



Statement Garda Representative Association

President Jim Mulligan

GRA says bodycams a win-win after Cabinet approves proposal to legislate

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GRA President Jim Mulligan has described the use of police body cams as a win-win for the public and for gardai after the Cabinet today authorised Justice Minister Charlie Flanagan to legislate for their use.

Mr Mulligan said: “We have been calling for the introduction of body cameras for many years having seen their benefit in other jurisdictions.

“They have been proven to have a positive effect in reducing levels of violence, complaints against police and in providing evidence in the criminal justice system – often speeding up court proceedings.

“These devices are proven to be effective in providing transparency in many aspects of policing, particularly when gardai are confronted by violent or potentially violent incidents.

“Body cameras give an accurate reflection of all interactions at incidents that police attend. They have a value in de-escalating volatile situations and countering false accounts of interactions with police videoed by others and often posted to social media.

“We are conscious of the human rights implications that arise from using body cameras and expect the legislation will provide for robust protocols to instil public confidence in their use.

“Bodycams also provide an important accountability function for police, providing evidence of officers’ actions that can be of use to suspects and other members of the public if they have a complaint.

“A study of their use in by City of Rialto Police in California found use of force by officers fell 59 percent and complaints against officers dropped 87 percent over a 12-month period*.

“We urge Minister Flanagan to bring his legislation before the Oireachtas at the earliest opportunity and for scrutiny of his bill to be swift and cooperative.

“The roll-out of bodycams by police forces around the world and the evidence of their use to date clearly points to them being a win-win for everyone concerned about public safety, swifter justice and accountable policing.