



Garda Representative Association

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Accommodation, Health & Safety Subcommittee

Following the decision of the Special Delegate Conference 2018, the Central Executive Committee, amalgamated the committees of Accommodation and Health & Safety. Since this merger, the newly formed committee has met eleven times.

The committee visited several Garda stations around the country that were not fit for purpose including: Sligo, Clonmel, Clonakilty, Drimoleague, Coachford and Macroom. Several breaches of the Building Regulations and Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts were identified.

Among the issues were: cramped conditions, rising damp, exposed electrical wires, non-compliant emergency escape routes and obstructed fire-fighting equipment. The committee also identified a need for greater capacity at some of these stations.

Garda National Safety Committee

In November, a two-person delegation from the subcommittee attended the meeting of the National Safety Committee, which was attended by all staff associations and unions where the following issues were raised:

- The urgent need for the election of safety representatives in accordance with the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act (2005). The committee was told this will likely be late 2019.
- The need to engage garda in respect of Health & Safety where station renovations are taking place.
- The absence of policy on motorway incidents protocols, training and equipment leaving members exposed to serious risks.
- The need for the Property and Exhibits Management System (PEMS) facilities are going to be renovated.
- Made representations on the training of Safety Representatives arguing Section 25 of the Garda Síochána Act (2005) act overrides the Garda code stipulation regarding study leave.
- Site-specific risk assessments for checkpoints should be provided to gardai prior to assignment.
- Insufficient risk assessment regarding water-related incidents and the absence of flotation aides in first responder vehicles.
- Two cases in which members injured on duty had not been updated on investigations. The investigation of near misses was also queried.

The committee also made a submission to the Health & Safety Authority regarding motorway incident protocols citing the authority's own literature; case law and the obligations on management in respect of the EU Framework Directive on Safety & Health (1989) as transposed into Irish law in the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Acts.

The submission noted that "it is clear that the statutory obligations, normal employees afford to their workers are not being afforded to members of An Garda Síochána." The committee goes on state this is evident from member testimony, the Garda risk assessment processes and the sufficiency of equipment. It also notes that the GRA have been making representations on this issue for several year.