

## POLICING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

OCTOBER 2008

Jurisdiction	Policing Governance Structure
Northern Ireland	<p>Northern Ireland policing is largely a tripartite structure includes: the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; the Policing Board<sup>1</sup>; and the Chief Constable of the PSNI.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>The Policing Board's is made up of 11 MLAs and 8 independent members. Its functions are to ensure an efficient, effective and impartial police service and hold the Chief Constable to account.<sup>3</sup> Other responsibilities are: to secure an effective and efficient local police service; to appoint (and dismiss, if necessary) the Chief Constable and senior police officers (Assistant Chief Constable and above);to consult widely with local people about the policing of their area; to set local policing priorities and targets for police performance to monitor everything the police do and how well they perform against the targets set by the Policing Board; to publish a three year and annual policing plan which tells local people what they can expect from their police service and report on police performance every year; to make sure local people get best value from their local police; to oversee complaints against senior officers; and to discipline senior officers.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>The Chief Constable has sole responsibility for direction and control of the police.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland may determine long term policing objectives and issue Codes of practice for the Policing Board.<sup>6</sup></p>

<sup>1</sup> The Policing Board for Northern Ireland replaced the Police Authority for Northern Ireland, see the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, section 2 (3).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nio.gov.uk/index/faq/niofaq-policing.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/index/our-work.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, section 33.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, sections 25 and 27.

Jurisdiction	Policing Governance Structure
Scotland <sup>7</sup>	<p>Police (Scotland) Act 1967 provides for a tripartite sharing of responsibility for Policing between the Scottish Ministers, police authorities or Joint police boards and Chief Constables.</p> <p>Police Authorities and Joint Police Board are made up of local authority councillors and cover the eight police forces in Scotland and responsibilities include: setting the police budget; appointing senior police officers and civilian support staff and securing best value and continuous improvement within police force.</p> <p>Chief Constables have sole responsibility for operational decisions about police deployment and enforcing the law in their areas and appoint all officers up to and including the rank of superintendent for their police forces.</p> <p>Scottish Ministers are responsible for policing policy in Scotland. It should be noted that there is also a Police Advisory Board for Scotland (PABS) which is examines the “conduct and efficiency of police officers and advises the Scottish Ministers on general questions affecting the Police.”<sup>8</sup> Membership of PABS is comprised of a Ministerial Chair, independent members, appointed by Ministers, staff association representatives and representatives from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.<sup>9</sup></p>
England and Wales	<p>Policing in England and Wales is a tripartite structure of the Home Office, Chief Constables and Police Authorities. The Home Office funds the police and has overall responsibility as a coordinator.<sup>10</sup></p> <p>There are 43 police authorities, one for each force area. Most police authorities consist of 17 members, including nine Councillors, three magistrates and five independents although some authorities have more members.<sup>11</sup> Responsibilities are<sup>12</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to make sure arrangements are in place to consult the local community about the policing of their area and their priorities;</li> <li>• to publish an annual local policing plan and a best value performance plan, setting out the policing priorities, performance targets and the</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> Information obtained from a report by the Scottish Parliamentary Information Centre (SPICe) (2007) The Scottish Criminal Justice: The Police, Pgs 6-8

[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/research/pdf\\_subj\\_maps/SMDA07-02.pdf](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/research/pdf_subj_maps/SMDA07-02.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Donnelly, D and Scott K “The Organisation of Scottish Policing” in Policing Scotland (2005) edited by Donnelly, D and Scott, Willan Publishing, Pg 25.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/about/?view=Standard>

<sup>11</sup> Following information taken from report by Docking M (2003) “Public Perceptions of Police accountability and decision making” Pg 7

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr3803.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

	<p>allocation of resources;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to monitor the performance of the force in delivering the policing plan;</li> <li>• to report to the community on performance during the previous year;</li> <li>• to appoint the chief constable and other very senior officers and deal with some complaints and discipline issues;</li> <li>• under the Best Value initiative, scrutinise police activity for possible improvements; and</li> <li>• to publish a three-year strategy plan, which must be approved by the Home Secretary.</li> </ul> <p>Chief Constables are responsible for the direction and control of regional forces.<sup>13</sup></p>
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Policing Governance Structure</b>
Republic of Ireland	<p>The Policing administrative structure in ROI, unlike other jurisdictions is not a tripartite structure. The Garda Siochana Act 2005, section 26 (3) sets out that the Garda Commissioner is accountable to the Minister for the Garda Commissioners functions and the functions of the Garda Siochana.</p> <p>It should be noted that the Irish Council for Civil Liberties in 2003 called for the establishment of a Garda Board “tasked with ensuring greater public accountability and civic oversight of An Garda Siochana.”<sup>14</sup></p>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/about/?view=Standard>

<sup>14</sup> [http://iccl.ie/DB\\_Data/publications/ICCLsubmissiononschemeoftheGardaSiochanaBill.pdf](http://iccl.ie/DB_Data/publications/ICCLsubmissiononschemeoftheGardaSiochanaBill.pdf)