

Note for FCP on Transition Phase for the Introduction of the 3 Year Firearms Certificate

9 June 2009

The Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 is due to be commenced in early July 2009 and will facilitate the enactment of the remaining sections of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 thereby introducing the three year firearms licence. This new legislation will make provide for the transition phase during which time all current licences, which are due to expire on 31 July 2009 will be extended. The extensions will be from a minimum of 3 months up to a maximum of 12 months: i.e. until at least 1 November 2009 up to the latest 31 July 2010. These extensions will be assigned on a random basis to facilitate the phasing in of the new 3 year firearms licence and will ensure that all licences will not expire on the same date in the future. In early July 2009 the Garda Commissioner will write to each licence holder and will outline the period of time that the licence has been extended for. He will also invite the holder when they can apply for a new firearms licence - up to 3 months prior to the date of expiry of the extended licence.

The letter from the Commissioner must be attached to the existing firearms licence and carried by the licence holder. It will be recognised by the Garda Síochána as being a valid licence for the extension period outlined in the letter. These extended licences will be free of charge. All existing firearms licence holders will not now be required to renew their licences on form PC20 and instead will be required to apply under the new legislation - on the new application form FCA1 - following the expiry of their extended licences. The application form is available at www.garda.ie

The collection of fees for firearms licences will be outsourced and no money will, in future, be accepted at Garda Stations for firearms licences. The Garda Commissioner will shortly publish Guidelines on firearms licensing. These Guidelines will be available to the public and the Gardaí alike and should be of assistance to all firearms licence holders during this period of major change in the firearms licensing processes.