

AGSI calls for new drive against evil drugs trade

09/06/2004

Society needs to re-energise the battle to combat the evil of the drugs trade which is capable of destroying so many lives, says the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors in its submission to the Midterm Review of the National Drugs Strategy currently being carried out by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

In its submission the association says that hard drugs are now available in every town in Ireland and that a range of stringent measures needs to be taken to combat the growing availability and misuse of drugs.

Among the points made by AGSI are:

- it is extremely difficult to arrest drug dealers unless gardai can catch them in the act
- drug units need to be staffed and resourced in every garda district and division to tackle the problem.
- drug dogs should be widely available throughout the country
- the multi-agency approach to dealing with the problem must be beefed up
- the system of referring drug addicts for treatment needs to be put on a statutory basis
- the system of gathering statistics on drug abuse needs to be overhauled
- mandatory sentences for drug dealing must be imposed by all judges
- Increased resources must also be devoted to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers,” said AGSI President Joe Dirwan. “Some years ago we put forward the proposal that assets seized from drug dealers should be allocated to areas which suffer most from drug abuse. The situation is now so bad that these measures are urgently needed.”