



THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL FROM A POLICING PERSPECTIVE

Sergeant Sheila Tuohy

15/6/17

Objectives

- ▣ Outline the various crimes where Alcohol has a been identified as having a key role.
- ▣ Present a number of facts/statistics on alcohol & crime in Ireland.
- ▣ Outline the work involved by Gardai in dealing with such incidents
- ▣ Outline the options available to Gardai to deal with such incidents
- ▣ Strategies in place to address these issues

Crimes

- ▣ Public Order Offences
- ▣ Assaults & Homicide
- ▣ Sexual Assaults
- ▣ Criminal Damage
- ▣ Domestic Violence including the effects on children
- ▣ Road Traffic Offences including drink driving
- ▣ Crimes involving youths – underage drinking & crimes listed above

Facts/Statistics

- ❑ 75% of alcohol drank in 2013 in Ireland was part of a binge drinking session – acc to Health Research Board
- ❑ Research by DrinkAware – 46% of people in Ireland think excessive drinking is no big deal (1000 people surveyed)
- ❑ Alcohol – contributory factor in 97% of public order offences (as per Garda Pulse System)
- ❑ Public Order Offences >2% in 2015 compared to 2014 (AGS Annual Report 2015)
- ❑ 650 Public Order offences in Sligo/Leitrim between 2010-2014
- ❑ Offenders are predominantly males - age category 25-44 yrs accounted for almost $\frac{1}{2}$ Public order offences with males 18-24yrs accounting for $\frac{1}{3}$ with females and other males accounting for the remaining offences.
- ❑ Estimated that $\frac{1}{2}$ of perpetrators of homicide were intoxicated when the crime was committed

Facts/Statistics contd.

- 85% of Garda Youth Diversion Programmes state alcohol related crimes as the top of the list of offences committed in their area.
- Acc to Rape Crisis Network – 76% of all rape defendants had been drinking at the time of the allege rape
- Acc to RSA research – alcohol is the main contributory factor in 2/5 fatal collisions
- Survey by RSA in 2015 – found 1/10 had consumed alcohol before driving in previous 12 months and of those 2/5 had consumed 2 or more alcoholic drinks
- New study - Oxford University/University of London – even moderate alcohol consumption leads to brain damage & decline in mental skills.

Work Involved by Gardai

- ❑ Analysis of Information to provide a targeted approach to reduce, detect & deal with such offences
- ❑ Checkpoints & Patrols – mobile, beat & mountain bike
- ❑ Monitoring of CCTV cameras
- ❑ Liquor Licensing Patrols and Inspection of Premises
- ❑ Arrests
- ❑ Preservation & examination of crime scenes
- ❑ Custody, processing & detention of prisoners
- ❑ Interviewing/Investigation of offences
- ❑ Administration – compilation of files
- ❑ Court Duty
- ❑ Juvenile Diversion Programme
- ❑ Liaison with crime victims

Options Available to Gardai

- Informal Cautions for minor breaches – recorded on Garda Pulse System
- Fines on the Spot for minor Public Order Offences
- Adult cautions for a number of offences
- Arrest - following direction - summons or charge offenders
- Leads to Court System/Juvenile Diversion System &/or possible conviction

Strategies to address issues

- ❑ Increased patrols to monitor, deter and detect offences – this has been prioritised by our Divisional & District Policing Plan and is being monitored on an ongoing basis
- ❑ Youth Education – Community Policing Units/CPO give talks to schools & Sligo IT on crime prevention, road safety, vandalism etc.. and the harmful effects of such behaviour.
- ❑ Victims of Crime Office – gives advice and support to victims of crime and keeps them updated on the progress of the investigation in line with the EU Directive on Victims Rights & the Criminal Justice (Rights of Victims) Legislation.
- ❑ Continuous Liaison between Gardai & the community – Community Events, YAPS, Vintners Assoc., Youth Groups to highlight awareness & change attitudes in this area.

Questions?