetings and I say look I am here representing the Guards I have my Inspector with me I have my two Sergeants from this District with me. Why weren't the people from the HSE or Housing asked to come, why weren't the people from the road section if it's in relation to accidents, have ye spoken to the County Engineer. I talk to him once every month in relation to the condition of the roads. They will say to you why are the cars speeding up and down such an area. I said have ye looked at putting in speed ramps.*

**I:** It is all of the other social services.

**R4:** *It is just the standard that is expected of us is getting higher all of the time. I suppose all we can do is strive to try and keep up with it.*

**I:** Within all of what you are doing, what are the challenges in it, in your performance here?

**R4:** *I suppose the big challenge is to get time to do everything that you would like to do and the second challenge is to keep yourself motivated to continue with it. You have to keep driving it on, if they see that you start up initiatives and you run them for two or three months or six months or a year and then all of a sudden like the tail rays coming out of a plane it fades away well then they know that they will stick with it for a while and eventually you are going to forget about it but if you stick with it and continue to demand a little bit more they will give a bit more but if you are not strong enough to follow it thorough I think you would probably do more damage than not starting it up at all, because you probably revert back to worse than what you had before that.*

**I:** So you are talking about perseverance really.

**R4:** *That is the thing, really and to try and make sure that fellows don't think that they are being targeted either. That they see, like there is no point in you seeing the good in something if you can't communicate that good to them. Unless you can switch their mind into the way you are thinking and say "look lads this is not getting at ye, this is just trying to do a little bit more of targeting the law breakers out there, targeting the druggies, targeting the fellows that are causing the problems for us". You need to realise that for you to do that as well as doing your job it's doing good for the community there as well and most of them are living in the community. And I think if you can get them to think the same way as you, you have achieved it then. There are a lot of very good young lads that I have here; they come out from the Garda College and they really would inspire you at times, the enthusiasm that they have and you would hate to think that they would ever lose that enthusiasm because of seniority and fellows that tell them listen you are only wasting your time that is going to get you nowhere or something along that line, and it does happen.*

**I:** Are you finding with those people here that they are keeping that enthusiasm?

**R4:** *They are yeah, they are keeping it but then at the same time I have to be honest and say that I have a good shake of the other crowd as well, that will try and drawn them down to their own level, that will tell them "listen, don't be killing yourself there is nothing in it for you" unfortunately and they are the fellows that should be giving the example but because of what I said earlier on, perceived notions of injustice done on their behalf and chips on their shoulder about X Y and Z; they have got into this rut.*

**I:** I wonder is that a personal thing with certain individuals or is it an Organisational, structural thing?

**R4:** *It has to be an Organisational, structural thing because there are too many fellows that we've all known down through the years that have got into this type of rut. I don't know, not everybody can get promoted; we know that. It brings you around to the question of rewards which is another strong plank of performance development; how do you reward guys? What do you give them, if they are consistently coming back with a high performance and then they go for a position within a drugs unit or a surveillance unit and they don't get it?*

**I:** How are you managing that here?

**R4:** *You see the thing about here is that it is small and the opportunities are small anyhow. So maybe something like a car course or a van course or a motor cycle course, because they know the positions of plain clothes don't come up that often but what I have done is I have created extra positions in plain clothes whereby I rotate the plain clothes every six months. I have two or three extra people brought in when I can afford to have them and I use them especially during the summer around the lakes and that where you have theft and fellows get an opportunity to work in plain clothes for a couple of months but what I do is I sit them down here and I say right you are getting an opportunity now, you have worked very hard, you have had a good return of work, you are getting an opportunity to go into plain clothes for five or six months but I want you to know when that six months is up you are out, regardless of how well you work because it is an opportunity for you and I want other people to get an opportunity as well because what has happened heretofore is that fellows have gone into plain clothes and they have been left indefinitely and then after three or four years it is next to impossible to get them out because then it is seen as a huge thing, but I think if you set down those parameters at the start and say six months, regardless of what happens after six months you are out. There is no big deal then.*

**I:** What you are talking there is job rotation?

**R4:** *Well I mean you have the words for it, that is what I am doing.*

**I:** You are finding, from what you are saying, that it is working.

**R4:** *It is working. I can give you an example of it and you can talk to the Detective Inspector about it. I put two young lads into a drugs unit here because all of a sudden one day I realised that our Section 15 detections were dropping and I said you know everybody is telling me that there is a lot of drugs around and yet we are catching a lot of Section 3's and we are not getting any Section 15's - fellows dealing and selling for profit. So I got two young lads who had a vent for drugs themselves, and I said look we need to get under this thing because we have the lowest numbers of Section 15 detections, so they went at it and they did good work.*



*Within four to five months we were able to bring the percentage for the Division up. The division was down and the number that was being done here for Section 15 brought the percentage for the whole division up. I mean unfortunately then I had to take those lads out of the Unit and I wasn't able to replace them because I was short staffed at the time and I still haven't replaced them but it is my intention to do it in the next month with two more lads, two different lads but the two that were in there worked very hard and if I am honest about it I know from talking to their Sergeant's they were very disappointed about being taken out as they felt that they had done very good work. But I had told them going in what the parameters were and I couldn't go back on that and I would have loved to have kept them in it longer but the Sergeants required them back because they were short staffed on the Units.*

**I:** Well, you see, you have to balance that need as well.

**R4:** *And unfortunately our detections will be down, but you have to keep working on it that's where the perseverance is. You just have to keep at it and looking at new ways of doing it and if it's not working we have to do something to change it, I don't care, there are sacred cows within the Organisation, if it is not working you have to do something with it. If you have a Detective, I don't care if he has twenty years service, if he is on a Unit and he is not working you have to sit him down and say look it's not working, here's the figures, what are we going to do about it, what do you want to do? And it is amazing sometimes fellows will come back and say to you, and I am talking about my experience in another place, and fellows that were fairly senior would say "well I know that and I want to change". And why didn't you come and ask for a change? "Well I didn't like to look for a change in case fellows would say this but if I got a change I will take it and things will improve". It's like everything else there is no point changing things when the curve is coming down, you have to start looking when things are going well, where do we change it when the curve is going up to keep it going up? Unfortunately a lot of the times we are coming in when the curve has come way down and we are trying to change things at nearly an impossible time. The whole graph has changed and it has gone too far and early intervention is the thing, trying to get detection rates up, to keep them up and encourage people with investigations, and everything has to be right and accountability. The guys that are doing the work will have the most complaints made against them, they are demoralised then, there are Superintendents coming over and investigating them and taking statements off them. A lot of it is motivation, you have to keep motivating fellows and keep them thinking that this is the job you are in and in the present climate lucky to have a job. But there are plenty of challenges there.*

**I:** Have you any other observations on any of it?

**R4:** *On the performance development – it is critical when you talk to people. I have good friends of mine that worked at a high level in places like Dell*

*and I have a good friend who is one of the top guys in Olympus and they just can't understand, they don't particularly target the Guards but they can't understand why a lot of Public Service Organisations have no performance development.*

**I:** When they are saying performance development are they referring to a real structured system?

**R4:** *Yes, we need a proper system in place whereby everybody knows where they stand and there is none of this kind of cajoling and putting fellows under pressure, you know where you stand – 'if you don't mix eight gauges of cement a day you are gone on Friday'. And that is the way these Organisations work and I know the argument that is being put against us all of the time:- hang on a sec you can't put the Guards? Yes you can, the people down through the years have said how do you measure crime prevention? I would say you can measure it very easily if we do fifty patrols a week, next week we should strive to try and do sixty. That is crime prevention; that is high visibility on the ground. Why can't we measure it; of course we can. We don't want to measure it because it doesn't suit some people to measure it and I think that is the big thing, to change this culture that is there about performance development, that it is something that everybody should be terrified of because it means that they are going to be looking over your shoulder measuring everything you do and if you don't do it, it is like time in motion studies years ago.*

**I:** Do you think that would be a big help to you and the Organisation if we had a system?

**R4:** *We need some structure definitely I mean I can't see it coming in my time to be honest with you but there is definitely a need to put something in place and maybe a lot of Districts have small little structures in place in an effort to try and improve things and that's all you do, just try and improve things. I mean it's all the whole thing of change. You go back and you look at it. I was involved in in-service training, when the new interviewing of prisoners was brought in, I was a Detective at the time and the most vocal opponents we had of this interviewing of prisoners was the senior Detectives saying this is not going to work, the crime rates will go through the roof, there will be no admissions and the argument we used against them was: hold on a second if we had audio interviewing of prisoners during X case and Y case we could have shown that the Guards didn't abuse your man, we could have shown that his statement was voluntary and made without any threats or inducement or promises but then he turned around afterwards and said he was punished and battered and beaten and we have no way of disproving it. A tape played could have proved it; and guys are going into interview rooms now and they don't even bat an eyelid it's par for the course and I think in time performance development will hopefully reach that level, it will be part of the Organisation and it will be par for the course for guys downstairs and everywhere else to know that I need to come up to a certain standard every week or every day that I come into work and if I don't somebody is*

going to ask a question somewhere about it.

**I:** I am going to ask you one final question if you had that type of performance development system for everyone what would you like to see being measured in it?

**R4:** *I wouldn't like to see it solely being measure in Summons, Charge Sheets, FCP's, I would like to see everything being measured, everything that we possibly could measure and what I said to you earlier on about school visits, community visits the work done by individuals with clubs, everything should be measured. It should not be solely a production line measurement because if you do that you play into the hands of the detractors who say that this is just to get more money out of public and it is more persecution where as if you look at it in a broad base and say measure everything, the guy that does community work and voluntary work the people that work outside of the Organisation. You take last Saturday, we did a cycle for charity, the Irish Wheelchair Association with the emergency services, everybody was on their day off or on annual leave and the amount of Guards that were involved in it was heartening to see. I mean that's the stuff that some Guards should be able to come back and say last Saturday I did a hundred and ten mile cycle for the Irish Wheelchair Association, that should be measured and that should be held up for him as a positive when he goes forward for a position within the Organisation. Even at the end of the month when there is a review done of his performance that should count for his performance as well as the fact that he has had three charge sheets or twenty summons or five FCP's or whatever, because I think that traditionally what some fellows have done with performance development and return of work is gone out and it's just tickets and summonses straight across the board. Well now I have a hundred and fifty tickets for the month so no one can say anything to me but that is all they did; they did more damage than they did good. So I would definitely say that whatever system we do introduce down the road, it should measure the whole community aspect of the Guards which to me is kernel to do the job that we have to do.*

**I:** That is the bottom line isn't it?

**R4:** *Yes the bottom line and if it is seen to be that way I think nobody can really have too much to say about it or give out about it.*

## **Appendix H**

### **Transcript of Interview with Respondent No. 5.**

### Transcript of Interview with Respondent No 5.

**I:** Basically, I want to have a discussion with you about performance management in the organisation; what your views are on it; how you manage performance here in your district and the challenges associated with it.

**R5:** *Performance Management in the Guards, in one sense it is a contradiction in terms because the more effective the Guards are the less you have to measure your performance against. What I am saying is if you put somebody out to prevent burglaries in a housing estate your Detectives don't solve any burglaries because very few burglaries are committed so therefore how do you measure the performance of the Guards preventing the burglaries, which is intangible anyway; and the Detectives who are not solving the burglaries that haven't occurred is also intangible. Within that you are left with the level of how do you manage and if you are left with no imagination, a lot of Managers are left with no imagination they start counting. Effectively what you count gets done so therefore if you count the amount of parking tickets that are issued or the amount of fixed penalty charged notices that are issued and you reward people for that kind of policing, that is the kind of policing you will get. So personally my view would be a much more holistic view of performance management where the individual would be measured as an individual in relation to things that have some relevance i.e. turnout for work is straight forward, courtesy, complaints. I don't like complaints from people if the Guards are doing their job and complaints from criminals and all that kind of stuff; but complaints from ordinary members of the public with whom they have an interaction and it is ruthless, that kind of stuff. It is negative performance management that is something you can keep an eye on but it is part of a holistic approach of using a team or a station party and measuring them all together and then using your managers and your line managers as a touchstone who will tell you what is going on where. I would consider it a bit like picking a football team where you have thirteen good players and two poor ones but the poor ones have to be on the team. You don't have any power to drop. Guards, Sergeants, Inspectors and to a large extent Superintendents don't have any power to drop, they have to make the best of their team so they have to be able to identify people, they pick a team and then find roles for the people within the team so you don't put your goalkeeper at full-back so you don't put your person who has anger management issues dealing with the public, you might put them in charge of property or something like that. So I think performance management should be on the management.*

**I:** When you said earlier that it is a contradiction in terms, that if we are preventing crime we are not able to count how we are detecting it, are we able to manage that, crime prevention, or have you ever seen us being

able to manage it?

**R5:** *Crime prevention should be open to many variables. Now crimes of passion happen within the four walls of a house and the Guards have no role in relation to it. Shoplifting happens within the four walls of a shop, so in theory that should be prevented by the staff and if you raise their awareness of shoplifting and all that kind of stuff what you will find is you will get a peak of shoplifting because they start reporting stuff so measuring is a crude enough barometer. You can turn around and say you can put a Guard standing on a corner and say a place where there is a high incidence of crime, which doesn't exist in rural areas as such, but we have a lot of handbag snatches in Dublin or whatever like that. You put a Guard standing on the corner and the next time he is standing there, there are no handbag snatches. Now a handbag snatch you could lose €150 or €200 in a snatch and it costs you the guts of €400 or €500 a day to have a Guard there and a Guard at twenty four hours a day will cost you more, so is it cost effective? I don't know.*

**I:** You have been in Dublin most of your service, what service do you have?

**R5:** *Thirty two years service.*

**I:** Thirty two, and this whole thing of performance management in the Guards, what is your views on it, are we getting to grips with it? We have the Policing Plan, have we anything else you think outside of it that we could use?

**R5:** *I don't think we are anywhere near getting to grips with performance management within the Police. The reason for that is I think the people who are up there developing these Policies haven't a clue what being a policeman is. I don't mean that offensively, but I mean if you are academic if you are up in the ivory towers of Templemore or Garda Depot and have been there for twenty five years and you are looking at Management Manuals and British Home Office publications in relation to Policing Strategies and all that kind of stuff, you will have the aerodynamics for performance management but you won't have the credibility for it.*

**I:** I saw you there when I came into the office with the guy and that young Guard there. I am sure she was doing a good job with him?

**R5:** *Yes but how do you count that.*

**I:** This is the difficulty, isn't it?

**R5:** *If people could define what the role of the Guard is, if that could be defined, and since I joined the Police it has changed a few times. But essentially it is protecting life, protecting property and then detecting crime. Preventing and detecting crime and they changed that around to*

*Mission Statement and Human Rights this and Human Rights that but really it is re-inventing the wheel. If you are protecting life and preserving the peace, all these things fall into place but what does that mean when you get down to it. Does that mean enforcing the Litter Laws, does it mean enforcing the driving laws in rural areas and putting pubs out of business and little old fellows committing suicide because they have nowhere to go to drink. There is a balance, and then it's fair to say do the Guards have a role in working out what they should and should not police? I don't think they have, I think they should just enforce the law of the land. If you take that approach then your performance management is: how many breaches of the Law did you detect? But all the time you are heading into figures that don't mean anything, because the man speeding in the car is only speeding if he is caught; so you have five hundred cars doing seventy miles an hour in a thirty mile an hour limit and you catch one you have one speeding offence detected but also what you have is a very dangerous road.*

**I:** I know you have done a lot of study on this and people talk about how good you are in this area.

**R5:** *The only study I have done, I have an MSC in Economic Policy and I have a MA in Philosophy which is nothing got to do with Policing.*

**I:** I don't know if would I would agree with that; if it's in Philosophy surely it is in some of the Social Science areas?

**R5:** *Well it pushes through into the role of the State and the legitimate use of force in the State and the consent of democracy to be policed, but your consent is conditional on a fair policing and it is also conditional on the effectiveness of the police force. It does tie into performance management in so far as if you have an ineffective police force people pay no attention to it and the State then loses its legitimacy and vigilantes take over the streets. I think you could view that in Dublin where the greatest Management failure of police was failure to tackle the drugs issue in the mid-eighties where the streets were taken over by the vigilantes and people took the power into their own hands, that was performance management failure because nobody was keeping their eye on the ball and realised that the drugs issue in Dublin was a huge issue, it crept up on them I think because of their straight jacket way of thinking.*

**I:** When you say straight jacket, what do you mean?

**R5:** *Well, if the box didn't have 'drug problems in Dublin' to be ticked, so the boxes aren't ticked. But they didn't realise that issue, and again for performance management you have to identify, we go back all the time to identify the issues, how do issues get on the Policing agenda. They get on from pressure groups and all that kind of stuff and I think if you take in what happened with the foot and mouth outbreak a couple of years ago the amount of diversion that the police went to save the State's*

*farmers and that was a success in one sense in so far as the only foot and mouth in the Country was smuggled in. But again how do you performance review and manage that?*

**I:** How do you do it here in your District, how do you manage? How many people have you here?

**R5:** *Fifty eight people. How do I manage it? I make sure I know what is going on. I actually make sure I know what they are doing and I have a view or perhaps a vision of how I want this place policed and I try and manage all the people to delivering on that. Now I would be obviously very strong in Community Policing, Community contentment, Community stability. That is where I would put most of my effort in, because I think that is important.*

**I:** I have to agree with you that its important. I suppose there is a view out there that if it is right for your community, it is the right thing.

**R5:** *It is but how do you measure it; how do you measure the success of Community Policing?*

**I:** This is the issue I am trying to grabble with? Do you think we have come up with any way to do so; or in your studies of other Police Forces have they figured out how to measure it?

**R5:** *I think what the Irish have, in comparison to the English Police Forces particularly and to a certain extent the yanks, is common sense. We still have despite the Ombudsman, H.R.M. and all those, we still have a common sense approach to policing in so far as the Guards are still part and parcel of the community. They are in all the clubs, the GAA clubs, the soccer clubs that they do know by and large what the community want. Now where that falls down is in areas like Limerick, inner city it falls down; and there you need a formal diversion of policing into community policing to take on a kind of a role that I would imagine would be three phase: to give the people more policing service; to set up community organisations; and restore community civic life. Once they have done it, support it, educate them how things should go ahead and then pull back. Now that would be a success, but it would take generations. That would require a change of culture of the people being policed. How do you performance manage that? Because what you would need to do with that is you would need to have a management vision of the police that goes beyond one person, one Superintendent, one Chief Superintendent, one Commissioner. You have to have an overview of what people want from the police services, but we are stuck in the electoral cycle. The fact that it is difficult doesn't mean it shouldn't be tried and there are certain people who will respond to it. Traffic for example can respond to it in a certain way with informed policing and I don't think doing speed traps on the motorway is going to do it but identifying traffic black spots that kind of stuff; speed traps there, high visibility and the drunk driving enforcement. It is like what I said earlier*



*on, if I do say it lightly, I think it is very mechanistic it doesn't require great management skills or great understanding of the policeman's role in society or anything like that, but it has tangible success in so far as it brings down road deaths and I don't think you can argue with that.*

**I:** It was proved last year, we had the lowest road deaths since records began in this Country.

**R5:** *Well the lowest for a long time I think since they opened up the Naas Dual Carriageway back in the 60's. But with that, that is a separate type of policing and I think the difference in traffic policing and other kinds of policing have been identified in a lot of places in so far as traffic is a completely separate entity in Spain or France, and in fact they are separate in the U.K.*

**I:** Do you think from all your experience is there a need, first of all to put a similar type measuring system into Community type policing or into say ordinary policing?

**R5:** *But then we go back to the original question – What do you do? With Community Policing you measure the absence of complaints, measure the absence of reports, you use your customer survey and then you turn around and say well then you are encouraging people not to answer the phone. If you close your Station for three or four hours you reduce your complaints by twelve and a half percent a day or something.*

**I:** Have you ever seen a way that it is measured, in your studies of other places?

**R5:** *I have never seen a successful way – all the bureaucrats, all the academics want to get rid of what they call "Officer discretion" and officer discretion is the main enemy of police management because it means that despite what you or I might send down the line on paper – 'this is what we want you to do'; where the Guard meets the public is where the policy is.*

**I:** Could you explain that a little more?

**R5:** *You can formulate policy, then you implement policy and then you evaluate it; but the policy that I formulate upstairs may have no relation to the policy that it being enforced downstairs because the Guard has discretion. For example I might want to prosecute every single person who parks in a wheelchair bay; they are going to say that's a load of rubbish; I will prosecute everybody who double parks outside the Hospital. So my policy is not being enforced, his policy is and the reason for that is that it is at ground level that the Officers discretion to enforce the Law as he sees fit. So then you formulate it and you try to implement it and you evaluate it and see you are going nowhere, so how do you get over that?*

**I:** Do you think Officer discretion is still a good thing?

**R5:** *Absolutely I think it is essential, because as I said before, common sense, and at this stage I think it is a fleeting animal that will be gone, common sense is what differentiates us from the U.K. and to a certain extent the Americans.*

**I:** I think you have identified there how discretion ties into common sense.

**R5:** *But the drawback then is the Management procedures might not be – you might not be able to manage it because policing is not like other industrial processes that we can measure output. Our output is either lots of prisoners or no prisoners. You have to have a flexible performance management tool where some stuff is measured; some of the straight forward rules that there is no way out of – you should be in work on time, you should be smartly turned out, you should not be rude to the public. That is straight forward performance management and to look after those p's and q's it's a bit like the broken window theory, you will improve things; and then you have to go and look at the role of the team and realise that your book man is looking at the same amount of prisoners as the fellow who goes after shoplifters or whatever like that. You have to be able to differentiate, and the only way you can differentiate is to have performance management in a Station to Station level that is not too formalised.*

**I:** Is that the way you have it here, do you think?

**R5:** *Near enough. Again, using a football team, I know who my goalkeeper is, I know who my fullback is and I know who my forward is.*

**I:** That is a good metaphor for it because really when you think about it, that's what it is. We are out there in the public, the public are watching us, it is a bit like a football team.

**R5:** *So therefore, follow the analogy; if it is working, give the Manager the credit, if it's not working ask him why; and at that rate remove performance management from the level of the Guard to say the level of the District Officer perhaps or the Unit Inspector at that level. You can performance manage that way and then you may be able to see some kind of improvement because if I am going to suffer because people being on the sick or like that I will do something about it. That's why I am saying management is part of a team and performance has to start with a team and as your goalkeeper can't be blamed for missing a penalty your Manager i.e. District Officer can be blamed for the poor results.*

**I:** You said something else there earlier, it's not the same as a factory or production process. What you think of the argument of trying to compare the police to any other sector of society and measure them. Is it a fair comparison?

**R5:** *No I don't think so, a policeman could be very productive sitting in a house looking out a window drinking tea and eating a slice of cake.*

**I:** That is a good way of putting it.

**R5:** *You could spend a week doing that and catch a drug dealer. You could spend a week in the house eating the cake and drinking the tea and not looking out the window but that lack of performance should be noticed by his line manager and hence his team manager and that has an impact, that should have an impact and that person's performance, the manager's performance is managed. Again go back to the football analogy, why keep on a fellow who won't play for you? To a certain extent normally in the police force we are not able to drop people, but District Officers, they can take certain steps.*

**I:** The key one there, that we can't drop people from the team, how do you manage that; what you are talking about there is the person who is not performing the same as the rest of the team?

**R5:** *Well the simple answer to all of that is to be task orientated. If you have somebody who is not a performer and we have mundane jobs that have nothing to do with policing but have to be done by police, like property stores, you give that to them. And go back to a mechanistic process that you have in traffic, and if you have a bad performer and you say right I want a three hundred item list of property before the end of the week – you get the picture.*

**I:** Are you using that type of approach here?

**R5:** Yes.

**I:** Is it working for you?

**R5:** *I have got all the property sorted. Well I have a Sergeant who isn't performing and I was very specific in that, it's what I got him to do. I made it clear that he is not on the A Team and he does not want to be on the A Team but he is not going to swan off either. Because I am paying him in theory he is going to do something for me. And I have enough mundane jobs to be doing that I can absorb three or four people like that and what that does is that nobody wants to be in the sin bin.*

**I:** So you use it as a sin bin.

**R5:** *It only works at District Officer level because the other people don't have the power to do it; so therefore performance management should be in or around that and it should be looked at how is the Station performing with parameters like public satisfaction, crime rates, that kind of stuff you know. And crime rates are not written in stone because it could be three burglars could be released from Prison and doing twenty or thirty burglary jobs; but within reason try to explain it.*

- I:** Do you find it a good way of doing it?
- R5:** *Well that is what I try to do here.*
- I:** Would you feel that if we had something like that in a structured way, would it be any help to you, would it be positive or negative?
- R5:** *I think people should be trained to do it and then the structure should be left to themselves insofar as no Station is the same. This place is not the same as a Dublin City centre Garda Station; and it certainly is not the same as small rural station.*
- I:** That is a good point, so the type of policeman you want in Pearse Street or in College Green in Dublin is very different to the man you want here.
- R5:** *In Pearse Street you have thirty or forty full time protection posts. Those posts have to be done; you can't not be there. It takes a certain type of person with certain stability to be able to do a protection post for eight hours and not go wander around and get bored or whatever.*
- I:** I think you put your finger on it there; it's the type of policeman you want for a certain area isn't it?
- R5:** *To a certain extent yes, but you need a certain personality and you can train that personality to a certain extent insofar as you can ask people do they want to go in and do protection posts and they may not want to have interaction with the public all day but once you settle down and get people out of the training centre people will find their niches in the place. There are hundreds of jobs like that and there are very important jobs that you wouldn't initially think are police jobs. You sit down, you have people who are trained and you measure not by how many things you get out but also by how many things you get right. Your key is quality that you are getting none of them wrong. So you have to be very careful with that kind of thinking with what we do as well. That you don't stitch up people that you don't put in what God left out as regards people, there are huge ethical issues in all of that.*
- I:** That ethical thing, and we are wide open now with Inspectorate and the Ombudsman and all of that, how do you feel we are doing as an Organisation?
- R5:** *The Inspectorate I think is a good idea, I think they come in and they have ideas and wide experience and they pass comment and they are prepared to listen. I have a very negative view of the Ombudsman in one sense in so far as that they were set up to investigate complaints into the Guards; they came in with a view that the Guards were corrupt. They have come out and said now that the Guards aren't corrupt and they divest themselves of all complaints and send them out to Superintendents to investigate. That just to my mind defeats the whole purpose of the*

*Ombudsman. It effects my performance here I don't like to say that, I view the Ombudsman complaints as very unimportant because if they were important they would not give them to us anyway. With that priority in mind I don't exactly ignore them but I don't give them high priority in trying to run the District, but it impacts on people managing my performance.*

**I:** How much time does it take up for you?

**R5:** *It doesn't take up much time because I don't pay it much attention but when I do pay it attention, its work for the Organisation. I don't know, I think the Ombudsman should be there and investigating police complaints but they should be doing it themselves. They have enough money and resources to do it. We shouldn't be doing it.*

**I:** What you are saying is give them total independence?

**R5:** *Total independence. And again I mean am I going to be managed, my management criteria, is my performance going to be judged on how well I do police work or how I do Ombudsman work?*

**I:** I think you have answered it there. The Policing Plan, the way we have the key performance indicators in it, what is your view of those?

**R5:** *They are very aspirational. Its nice to have a framework within which to operate, I think it's a good idea. I am not a hundred percent as to how they are formulated. They used to be formulated by public attitude surveys and now I think they are better informed there is only six where there used to be a lot more. I think it is essential to have a framework, we were talking about vision earlier on I think its essential to have a vision a consistent vision and I would have thought that the Policing Plan from year to year would have kept much the same vision, that there should not be a radical change one year to the other, that the same things should you cross over. I remember one year boy racers was the number one goal you know.*

**I:** I understand that current thinking on it has come around to what you are actually saying. I remember that year it must be five or six years ago and there was a bit of a public outcry for a finish over it wasn't there?

**R5:** *There was, but it struck me as very short term, very much a Joe Duffy driven agenda insofar as we change our goals, and I think policing itself has been around for a long time and it doesn't change that much but if we keep changing it for the sake of changing it we end up not quite sure what we are doing and therefore we cant manage what we are doing. The Policing Plan should be more or less the same from year to year and I don't mean automatically the same say the counter terrorist threat you know from the way its gone, but the core policing thing is still the same the response is still the same, it's a terrorist threat and what we have to do to the terrorist threat changes so that will always be there and crime*

will always be there we can adjust our responses to it but we don't have to go overboard and say this is more important than something else. Road Safety will always be there, now we are calling things like Human Rights but basically speaking that was always there it wasn't articulated as obviously as it is now but again it is something we can measure ourselves in so far as reduction in complaints, we are talking about how to quantify that so to make a long story short I suppose performance management has to be very flexible and to reflect the work the person is doing and the area the person is working in and it has to have some feedback on the member himself or herself to explain what they have done and we go back to my man who is doing tickets at the Hospital as opposed to the wheelchair parking sites; he could turn around and say well all the wheelchair spaces were full with people with permits so I thought I would extend it out and I took the discretion to extend it out to stop people interfering with the emergency exits of the Hospitals. Or he could turn around and say my brother parks there, he hasn't got a permit and I am not going to start doing anything like that so I headed over to the Hospital. You give him the chance to explain his side. The performance management tool has to be sophisticated. An input from the person as well because if we are going to give them the power of discretion at the coalface we have to get that discretion explained back to us and in the long term the more the discretion is recognised as such and is explained back the more formal use the discretion will become and the less heavy baggage you will have.

**I:** And, listening to you, the more responsible they will become in using it.

**R5:** Yes exactly, because they know they will have to explain it afterwards so you are not inhibiting them but you are just asking them to explain.

**I:** So would you see if we could get to something like that, that they would have to explain it to us after what you called it was open feedback from manager to employees, would you think that would be a good thing?

**R5:** I think for it to be effective it is essential, because I could be doing things here and people may think its crazy but if I explain it, it doesn't seem that crazy. I can always turn around and say ok I am not going to target juvenile drinking at the moment I am just going to let a problem develop and I am going to come and solve it but at least it will have a big impact. Now that is a bizarre example but you can use it for drugs as well; you let someone set up as a dealer so you can get the big stuff. I disagree with that but you can see where it evolves. So where there is a person doing that you nearly want to ask them to explain what they are at and why they are at it and to give them the discretion you have to give them the responsibility.

**I:** Do you think we don't have anything like that at the minute, is that what you are saying?

**R5:** We do informally, we account for our stewardship all the time, we

*account for our stewardship at these meetings but I don't think the people whom are getting us to account realise what we are doing. I think it is very formulaic.*

**I:** Formulaic rather than structured; and would you think a formal system would be an advance on that?

**R5:** *I think a concept of it rather than a system, I think systems are inflexible.*

**I:** That is a good point, a concept of it.

**R5:** *Personally I hate straight jackets. I hate boxes because it is either yes or no, and life is not like that and policing certainly is not like that. Now as I said there are certain things that are set in stone – did you turn up for work every day yes/no; did you wear a uniform yes/no; you know. Straightforward stuff, professionalism and the more sophisticated stuff as you identify your person, these are the minimum you want from a person as you identify the person the performance management for that person changes. The concept of performance management should exist but should be able to encompass that. How many Guards have you? Twelve thousand; so you have twelve thousand performance plans.*

**I:** And the one in Store Street will be a lot different to the one in Cahirciveen.

**R5:** *Because what do fellows in Store Street know about lobster pots?*

**I:** Nothing, or about the fishing laws or any of those things; that is the key to it.

**R5:** *And if they did know they wouldn't have time.*

**I:** Have you any other observations on the topic?

**R5:** *As you can tell I am not a hundred percent fan of performance management, only because I think it would be time consuming, you would have to trust the people doing it and I think that is a key thing. Trust the people doing it and they have to have credibility. You don't have credibility unless you are in doing the work. I could not possibly performance review you, because of your specialist work. Now you could do it for me, it would be easier coming back but you would have difficulty doing it to a Detective Inspector. That is the nature of it, we can't be everything to everybody.*

# **Appendix I**

## **Glossary of Organisational Terminology**



## **Glossary of Organisational Terminology**

<b>GRA</b>	<b>Garda Representative Association</b>
<b>AGSI</b>	<b>Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors</b>
<b>The Associations</b>	<b>Collective term for GRA and AGSI</b>
<b>Management</b>	<b>Generally understood to be senior management, from Chief Superintendent upwards.</b>
<b>Member</b>	<b>A member of An Garda Siochana</b>
<b>Garda Code</b>	<b>Garda Siochana Code of Practice or Employee Handbook</b>
<b>Return</b>	<b>Organisational terminology for figures attained in a specific activity over a specific duration, eg Drink driving detections</b>
<b>Work Return</b>	<b>Term used to indicate the amount of work an individual or group is delivering within the organisation</b>
<b>Post</b>	<b>A protection post similar to that outside Dail Eireann</b>
<b>Allowances</b>	<b>Additional pay for duties like night duty or weekend duty</b>
<b>Light Duties</b>	<b>Where an employee is employed on non-confrontational duties due to medical advice</b>
<b>Roster</b>	<b>Times of duty for members</b>
<b>Duty Sheet</b>	<b>Daily directive in respect of what duty employees are to perform</b>
<b>EPW 1</b>	<b>Commendation for Excellent Police Work</b>
<b>FCPS</b>	<b>Fixed Charge Penalty System</b>
<b>PULSE</b>	<b>The Garda Operational Computer System</b>
<b>Collator</b>	<b>Criminal Intelligence Officer</b>