

GRA STATEMENT

Survey of gardai shows importance of family time drives satisfaction with current roster

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A survey of nearly 11,000 members of An Garda Síochána has found respondents satisfied with their current roster outnumber dissatisfied respondents by a ratio of over 2:1.

The survey, the biggest ever conducted by the Garda Representative Association (GRA), found a similar ratio saw rosters as a “strongly important” aspect of their working conditions with facilitation of family ranking as a key reason.

All members of Garda rank across all levels of experience, geographic location and duties were surveyed. The gender balance also corresponded to the overall composition of the Garda Síochána, with 27% of respondents female.

GRA General Secretary Pat Ennis said: “The GRA has conducted focus groups on rostering in the past but this is the biggest survey of members ever undertaken. After pay, rostering is usually the issue of most concern to our members and this survey confirms that.

“The findings show a strong preference for maintaining the status quo of working six consecutive 10-hour shifts.

“Rostering across 24 hours, 365 days a year presents huge problems for family life, particularly raising children. So the finding of average-to-good levels of satisfaction with rosters facilitating family time, is of enormous significance.

“We will therefore vigorously defend our current roster when it arises as part of the sweeping Garda reform agenda in the years ahead.”

Some 53 percent of respondents expressed satisfaction with their current rostering arrangements while 23 percent expressed dissatisfaction. The remaining 24 percent did not express a strong view either way.

Rostering was regarded as “strongly important” by 54 percent, while 26 percent regarded the issue as not of great importance, and 26 percent did not express a strong view either way.

A question on the predictability of rosters, registered the highest level of consensus with 73 percent rating it as “extremely important” – the highest level on the seven-point Rickert scale used in the survey.

The results also showed generally good levels of compliance with the requirement under the Garda Working Time Agreement for 11-hour breaks between shifts. Only 10 percent said it was always achieved, while 11% respondents had experienced roster pattern changes by management at least once a month.

The research carried out by Professor Andrew Coogan of Maynooth University had a response rate of over 45 percent which equates to 4,868. Professor Coogan said: “The strongly satisfactory response rate minimises the risk of non-response bias in the interpretation of the findings.”

Other non-roster-related questions showed GRA members have moderately positive sentiment about their job, and strongly positive views about their colleagues.

There was markedly limited interest in working beyond the age of 60 (70 percent) and there was considerable interest expressed in availing of a voluntary severance package, should one become available.

Some 31 percent said they would be “very likely” to avail of a scheme, while a further 20 percent also factored as more likely than not. Just 17 percent said they would be very unlikely to avail of a redundancy package.

ENDS

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Note to editors

A full copy of the report is available here: <http://gra.ie/news.html>

- Most questions on the survey asked respondents to rate their response on a 7-point Likert-like scales (eg. 1=not satisfied at all, 7=extremely satisfied); the advantage of a seven-point scale is that it represents a sufficient level of granularity of responses, whilst also offering a midpoint score of 4.
- The survey was open from April 17 until May 9, 2019. Data collection was fully anonymous, and no potentially identifying personal information (including IP addresses) was collected. Data was analysed for evidence of significant malingering and/or ballot stuffing, and no evidence for the same was found.