



# AGSI: Damage to morale and ability

**RANK AND FILE**  
by Stephen Rogers

The body representing Garda sergeants and inspectors has said the spotlight put on the force in recent times has “seriously diminished” morale and demanded that a review of the organisation be expanded to include oversight and accountability.

**John Redmond**, general secretary of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors pointed to the focus on the outgoing commissioner’s “choice of words” and said anything that reduced the ability to carry out policing work was a concern. He said bringing at least a part of the matter to a close with the resignation of the commissioner would allow the organisation to get back to what it should be doing — policing.

“The myriad of controversies over the last number of weeks has impacted on public confidence in the Garda organisation,” said Mr Redmond. “AGSI believes that the Minister for Justice, Alan Shatter, must act swiftly in appointing a new commissioner. This is critically important so that confidence and leadership can be provided at this time within An Garda Síochána.

“Some of the reports and criticisms have impacted greatly with morale seriously diminished within the organisation — all of this when our members are trying to deliver a policing service in difficult times.”

He said the review of the force was timely and should be prioritised by Government and garda management “as a matter of urgency” in light of the resignation.

“As you know we are in the process of undertaking a review of the Garda organisation as part of

the Haddington Road agreement,” said Mr Redmond. “Now is the opportune time to expand the review of the garda organisation to include oversight and accountability and indeed to look at service provision generally by the garda organisation. The public have expectations of what service they want and yet this review is not engaging globally with all interested parties and stakeholders.”

He said AGSI will debate the issue of a policing authority at its conference in three weeks.

“We hope that Government fulfil their commitment under the Haddington Road Agreement — that a robust review of the structure and operations of the Garda organisation, the first in over 40 years, takes place this year,” added Mr Redmond.