

QUESTION NO: 79

DÁIL QUESTION addressed to the Minister for Justice and Equality
(Deputy Frances Fitzgerald)
by Deputy Niamh Smyth
for **WRITTEN** on **Tuesday, 28th March, 2017.**

* To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality the number of new Garda recruits assigned to each Garda division since recruitment resumed in Templemore in 2014, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

- Niamh Smyth

REPLY.

As the Deputy will appreciate, the Garda Commissioner is responsible for the distribution of resources, and I as Minister, have no direct role in the matter. I am assured by the Commissioner that Garda personnel assigned throughout the country, together with the overall policing arrangements and operational strategies are continually monitored and reviewed. Such monitoring ensures that optimum use is made of resources and the best possible policing service is provided to the general public.

This Government is committed to ensuring a strong and visible police presence throughout the country in order to maintain and strengthen community engagement, provide reassurance to citizens and deter crime. To make this a reality for all, the Government has in place a plan to achieve an overall Garda workforce of 21,000 personnel by 2021 comprising 15,000 Garda members, 2,000 Reserve members and 4,000 civilians. This year, funding has been provided for the recruitment of 800 Garda recruits and up to 500 civilians to support the wide ranging reform plan in train in An Garda Síochána. Funding has also been provided for the recruitment of 300 Garda Reserves.

I am informed by the Garda Commissioner that, since the College re-opened in September 2014, a total of 839 recruits have attested as members of An Garda Síochána and have been assigned to mainstream duties nationwide. I am also informed that another 750 trainee Garda are scheduled to attest this year which will

see Garda numbers, taking account of projected retirements, increase to around the 13,500 mark by year end.

In so far as the allocation of newly attested Gardaí is concerned, this is a matter for the Garda Commissioner. I am assured by the Commissioner that the needs of all Garda Divisions are fully considered when determining the allocation of resources. However, it is important to keep in mind that newly attested Gardaí have a further 16 months of practical and class-room based training to complete in order to receive their BA in Applied Policing. To ensure that they are properly supported and supervised and have opportunities to gain the breadth of policing experience required, the Commissioner's policy is to allocate them to specially designated training stations which have the required training and development structures and resources in place, including trained Garda tutors and access to a permanently appointed supervisory Sergeant who is thoroughly familiar with their responsibilities under the training programme.

For the Deputy's information I have set out below, as provided by the Commissioner, the number of new Garda recruits, since recruitment resumed in Templemore in 2014, currently assigned to each Garda division .

DIVISION	No of newly attested Garda allocated
D.M.R. EAST	38
D.M.R. NORTH	66
D.M.R. NORTH CENTRAL	78
D.M.R. SOUTH	66
D.M.R. SOUTH CENTRAL	77
D.M.R. WEST	77
KILDARE	45
LAOIS / OFFALY	36
MEATH	26
WESTMEATH	17
WICKLOW	9
CAVAN / MONAGHAN	21
DONEGAL	13
LOUTH	42

SLIGO / LEITRIM	13
KILKENNY/CARLOW	24
TIPPERARY	26
WATERFORD	24
WEXFORD	28
CORK CITY	20
CORK NORTH	5
CORK WEST	5
KERRY	15
LIMERICK	33
CLARE	15
GALWAY	9
MAYO	3
ROSCOMMON/LONGFORD	5
TOTAL	839

QUESTION NO: 34

DÁIL QUESTION addressed to the Minister for Justice and Equality
(Deputy Frances Fitzgerald)
by Deputy Niamh Smyth
for **ORAL** on **Thursday, 30th March, 2017.**

To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality the capital investment being made in Garda resources in counties Cavan and Monaghan; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

- Niamh Smyth

REPLY.

As the Deputy will appreciate, the Garda Commissioner is responsible for the distribution of Garda resources in the State and I, as Minister, have no direct role in the matter.

The Cavan/Monaghan Division forms part of the Northern Region and the Garda strength of the Division, on the 28 February 2017, the latest date for which figures are readily available, was 321. There are also 13 Garda Reserves and 37 civilians attached to the Division. When appropriate, the work of local Gardaí is supported by a number of Garda national units such as the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Garda National Economic Crime Bureau and the Garda National

Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau.

I am advised by the Commissioner that, since the reopening of the Garda College in September 2014, some 839 recruits have attested as members of An Garda Síochána and have been assigned to mainstream duties nationwide, 21 of whom have been assigned to the Division. I am also advised that another 750 trainee Garda are scheduled to attest this year which will see Garda numbers, taking account of projected retirements, increase to around the 13,500 mark by year end - a net increase of 700 in the total Garda strength since recruitment recommenced.

The Deputy will be aware that the Garda Station Building and Refurbishment Programme includes the delivery of a new Garda station in Bailieborough and the provision of a Specialist Victim Interview Suite in Stradone. I understand that substantial progress has been made in relation to the acquisition of a site for the Bailieborough station and that, in advance of the development of the new station, essential remediation works at the existing Station were completed in 2016 to enhance the public office and general safety throughout the building.

In relation to the development at Stradone, I understand that the OPW is currently awaiting responses to the tender issued and, subject to the tendering and procurement process, the intention is that this project will commence later in the year.

In addition, there are some 60 Garda vehicles allocated to the Division.

The Programme for Government commits the Government to ensuring a strong and visible police presence throughout the country in order to maintain and strengthen community engagement, provide reassurance to citizens and to deter crime. A cornerstone of this commitment is the Government plan to achieve an overall Garda workforce of 21,000 personnel by 2021 comprising 15,000 Garda members, 2,000 Reserve members and 4,000 civilians. This year, the Government has provided funding for the recruitment of 800 Garda recruits and up to 500 civilians to support the wide ranging reform plan in train in An Garda Síochána. Funding has also been provided for the recruitment of 300 Garda Reserves. In order to continue to ensure

seamless ongoing recruitment it is expected that a new competition for trainee Garda will be announced shortly.

This focus on investment in personnel is critical. The moratorium on recruitment introduced in 2010 resulted in a significant reduction in the strength of An Garda Síochána. We are now rebuilding the organisation and providing the Commissioner with the resources she needs to allow her to deploy increasing numbers of Gardaí across every Garda Division, including the Cavan/ Monaghan Division, in the coming years.

This investment in personnel is complemented by substantial investment in resources across the board for An Garda Síochána. The Deputy will be aware of the significant resources that have been made available to An Garda Síochána under the Government's Capital Plan 2016 - 2021. In particular, some €205 million in additional funding for Garda ICT and €46 million for new Garda vehicles has been allocated over the lifetime of the plan. This investment will facilitate the provision of more effective policing services and I have no doubt that these new resources now coming on stream will see an increase in Garda visibility in our communities.