

PAC-R-933

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Meeting 84 – 16/05/2013



Vote 20

An Garda Síochána

Public Accounts Committee
Briefing Document
16th May 2013

2011 Appropriation Account

Chapter 26 Collection of Motor taxation

Report September 2012

Overview of Vote 20

The following table shows the 2011 Estimate allocation and expenditure outturn under each subhead of the Vote, as contained in the 2011 Appropriation Account, as well as the 2012 Estimate Allocation and 2012 Provisional outturn.

Subhead	2011 Estimate €000	2011 Outturn €000	2012 Estimate €000	2012 Outturn (Provisional) €000
A.1 Salaries, Wages and allowances	1,041,500	1,036,917	956,433	955,189
A.2 Travel & Subsistence	21,775	20,558	13,966	14,013
A.3 Incidental Expenses	19,261	18,986	12,369	12,268
A.4 Postal and Telecommunications services	39,675	44,852	42,835	43,165
A.5 Office machinery and other office supplies and related services	24,035	24,563	19,037	19,373
A.6 Maintenance of Garda Premises	10,000	9,534	6,521	7,141
A.7 Consultancy services	60	52	155	157
A.8 Station services	20,170	20,102	18,850	18,520
A.9 Implementation of Garda SMI	143	145	178	150
A.10 Garda Reserve	875	780	900	884
B. Clothing and accessories	3,185	3,896	2,650	2,499
C. St Paul's Garda Medical Aid Society	124	124	124	124
D. Transport	25,455	26,146	26,654	27,018
E. Communications and other Equipment	31,552	32,743	27,966	28,184
F. Aircraft	1,800	1,805	1,250	1,320
G. Superannuation, etc	309,773	307,119	319,673	317,825

Subhead	2011 Estimate €000	2011 Outturn €000	2012 Estimate €000	2012 Outturn (Provisional) €000
H. Witnesses Expenses	1,805	1,838	1,500	1,472
I. Compensation	20,935	20,103	16,622	16,587
J. Witness security programme	700	700	-	-
Gross Expenditure	1,572,823	1,570,963	1,467,683	1,465,889
K. Appropriations-in-aid	133,200	133,716	133,641	133,386
Net Expenditure	1,439,623	1,437,247	1,334,042	1,332,503
Surplus to be surrendered		2,376		1,539

Explanations on causes of Variation between Outturn and Estimate Provision

An explanation is provided in the Appropriation Accounts in the case of each expenditure subhead where the outturn varies from the amount provided, after any supplementary adjustments, by more than €100,000 and by more than 5%. The following table sets out the position across Subheads where variations occurred in 2011:

Subhead	2011 Estimate €000	2011 Outturn €000	Variation Less/(more) than provided €000
B. Clothing and accessories	3,185	3,896	(711)

Explanation provided in the Appropriation Account is as follows:

<u>Subhead</u>	<u>Variation (€000)</u>
B. Clothing and Accessories	(711)

The excess arose due to the requirement to purchase additional clothing items for security and public order purposes.

Chapter 26 – Collection of Motor Taxation

The role of An Garda Síochána in the administration of motor taxation is to enforce the legal requirement for a vehicle in use to be taxed and to display a valid motor tax disc.

An Garda Síochána issue and process the collection of fixed charges notices in cases of failure to display a current motor tax disc and instigate prosecutions where fixed charges are unpaid. Motor tax disc display checks are carried out by members of An Garda Síochána during routine operational activities and checkpoints. An Garda Síochána may also instigate a prosecution where a person is found using a vehicle without having a current disc.

The fixed charge penalty for the non-display of a current disc is currently €60. On receipt of a fixed charge notice, a person is required to pay the charge within 28 days. If the charge is not paid during that period, the charge increases by 50% with a further 28 days to pay the higher amount. If the charge remains unpaid after this time, An Garda Síochána may initiate a prosecution.

With regard to a declaration of non-use, the role of members of An Garda Síochána is to witness the signed declaration of non use by the vehicle owner. An Garda Síochána supports measures included in the Non Use of Motor Vehicles Bill, 2013 whereby off road declarations will be required to be made prospectively.

Fixed Charges Notices

A total of 58,075 fixed charge notices relating to tax and registration offences were issued in 2012. This compares to 65,863 for 2011, a reduction of 7,788 (or 12%).

On an annual basis the total number of fixed charge notices issued for tax and registration offences is shown in the table below.

Fixed charge notices issued for tax / registration offences (2008 to 2012)

Year	Fixed Charge notices issued
2008	75,310
2009	73,293
2010	96,298
2011	65,863
2012	58,075

In addition An Garda Síochána can detain vehicles under Section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1994 as amended by Section 19 Road Traffic Act 2006 where, inter alia, there is no road tax in force for a period of 2 months or greater. The total number of vehicles detained for the last 5 years is shown in the table below.

Section 41 Road Traffic Act – Vehicles detained (2008 to 2012)

Year	Sec41 incidents
2008	25,634
2009	27,163
2010	26,244
2011	23,983
2012	22,500

(Include detentions under all sub-section of Sec 41 – insurance, tax, NCT etc)

Utilisation of Garda Mobile Road Safety Cameras

It has been proposed that Garda mobile road safety cameras be utilised in the enforcement of motor tax offences however it is the view of An Garda Síochána that this would impact negatively on the deployment of road safety cameras for their original purpose of road safety and the reduction of road fatalities for the following reasons:-

- The “GoSafe” project is a safety camera project and the collection of motor tax is not a safety issue.

- This would be outside the scope of the service tendered for, which related solely to speed monitoring and speed surveying which would carry a significant risk in terms of legal challenge.
- GoSafe captures images of vehicles exceeding the speed limit. With the changes brought about in driver behaviour this amounts to between 6,000 and 7,000 images per month. Additional in-vehicle and back office equipment / software would be required if vehicles, other than those exceeding the speed limit, were to be captured.
- GoSafe vans are deployed based on a history of speed related collisions on the days of the week and at the times of the day when such collisions tend to occur. To maximise the benefits, enforcement of motor tax should concentrate on locations where there is the highest volume of traffic.
- Public support for the safety camera project would be diminished and there would be an increased risk of attack.

In conclusion therefore, a separate contract would be required to carry out this type of enforcement using an outside service provider.