



OFFICIAL [PUBLIC]

**CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT TO NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD
3 OCTOBER 2019**

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1. BUILDING CAPACITY

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarise the **case for increased police officer numbers** within the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). It is not intended to be a detailed business case. Rather, it is intended to start a conversation with the Policing Board, Department of Justice (DOJ) and other stakeholders as to how we take forward the debate about adequate police resourcing.

Current Capacity and Funding Governance

The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing in Northern Ireland (**Patten Report**) Recommendation 105 stated, “We recommend that, provided the peace process does not collapse and the security situation does not deteriorate significantly from the situation pertaining at present, the approximate size of the Service over the next ten years should be **7500 full time officers.**” **Patten Recommendation 104 envisaged a Part Time Reserve of 2500 officers**, representative of the communities we serve. At present PSNI has 277 Part Time Reserve Officers, representing a dramatic shortfall in capacity envisaged by Patten.

In only four of the succeeding ten years did PSNI have a regular officer head count of around 7500. Since the commencement of the period known as “austerity” PSNI officer numbers have been determined by the available public spending envelope rather than a professional assessment of operational officer numbers required.

The continued downward pressure on PSNI capacity is illustrated in the following table where the capacity gap is growing with less officers met by less overtime to meet surges in demand for police resources:

Date	1. Officer Numbers Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	2. Overtime Main Grant £k	3. Overtime Security Funding £k
31/3/16	6834.75	19,471	22,772
31/3/17	6783.25	19,631	20,172
31/3/18	6712.35	14,184	19,689
31/3/19	6683.7	16,285	19,753
31/8/19	6766.3	16,205	19,823

Our argument is not based solely upon Patten, important as that report is to the fundamentals of policing in Northern Ireland. It is based upon the operational challenges and realities that we face in the here and now. To bridge the gap to 7500 officers would represent an **additional cost to the main PSNI grant of approximately £40m per annum** (officers and associated costs).

We have recently received an uplift of officers and staff in the initial round of funding for EU Exit. In preparation for the contingencies arising from the possibility of a no deal EU Exit, PSNI recently submitted a bid for additional resources. If granted, this would bring **overall funding** to a level of c7200 officers. However, none of this additional funding is sustainable. We currently have **four different pots of funding** – main grant, additional security funding, paramilitary crime task force and EU exit funding. Only main grant funding is considered sustainable, with other funding streams temporary, making resource planning and therefore representative recruitment beyond one year very difficult. Our aim is to have a reduced number of funding streams and for the funding to be sustainable beyond a one year cycle.

There is a strong evidence base to support the benefits of a sustainable police presence in localities to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour and aiding prosperity and support in the longer term development of the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland.

The table below shows the cost of the 300 officers + 114 police staff contained in our recent bid for a no deal scenario. It is spread over two years (20-21 phased recruitment, 21-22 some officers still in training therefore not full cost and the third column is the equivalent full year additional cost when they are all trained). The second table is the cost of another 300 officers to bring overall numbers to 7500 (same columns as above and assumes we can recruit and train 600 officers in a year).

Please note this does not include any ancillary costs – only pay costs.

EU Exit recruits - 300	20/21 £k	21/22 £k	Full Year Cost £k
Officers - 300 Recruits in 20/21	6,063	12,624	17,400
Staff - 114 all year	4,550	4,639	4,732
Total	10,613	17,262	22,132

Additional 300 Recruits to 7,500	20/21 £k	21/22 £k	Full Year Cost £k
Officers - 300 Recruits in 20/21	6,063	12,624	17,400
Total	6,063	12,624	17,400

Total Additional Costs	20/21 £k	21/22 £k	Full Year Cost £k
Officers - 600 Recruits in 20/21	12,127	25,247	34,800
Staff - 114 all year	4,550	4,639	4,732
Total	16,676	29,886	39,532

All costs are indicative only

I accept that the delivery of 600 additional officers in one year, including training and all other related measures, would be impracticable. Any increase in overall numbers would probably need to be staged over a two to three year glide path, coupled with supervision ratios, police staff support, fleet and IT needs.

Workforce modernisation will play a significant role in shaping the Service in the medium term, but does not provide an immediate answer to the gap in capacity. We need to increase capacity as a matter of urgency, whilst focusing upon organisational development to build a flexible workforce that will be sustainable and representative in the longer term.

Capability and Risks

The PSNI is operating in a **highly geared** manner and this has been the situation for a number of years. Working with partners we have delivered considerable success in the national security domain and local policing. Both, of course, are a continuum and interdependent. However, this is being delivered at a **cost to officer and staff wellbeing**, with c900 officers recorded as having some form of duty restriction. The largest factors are mental health and muscular-skeletal, contributing to both sickness and impairments, signalling an organisation under strain. We continue to operate in a severe threat environment, with no sign of that abating.

Overtime remains a necessity to sustain both regular and extraordinary operational activity, again placing a strain on officer wellbeing, work life balance and a cycle of demanding roles to meet the severe threat.

Whilst not unique to Northern Ireland, **crime is rising** after a number of years of continual reduction. The challenge of refocussing our efforts on new and emerging crime types whilst continuing to deal with national security, paramilitarism and the constant demand arising from policing divided communities requires both organisational development and enhanced capacity.

The **local policing consultation** undertaken by the Policing Board and our own review of District Policing both indicate that communities expect and demand increased officer visibility and responsiveness. As an initial action, I have prioritised an additional 400 posts in neighbourhood policing but this is only achieved by internal redistribution.

The **fragility of Northern Ireland society** must not be underestimated. We continue to police a divided society with significant intra community tensions. Any perceived failure of policing amongst our communities could result in much wider societal tensions, with significant consequences for all public service providers.

Local policing must succeed and be seen to succeed. The **confidence gap which is so crucial to legitimacy** can be evidenced in findings from, *'Perceptions of Policing and Justice: Findings from the 2017/18 Northern Ireland Crime Survey:'*

- 68% of Northern Ireland respondents expressed confidence in the PSNI compared to 78% in police forces in England and Wales.
- The survey found that a mere 51% of NI citizens rated the police in their area as doing an excellent or good job.
- Only 38% of people agreed that the police and other agencies seek their views about antisocial behaviour and crime issues that matter in their local area, although 43% felt police were dealing with these issues.

The Department of Justice's 2019 bulletin, *'Perceptions of Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland,'* found that 57% of citizens within their area were confident in reporting crime and antisocial behaviour to the PSNI. A similar proportion (57%) strongly agreed or agreed that PSNI keeps their area safe. This figure needs to increase and the only sustainable means to do so is neighbourhood policing that is accessible, responsive and visible in sufficient numbers. **The number of neighbourhood officers and teams is much reduced from the post Patten high**, in the main as a direct result of budget cuts.

Moreover, recent years have witnessed the PSNI reduce the number of Major Investigation Teams, just before a significant increase in homicides and major investigations, and a reduced Level One Public Order capacity, whilst **community tensions** arising from parades, bonfires, flags and emblems continue to place a considerable strain upon our front line resources.

Examples of recent pressures include:-

- Continued public order pressures in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Carrick.
- Rise in homicides.
- Further judicial direction to investigate legacy cases, against a declining UK Detective base to draw from.
- Major investigations such as Greenvale, Muckamore, Dunmurry Manor and Hyponatremia.
- Increased pace and intensity of Dissident Republican activity (official national security attack numbers do not adequately capture the totality of the risk).

Legacy remains unresolved and continues to place an unacceptable and unsustainable burden upon PSNI resources. In the absence of the Historical Investigations Unit (HIU) or provision of sufficient funding to PSNI, it will not only diminish our overall capacity to deal with contemporary priorities but **risks fatally undermining confidence in the PSNI.**

I am concerned that should public confidence in the PSNI's ability to provide an effective response to the needs of local communities (and be seen to be impartial in doing so) fall, and the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly remain suspended, the ability to deliver upon the high level outcomes of the Programme for Government will be limited. Moreover, such a combination risks **severe uncertainty** and potential instability in Northern Ireland just as we enter the uncertainty of the EU Exit period.

Investment in policing is not just about people but also the **estate** within which they work; the **technology** used to increase productivity and agile working; and the equipment they wear to maintain comfort, practicality and safety. I believe the PSNI needs to argue for transformational funding to help deliver upon these combined aims.

Closing the Gap

In the interim, we are focusing upon how we can improve our responsiveness and utilise all available resources effectively and efficiently. To that end, the following work is ongoing:-

- **Prioritisation of neighbourhood policing** by redeployment of officers.
- **Review** of channels and methods of **public contact**.
- **Increase productivity** via technological innovation and estates transformation.
- **Cultural change** via agile working and upskilling officers and staff.
- Refocus **performance management** on improving the local and routine, to equal our efforts in policing serious and high risk matters.

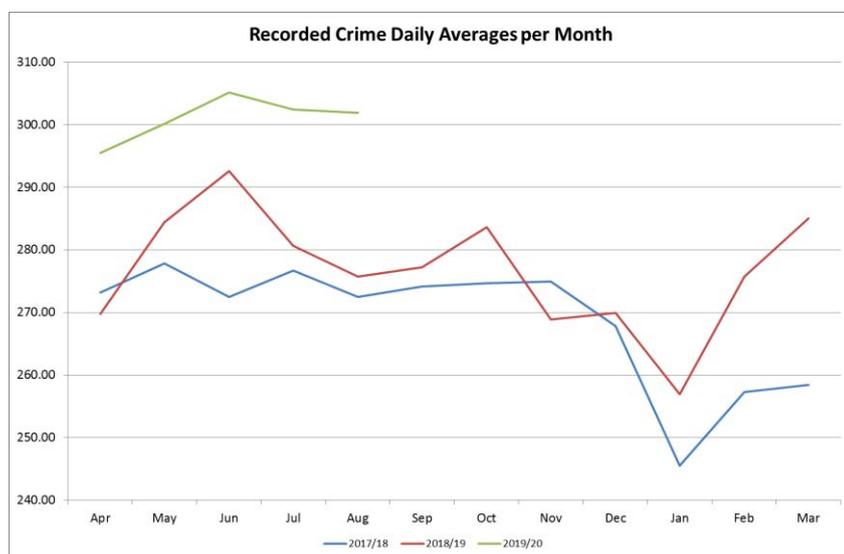
Next Steps

Respecting the governance arrangements for public money and being realistic about the competing demands upon the public purse, I have directed the Deputy Chief Constable to oversee the development of an evidence based **Strategic Outline Case** to articulate the totality of our ask, in order to better inform our engagement with the Policing Board and the Department of Justice. It will be finalised before Christmas and I look forward to engaging with the Policing Board and the Department of Justice once that work has been completed.

2. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Overall crime figures as per PSNI Crime Statistics published 26 September 2019

In 12 months from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019:



There were 104,112 recorded offences in Northern Ireland, an increase of 5,064 (5.1%) when compared with the previous 12 months, continuing the increase seen during 2018/19.

The outcome rate is 26.6%, a 0.2%pt reduction compared to the last financial year.

The number of crimes recorded each month this financial year has been significantly above the three year average.

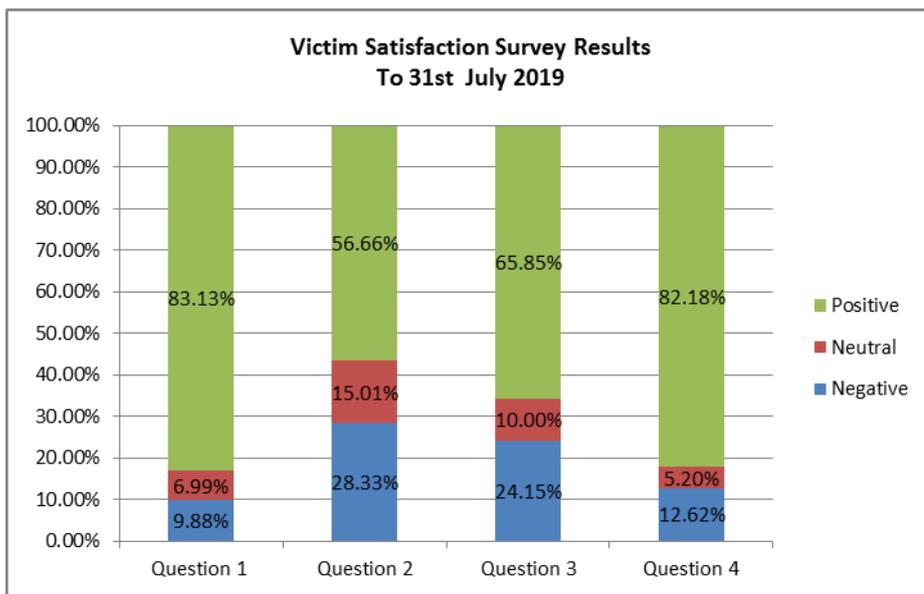
Harassment offences are continuing to increase across the Service. There has been an additional 1,206 harassment crimes recorded (+54.8%) this financial year. The majority of this increase is in relation to malicious communications (+820 crimes, 114.6%). Increased crime levels were seen in violence against the person offences, robbery and drug offences, while burglary offences showed falling levels. Analysis is being carried out to understand the cause of this increase and I can update the Policing Board once that has been received and considered.

Victim Satisfaction

To the end of July 2019 surveys have been sent to 5,107 victims of whom 441 (8.64%) agreed to complete the survey. Overall, the most common response to all four of the Victim Satisfaction survey questions was '5 – Strongly Agree'. The questions are:-

- Q1. 'The officers/staff I met treated me with fairness and respect'.
- Q2. 'I am satisfied with how well I have been kept informed of the progress of my case'.
- Q3. 'I am satisfied with my contact with the Police Service of Northern Ireland'.
- Q4. 'If a family member or friend were a victim of crime in the future, based on this experience, I would recommend they report it to the police'.

The chart below illustrates these results.



Reduce allegations against the PSNI

	Apr – Jul 18	Apr-Jul 19	Change	% Change
No of Complaints	873	804	-69	-7.9%
No of Allegations	1320	1225	-95	-7.2%
Oppressive Behaviour	265	272	7	2.6%
Failure in Duty	633	560	-73	-11.5%
Incivility	83	66	-17	-20.5%

Overall the number of complaints and allegations are continuing to decrease. There has been a small increase in the number of oppressive behaviour allegations. This would largely appear to be the result of an increase in Oppressive Behaviour allegations in Belfast and Causeway Coast & Glens districts during July.

Domestic Abuse

The number of Domestic Abuse crimes has increased this financial year by 6.9% (+475 crimes). The outcome rate for domestically motivated crime has increased by 2.0%pts from 24.4% to 26.4%. Increases have been recorded in criminal damage (+100 crimes, 13.4%) and harassment (+562 crimes, 83.3%).

Crime Against Older People

This financial year the number of crimes committed against older people has increased by 119 offences (4.3%), the overall increase in crime is 7.1% (3,047 crimes).

Sexual Offences

Sexual offences have reduced by 10.8% (-167 crimes) this financial year to date. Reductions have been recorded in both rape (-92, -18.4%) and other sexual offences (-75, -7.1%). The outcome rate has increased from 12.7% to 14.4% this financial year (+1.7%pts).

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) as per Official PSNI Statistical Bulletin published 26 September 2019

In 12 months from 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019:-

- There were 56,232 antisocial behaviour incidents in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 2,519 (4.3%) on the previous 12 months.
- Levels have been lower when compared with the same months in the previous year, with the exception of February, April and August 2019.

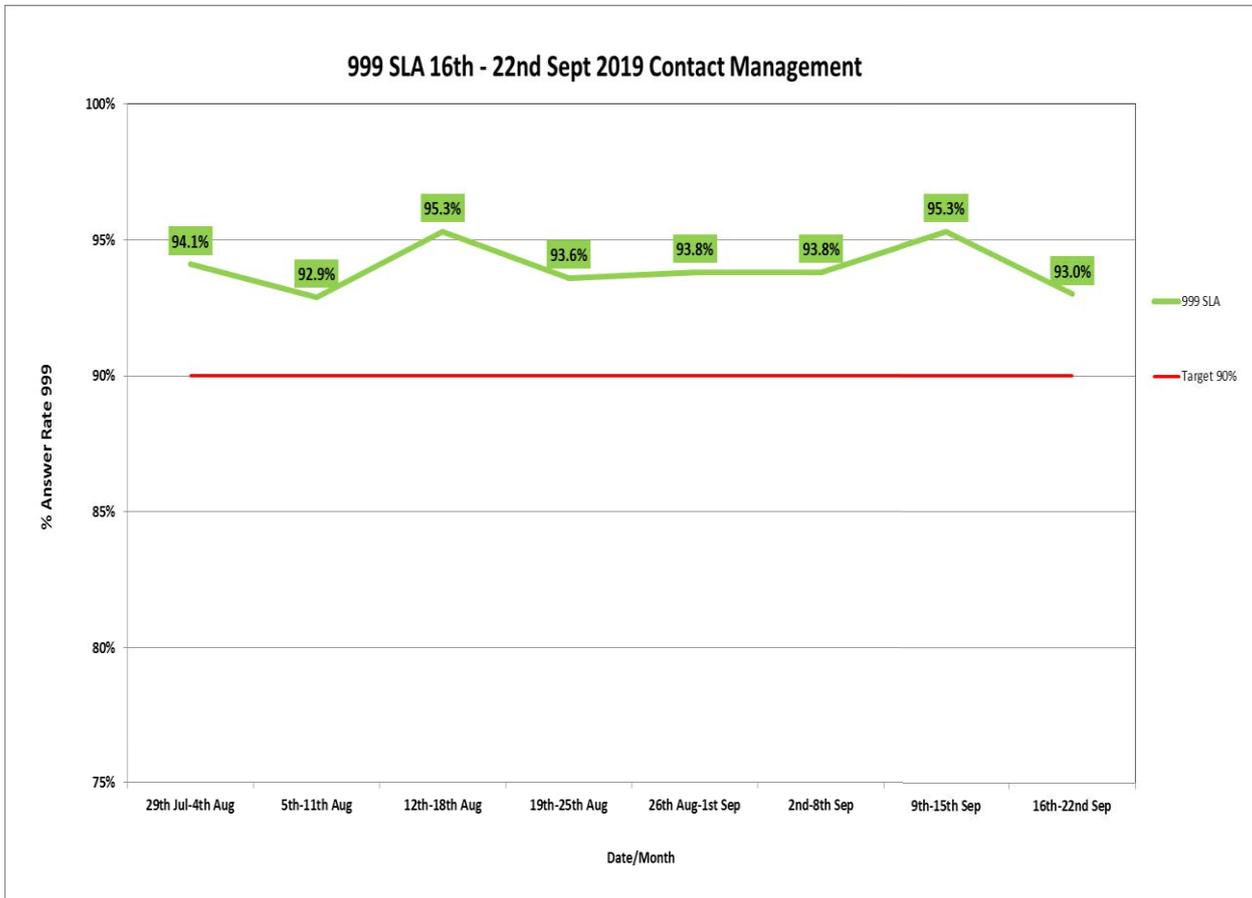
Fatal Road Traffic Collisions

This financial year to date there has been 20 fatalities as a result of road traffic collisions (RTCs) which is a reduction compared to 2017/18 (29) and 2018/19 (23). Over the summer months of June, July and August 2019 there were 13 fatalities, with 14 in 2018 and 18 in 2017. This calendar year there have been 35 fatalities compared to 32 in 2018 and 40 in 2017

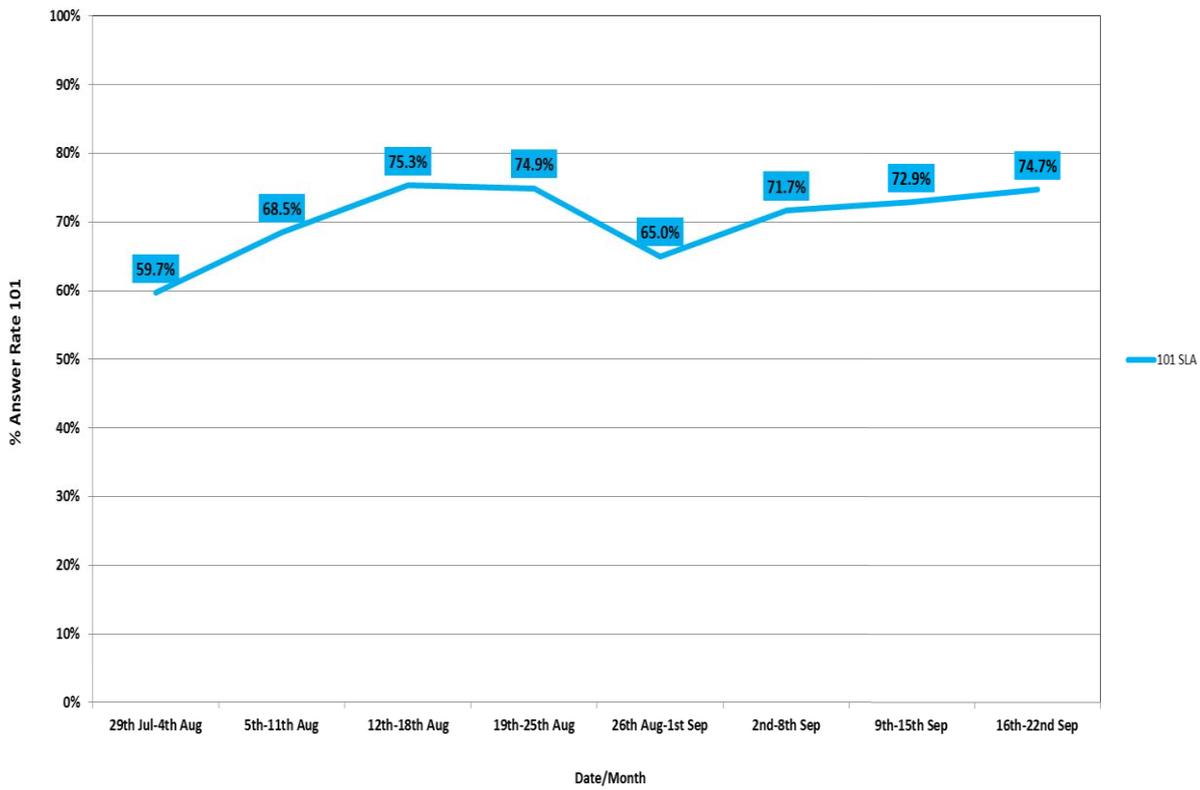
Paramilitary Style Assaults

	Apr – Jul 18	Apr - Jul	Change
Republican Shootings	2	0	-2
Republican Assaults	6	4	-2
Republican	8	4	-4
Loyalist Shootings	0	0	0
Loyalist Assaults	17	21	+4
Loyalist	13	17	+4
All	25	25	0

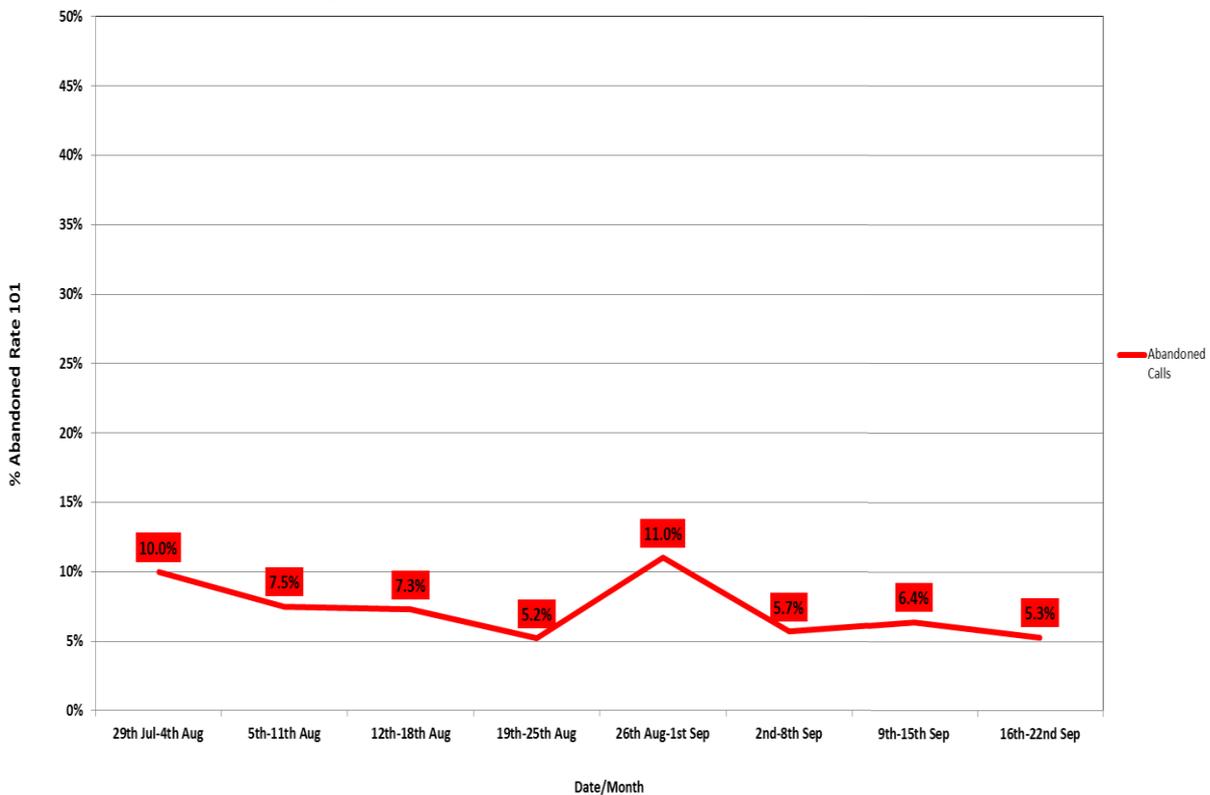
Public Contact



101 SLA 16th - 22nd Sept 2019 Contact Management



101 Percentage Abandoned Rate 16th - 22nd Sept 2019 Contact Management



3. SECURITY SITUATION UPDATE

- Shandon Park Golf Club - UVIED – 1 June 2019

The investigation into an UVIED located under a serving PSNI officer's vehicle at Shandon Park Golf Club continues. An extensive CCTV trawl and house to house enquiries have been completed. As a follow on from the ten searches and six arrests that have taken place, a further search and arrest operation took place on 11 September 2019 which resulted in one person being charged with the Attempted Murder of a serving PSNI officer, Possession of an Explosive Substance with Intent to Endanger Life or Cause Serious Injury to Property and Making an Explosive Substance with Intent to Endanger Life or Cause Serious Injury to Property. He is currently on remand. PSNI officers are currently assisting in providing evidential material for An Garda Síochána investigation file in respect of two other persons who have been charged with membership of the IRA regarding their alleged involvement in this incident.

- Tullygally Road, Craigavon - Bomb Attack – 27 July 2019

At approximately 0005 hours police received a report from a member of the public of an explosion in the area of Tullygally Road, Craigavon. This was followed by a call from a local newspaper who reported receiving a call from an unknown person stating that a horizontal mortar had been fired at a passing police patrol on the Tullygally Road and that the device missed its target and a live warhead was reported to be in dangerous condition in the area. A clearance operation was commenced and a mortar tube, attached to a secondary device, was discovered near to a bus stop on the Tullygally Road. A number of follow up searches were conducted in the Lurgan/Craigavon areas (seven dwellings and one area search) and a number of items were seized for forensic examination. The investigation is ongoing at this time, the incident is attributed to CIRA.

- Wattlebridge Road - Bomb Attack – 17 August 2019

Police received a report that a suspect device had been left in the area of Wattlebridge Road, Fermanagh. During a clearance operation a hoax device was discovered at the junction with Cavan Road. Whilst this device was being cleared, a second device exploded nearby. Despite the fact that a number of officers and support staff were in the immediate vicinity of the explosion, no one was injured. Two persons were arrested in relation to this attack and were later released pending further investigations. Follow up enquiries are ongoing and assistance is being provided by colleagues in An Garda Síochána.

- Strabane Mortar Find - 6 September 2019

On Saturday 7 September 2019 at 0830hrs, police received a report of a suspicious device placed on a wall in Church View which has a direct line of sight of the police station. A full clearance operation was implemented and confirmed the device to be viable. Several scenes were examined in relation to the pizza delivery call, hijacking and burning of the vehicle, find of the device itself and a local area search. House to house and CCTV trawls were completed. Searches and arrests were conducted between the 7-12 September and two persons were arrested, interviewed and subsequently released pending further investigations. The investigation continues at this time.

- Creggan IED - 9 September 2019

Police commenced an area search in the Creggan Heights area of Londonderry searching for munitions and wireless apparatus. During the course of this search an item was discovered in the rear of a vehicle, parked in the front yard of a house in Creggan Heights. A full clearance of the vehicle was conducted by ATO and a command wire operated IED was discovered and seized. House to house, CCTV and witness enquiries have been conducted and forensic submissions have been made. The investigation is ongoing at this time.

- Weapon Find – Holy Cross Boys’ Primary School – 23 September 2019

An improvised weapon was discovered down a manhole in a garden area of Holy Cross Boys’ Primary School by staff members on Monday afternoon. This was in the area of the school actually used by its pupils. The school itself was evacuated and remained closed the following day whilst the police operation continued to establish if anything else had been hidden in the grounds. No further finds were made. The weapon was capable of firing a high calibre round. It was not an explosive device as such but an improvised heavy calibre rifle. A number of witnesses have been interviewed, CCTV gathered and forensic submissions will be made. It is unknown how long the weapon may have been in place. The investigation is ongoing and the find has not been attributed to any specific organisation at this time but the primary line of enquiry is that it was placed by dissident republican terrorists.

4. CORPORATE PLAN

The PSNI, like all other police services and, indeed, all other public services, is facing some very significant challenges. Within the PSNI these challenges revolve around reducing budgets and workforce and changing demands and public expectations. With this in mind, the PSNI developed a one year Corporate Plan document to explore these future challenges and identify how the PSNI needs to evolve in the years ahead in order to continue to achieve the outcomes set out in the Annual Policing Plan. The Corporate Plan outlines 19 areas of planned activity linked to seven areas of identified focus. PSNI is undertaking a review of the current plan and developing a five year Corporate Plan which will become our mechanism to deliver continuous improvement across the Service. We look forward to sharing our thinking with the Board as we develop the new Corporate Plan for 2020 and beyond.

5. EU EXIT UPDATE

Members will recall at the last Board meeting I advised that ACC George Clarke has now assumed the role of Gold Commander for our planning and response to EU Exit. I have conducted a personal assurance check of our planning and am satisfied that the PSNI is as ready as it can be for all foreseeable outcomes. Further assurance of our planning and preparedness will be sought during a table top exercise this week.

Due to the uncertainty and the potential challenges facing us as a Service, an operational decision has been taken to restrict officers' leave by 10% for a period of six weeks between 31 October and 12 December. This is a necessary operational contingency but one that has not been taken lightly. The restriction will only remain in place for as long as is absolutely necessary.