



# PROTECT North & South

## Final Evaluation Report

European Union Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern  
Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland 2000-2004

Priority 5 Cross-Border Co-operation

Measure 2 Improving Cross-Border Public Sector Co-operation.

June 2007



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## Executive Summary

The Belfast Agreement, 1998, committed the UK Government to a review of criminal justice in Northern Ireland. One target area of the review was an examination of the Scope for Structured Co-operation between the Criminal Justice agencies on both parts of the Island (Police and Justice Annex B). This proved to be a key point for the two probation services on the island of Ireland to develop meaningful partnership work.

Before the introduction of the Probation Reducing Offending Through Enhanced Co-operation and Training North & South (PROTECT N&S) project, there had been limited contact between the two services and there had not been the opportunity or resources to formalise this contact and develop common practice. Senior managers in the two services had met once per annum for informal information exchange but this had limited impact beyond the information sharing. It did, however, raise the issue of the need for more formal ongoing contact which formed the foundation for the development of the PROTECT N&S project.

The PROTECT N&S project was set up in partnership between the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Probation and Welfare Service (PWS) in the Republic of Ireland. During the course of this project the Probation and Welfare Service changed its name to The Probation Service (PS). For ease it will be referred to as PS throughout this report.

The two organisations successfully applied to the Special European Union Programme Body for funding under Peace II, Measure 5.2 and the PROTECT N&S project was launched in September 2004. This was a new and innovative project and both partners committed considerable resources to it indicating their determination to make it work. The partnership was 'solution' focused and as it evolved it became more directional in its management style as the partners grew in trust and confidence. This evolving partnership has created a template for work not only between these partners but also as a model of practice for other initiatives in cross-border co-operation.

The four key aims of PROTECT N&S were to:

1. Develop cross-border approaches to the management of offenders;
2. Disseminate knowledge of effective models of supervision approaches;

3. Promote and engage with local communities; and
4. Create opportunities for staff exchanges.

Seminars and conferences were organised to disseminate knowledge and topics included:

- Sharing information on offenders;
- Developing networking;
- Sharing practice;
- Undertaking joint work; and
- Facilitating cross-border cooperation.

Seminars focused on practice and were by and large internal to the two organisations. Conferences had a different focus concerning awareness raising, development of practice and looked at a wider developmental picture. Conference themes, which included information on areas such as electronic tagging of offenders, were relevant to a wider range of stakeholders. This included policy makers, academics, statutory sector agencies and voluntary sector agencies, both domestic and international.

These conferences and seminars resulted in the sharing of best practice, the development of joint protocols and laid the foundations for other work between the two organisations.

An Expert Panel was created which brought together a wide range of organisations and individuals with an interest in the criminal justice system and cross-border co-operation. This Panel operated on a number of levels: as an advice-giving forum, to creating partnerships between members of the Panel and to improve cross-border co-operation.

Engagement with communities was not as fully realised as would have been intended in the original proposal.

The project also developed a series of staff exchanges on both a formal and informal level. This has benefited practice and increased communication.

The project organised six seminars, two conferences and a public launch of PROTECT N&S. All of these were well attended and explored practice, new developments in criminal justice and potentials for partnership. Feedback from participants was positive.

A further key outcome of the project was a formal joint protocol on the monitoring of sex offenders.

Overall the PROTECT N&S project has proved to be of considerable value. It has to a large extent achieved its aims and has undertaken successfully most of the tasks it set itself in order to meet its aims.

Additional impacts unforeseen at the start of the project have been that it has proved to be a forerunner of wider inter-governmental partnerships. It preceded and helped to set the scene for the now considerable amount of inter-agency work occurring between the jurisdictions.

It has also placed both organisations at the centre of the public protection agenda in both jurisdictions.

As well as creating closer links between the two organisations, PROTECT N&S developed contact with other key agencies with an interest in criminal justice. Stronger contacts were also made with other European Probation organisations.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Belfast Agreement, 1998, committed the UK Government to a review of criminal justice in Northern Ireland. One target area of the review was an examination of the Scope for Structured Co-operation between the Criminal Justice agencies on both parts of the Island (Police and Justice Annex B). This proved to be a starting point for the two organisations to develop partnership work.
- 1.2 PROTECT N&S was developed in the spirit of the Belfast Agreement and the Criminal Justice Review that highlighted the need for development of co-operation between public bodies in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Many of the recommendations accepted by the two Governments are reflected in this project. These include:
  - Identify and advise on cooperation between Criminal Justice agencies;
  - Information sharing on an all-Ireland basis; and
  - Mutual arrangements for monitoring offenders
- 1.3 Before the introduction of PROTECT N&S there had been contact between the two services but there had not been the opportunity or resources to formalise this contact and develop common practice. Senior managers in the two organisations had been meeting once per annum for informal information exchange, which identified the need for more formal ongoing contact. This formed the foundation for the development of the PROTECT N&S project.
- 1.4 PROTECT N&S is a partnership approach between the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Probation Service (PS) in the Republic of Ireland. Both agencies are key players in criminal justice in their respective jurisdictions. While they have different corporate backgrounds they have large areas of commonality and a common agenda. This recognition of common ground was identified by both Probation organisations through the ongoing contact between the two organisations.
- 1.5 PBNI is a community-based Board with the status of a Non-Departmental Public Body. It has a number of functions which are laid down in legislation including:

- To carry out assessments and provide reports to Courts which are designed to make a contribution to the decisions which magistrates and judges make in relation to sentencing;
- To supervise offenders in the community;
- To have staff who work in prisons providing a range of services; and
- With the approval of the Secretary of State has the authority to provide and maintain hostels and to make and give effect to schemes for supervision of offenders and prevention of crime.

1.6 The purpose of PBNI is to:  
 ‘Protect the public by working with the Courts, other Agencies and Partners to reduce re-offending and integrate offenders successfully back into the community.’

Its AIM is ‘To help reduce crime and the harm it does’

Its VISION is to ‘Achieve excellence in the assessment and management of offenders’.

1.7 The PS is part of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR). It assesses and manages offenders in the community on behalf of the Courts Service and the Prison Service, and in the process helps to make society safer. It also works in prisons and detention centres.

1.8 The organisation’s MISSION is ‘On behalf of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and in conjunction with the Courts Service, the Irish Prison Service, An Garda Síochána and the wider community, we provide high quality assessment of offenders and a professional and effective management of services and supports to bring about positive change in the behaviour of offenders’.

1.9 PS is guided by the following core values:

- Crime results in hurt and damage to victims and communities and must be met by an effective sanction.
- Where appropriate, community sanctions are more fitting and effective than custody.
- By engaging effectively with communities, particularly through a restorative justice model to address crime, it can enhance public safety and reduce offending patterns.
- Each person has innate value, dignity and capacity for positive change; and will be treated fairly, openly and with respect.
- As with all members of society, offenders must accept personal responsibility for their behaviour.

- It recognises the importance of accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money in the provision of a quality public service.
- 1.10 PS provides probation work and related services to the Courts and a welfare service to the prisons and places of detention. The work involves:
- Preparing pre-sanction assessments for the Courts;
  - Supervising offenders in the community who are referred by the Court;
  - Supervising offenders released conditionally from custody; and
  - Providing a counselling service to offenders and their families.
- 1.11 With a shared agenda it had become increasingly clear over the recent years that there were a number of common themes and issues, which could be developed and addressed between the two organisations. These included:
- Increased cross-border co-operation;
  - Sharing of best practice; and
  - Addressing cross-border offending.
- In addition there was an opportunity to work at a local level to promote safer communities.
- 1.12 Based on this information the two organisations applied to the Special European Union Programmes Body for funding under Peace II Measure 5.2. This particular strand of Peace II addressed cross-border co-operation, Measure 2 specifically at improving Cross-Border Public Sector Co-operation.
- 1.13 The bid to SEUPB for £526,150 resulted in funding of £354,750. The two organisations committed considerable additional resources to the project. The PROTECT N&S staff team commenced in May 2004 with a formal launch in September 2004 at a widely attended event in Armagh. The project completed in August 2006.
- 1.14 PROTECT N&S aimed to contribute to community safety throughout Ireland, enhancing co-operation between the two organisations with particular emphasis on developing best practice, joint training and exchange opportunities. The project aimed to bring together an Ireland-wide network of probation management, staff and criminal justice experts who had practical experience of effective practice in securing the protection and safety of communities through the social inclusion of offenders.
- 1.15 This evaluation assesses the impact of the project, its ability to meet its own objectives and any additional outcomes of the project.



## 2. Methodology

2.1 This evaluation used a participative approach to monitoring the PROTECT N&S project. Rather than a reflective evaluation the evaluator maintained periodic contact with key individuals and groups within the project. This allowed the evaluator to reflect on the process as it was developing and monitor this against the project outcomes. This helped the Project Managers to reflect on the development of the project as it unfolded rather than presenting an evaluation which reflects on outcomes at the end of the project.

2.2 In addition to the ongoing contact the evaluator attended a number of meetings and events that formed part of the project. These included attendance at:

- A meeting of the Expert Panel;
- Attendance at two seminars;
- Attendance at the second National Conference; and
- Attendance at a joint planning day between the two services.

2.3 Individual meetings were held with the following:

- Chief Executive (CEO) PBNI; and
- Principal Probation Officer (PPO) PS.

2.4 Ongoing meetings were held with:

- Director of Operations, PBNI;
- Assistant Chief Officer, PBNI;
- Two Assistant Principal Probation Officers, PS.

These four post holders formed the Project Management Team. Each of these was also interviewed on an individual basis. Key areas and themes were explored using informal questioning.

2.5 In addition a meeting was held with:

- Senior Management Team, PS; and
- Senior Management Team, PBNI.

- 2.6 There was ongoing contact and a final joint meeting with the two Project Co-ordinators responsible for the day-to-day management of the project.
- 2.7 Discussion took place with both members of the Expert Panel from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR). Informal discussions took place with other representatives of the Panel and the evaluator also attended an Expert Panel meeting.
- 2.8 Meetings also took place with:
- The Area Managers and Assistant Chief Officers (ACO) for the border counties of the PBNI; and
  - Senior Probation Officers for the border counties of the PS.
- 2.9 In addition, a number of written materials were reviewed. These included:
- The original application to SEUPB;
  - Evaluation Sheets from all seminars and both National Conferences;
  - Reports provided on the project to the Project Management Team;
  - Conference Reports;
  - Interim Report to SEUPB;
  - Minutes of the Expert Panel;
  - Conference and Seminar planning meetings;
  - Access to the PROTECT N&S Website; and
  - The Irish Probation Journal.
- 2.10 The Evaluator would like to thank all of those who supplied information and/or gave interviews as part of this process.

### **3. Description of the Project**

- 3.1 The project aimed to bring together a unique, Ireland-wide, network of Probation staff and Criminal Justice experts to help secure the protection of communities through the social inclusion of offenders. The two main partners, PBNI and PS, would bring together and share knowledge and expertise that would promote the development of best practice at strategic, operational and community level.
- 3.2 A number of key areas of potential work, which could be shared and help improve the supervision, monitoring and rehabilitation of offenders, were identified by the key partners. These included working with:
- Young offenders;
  - Sex offenders;
  - Drug users;
  - Alcohol abusers;
  - Dangerous offenders; and
  - Perpetrators of domestic violence.
- 3.3 Both partners were aware that the improved design, delivery and co-ordination of services and interventions would help to support public protection and monitor the increased movement of offenders between the two jurisdictions. The movement of offenders between jurisdictions was seen as an increasing issue for both organisations.
- 3.4 Identification of need for the project came from a number of different sources:
- The anecdotal evidence of both organisations through their ongoing contact with local communities indicated that offending and fear of violent crime were high on their agenda;
  - The Annual Reports of both the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and An Garda Síochána confirmed that the public had high concerns regarding violent crime and sex offending; and
  - Both organisations had identified an increase in offenders moving between the two jurisdictions and an increase in offenders committing offences across both jurisdictions.
- 3.5 In order to carry out this project the partners agreed to undertake a number of steps. These will now be highlighted and evaluated in turn.

## **Management of the Project**

- 3.6 In order to ensure the efficient and effective management of the project a number of key processes were put in place. Overall project management remained ultimately the responsibility of the heads of the respective organisations, namely the Chief Executive (PBNI) and the Principal Probation Officer (PS). These two Heads of Service plus the four members of the Project Management Team formed the overall Project Board for PROTECT N&S. Responsibility for management of the project was delegated to the PROTECT N&S Project Management Team.
- 3.7 This Project Management Team had responsibility for the overall strategic direction of PROTECT N&S. The Project Management Team had four members – two from each organisation. They were:
- The Director of Operations, PBNI;
  - An Assistant Chief Officer, PBNI; and
  - Two Assistant Principal Probation Officers, PS.

The two Assistant Principals from PS had key roles within the organisation having between them responsibility links to the border counties, to PS Headquarters and to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Assistant Chief Officer (PBNI) also had specific responsibility for promoting cross-border co-operation and a rural border remit.

- 3.8 Initially this Project Management Team had responsibility for setting up the project, shaping its direction and recruiting the staff that would have day-to-day responsibility for running the project. It was agreed at an early stage that the day-to-day management of the PROTECT N&S staff would be undertaken by one of the members of the Project Management Team. This post would rotate between PBNI and PS on a six monthly basis.

## **Project Co-ordinators**

- 3.9 Through internal notices two members of staff at middle management level were recruited as Co-ordinators to undertake the day-to-day work of PROTECT N&S. This was one manager each from the two organisations. Additional support and governance of the financial administration was identified and provided by PBNI and funded through the project. While both Co-ordinators were of equal status, the Co-ordinator from PBNI had lead management responsibility for the project. An Administrator was also

appointed to support the Co-ordinators. These three people were responsible for day-to-day activity and links to SEUPB (see Appendix 1 for full organisational chart).

- 3.10 The Project Management Team normally met on a bi-monthly basis to consider the progress of the project. However this was increased to more regular meetings where appropriate, for example, to support staff in the development of conferences and seminars.

### **The Expert Panel**

- 3.11 In addition to the overall management of the project an Expert Panel was created to support the intention in the original application to have a steering group. The role of the Expert Panel was three-fold. The Panel would act in an advisory role for the project, would take forward issues and concerns or potential areas of co-operation back into their own agencies and would support the development of existing good practice. The role of the Expert Panel is further addressed at paragraphs 3.27 –3.38.

### **Location of the Project**

- 3.12 The project had dual locations. An office base was identified in the PBNI premises in Lisburn. The decision to locate administrative support there was based on practical considerations. In addition, the project had an office base in PS Headquarters in Smithfield, Dublin. Meetings also took place in various probation offices in both jurisdictions. This dual office approach was a new challenge outside traditional line management systems. This style of partnership was innovative in how it used the resources of both organisations.

### **Management functions**

- 3.13 Both of the partners felt that they had an equal stake and input to the project. All felt that contributions were valued and that the project moved forward on the agreed shared values of both organisations. However working with two different organisations did highlight a number of complications.

### **Overall management**

- 3.14 The organisations were, at the time of the project, different in the way they operated and were managed. The PBNI is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) with its own Board and therefore is semi-autonomous from Government. The PS, while recently changed in structure, is an office of the DJELR. This meant that the two organisations had different reporting, decision-making and accountability structures. This had an impact on the speed at which particular decisions could be taken, as the ultimate lines of responsibility and decision-taking were different for the two organisations.
- 3.15 While this had limited impact on day-to-day decision-making it meant that larger policy decisions needed consultation across a wide range of stakeholders and in particular the NIO and DJELR.
- 3.16 This was not a major issue but did, on occasions, reflect different priorities within the two organisations. This highlights the challenges of working over two jurisdictions with different structures, different priorities and a different legislative structure. It raised awareness of the need to be sensitive to different priorities and political agendas which could have a bearing on decision-making.
- 3.17 It should be emphasised that this in no way detracted either from the value of the project or from its ability to plan and carry out its work. It reflects more the fact that this process of decision-making took longer and was sometimes more detailed than either of the partners had anticipated.
- 3.18 It is a tribute to staff in both organisations that they were able to work through these issues and not only complete the project successfully but put forward a joint bid to SEUPB for further funding. This is a positive factor that bodes well for the development of future work between these partners.
- 3.19 In addition, both organisations learned a great deal about the cultures of each other and this has increased sensitivity and understanding which will serve to underpin further planning and partnerships in the context of different priorities, needs and legislative frameworks.

### **Sharing of day to day line management**

- 3.20 Line management of the process was viewed by all of the key participants as having been a positive experience. In the first instance the sharing of line management on a rotating six monthly basis between the two organisations meant that each had an equal stake in the project. This role of direct support alternated between an Assistant Principal Probation Officer

- (PS) and an Assistant Chief Officer (PBNI) on a six monthly basis. There were, however, some practical problems.
- 3.21 In reality this was additional work on top of senior managers' existing workloads resulting in the practical pressure of 'creating space' for the project. (Additionality and commitment will be further explored in Chapter 5).
  - 3.22 So, in effect, as well as their overall management of and contribution to the Project, one member of the team had an increased role in staff support and management.
  - 3.23 The Project Management Team are to be commended on their hard work and commitment without which this project would not have been nearly as successful as it turned out to be.
  - 3.24 In addition there was the complication of geography. Finding suitable times, venues and dates where all of the key people could come together was not easy and could have been a potential obstacle to the development of the project. However by developing a flexible, accommodating approach all of the project partners ensured that PROTECT N&S had the time, commitment and support it needed.
  - 3.25 A further anomaly was that regardless of who undertook the line management role they had one member of staff – from the other jurisdiction – for whom they had no legislative or management authority. While this did not present as a major issue it meant that in the early days the drive, direction and pace of the project was slow, as decisions were made through discussion and with the consent of all of the Project Management Team. This however became more directional as the partnership developed and grew in confidence.
  - 3.26 This was one of the challenges of setting up, agreeing and monitoring a project that was outside the traditional line management system. This successful partnership approach forms a template for further cross-border projects both for these partners and other potential partnerships. Guidelines on the process should, if funding becomes available, be developed and disseminated to others undertaking cross-border work.

### **The Expert Panel**

- 3.27 The Expert Panel met twice per annum and had agreed Terms of Reference. It had three key roles:
1. To monitor, support and direct the project where appropriate.
  2. To identify and support areas of good practice or cross-border co-operation that they could help facilitate bringing to fruition.
  3. To take back to their respective organisations/departments issues which could then be dealt with at a more strategic level.
- 3.28 There were a number of outcomes from the Expert Panel. For example, in cross-border co-operation on programmes such as drink driving, where judiciary ‘bought into’ programmes which were previously unavailable within their jurisdiction.
- 3.29 However, the remit and the make up of the Expert Panel were very broad. It was therefore difficult to focus this divergence down to undertaking specific tasks at meetings that only took place on a bi-annual basis.
- 3.30 The Panel was set up to comprise members of the judiciary, senior executives from Health and Social Services, senior civil servants, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, representatives of criminal justice voluntary agencies, Business in the Community, and voluntary and community organisations (see Appendix 2 for full list) While this meant there was a considerable range of expertise, effectiveness and potential to contribute, this was often diluted for some participants if areas being discussed were outside their remit.
- 3.31 Additionally, the Expert Panel had difficulty recruiting ‘like with like’ from both jurisdictions. So for example while there was regional voluntary presence in the criminal justice sector from Northern Ireland, it proved impossible to recruit this type of regional organisation in ROI. The community representation identified in ROI did not have a regional remit and in fact the organisation identified did not attend any of the meetings.
- 3.32 However the main limitation to the effectiveness of the Expert Panel was the number of times and the duration for which it met. Links to the main project activities were limited and it was difficult to have a full agenda that gave everyone a chance to talk. Four days over two years was simply inadequate to meet the Panel’s Terms of Reference.
- 33 The Expert Panel had some positive effects and aspects of the work that began here are still underway. For example, the Gardaí and PSNI formed closer contact as a result of the project.

- 34 The Expert Panel also created a forum for people to meet who might not otherwise have had this opportunity.
- 3.35 However, the key achievement of the Expert Panel was to identify and bring to the attention of key people in both governments and in the judiciary issues and anomalies in the justice systems between the two jurisdictions that made the supervision, tracking and monitoring of offenders more complicated where their offending had a cross-border dimension.
- 3.36 For example, there is a drink-driving programme with a basis in legislation in Northern Ireland that allows for a driving ban to be reduced by up to 25% upon successful completion of the programme by the offender. Programmes in ROI do not have this legislative basis. So, for example, a Northern Irish driver caught drink driving in ROI could not avail of a programme on drink-driving which is available in Northern Ireland. Equally there was no provision for, even if viewed as the best alternative, a Probation Order to be imposed as a sentence if an individual did not live in the jurisdiction where the court proceedings were taking place.
- 3.37 These types of anomalies are being addressed at a practical level with joint protocols which allow offenders to be supervised in the jurisdiction where they live when they have offended in the other jurisdiction. Additionally, and possibly much more importantly, drafters of legislation in both jurisdictions have taken on the issues identified by the project and are seeking ways in which at least parts of sentencing and cross-border links can be adapted and formalised to address these anomalies. The ultimate goal is to have legislation which is equally applicable in either jurisdiction. However it should be recognised that this is still a long way off.
- 3.38 There is scope to maintain and develop the role of an Expert Panel but its make up, terms of reference and regularity could be reviewed to ensure that the most effective use of time and the wide variety of skills and influence are utilised to best and most efficient effect. The Panel should have more focused Terms of Reference and the size and membership should reflect this.

#### **4. The Project's ability to meet its Aims and Objectives**

4.1 The four key aims of PROTECT N&S were to:

- Develop cross-border approaches to the management of offenders;
- Disseminate knowledge of effective models of supervision approaches;
- Promote and engage with local communities; and
- Create opportunities for staff exchanges.

4.2 PROTECT N&S set itself a number of targets to achieve over the 2 ½ years of the programme. These were to centre on the most current and effective approaches to reducing offending within six key offending areas.

These were:

- Domestic violence;
- Alcohol related offending;
- Youth offending;
- Dangerous offending (violence);
- Sex offending; and
- Drug dependent offending.

4.3 These six areas of offending were identified as the key offence types which were prevalent in both jurisdictions and which were seen to be on the increase. In addition, they were areas of offending behaviour which were either prevalent within communities or which were of great concern to communities.

4.4 In order to address these issues PROTECT N&S set up a number of different but complementary strategies. These were to deliver on the following activities:

(a) Six offender-focused seminars relating to the six key areas identified.

(b) The hosting of two Ireland-wide conferences on wider issues and innovations in the criminal justice sector.

(c) The development of practical services/projects in border areas working with partnership agencies (e.g. communities, police, courts, child protection, victim support and youth justice agencies).

(d) Sharing of information which would lead to cross-border working guidelines and protocols.

- (e) Exploring opportunities for staff exchanges and the development of international perspectives.
- 4.5 Each of these key areas will now be considered in turn and this will be followed by an identification of the other aspects of the project that do not fall within this remit – i.e. the additionality that the project managers had not anticipated.

### *Offence Focused Seminars*

- 4.6 The aim of the seminars was to share good practice between the two organisations. This was both the internal practice that both organisations had developed and external practice that was developing elsewhere which could inform their work.
- 4.7 While open to all of the organisations' staff the primary target audience of the seminars was to engage the border teams and key managers within the organisations. This would allow for the dissemination of practice and also give the border teams more opportunity to meet each other and thus create new partnerships and relationships.
- 4.8 All of the seminars were held in locations close to the border. These were:
- Domestic Violence* – Enniskillen – 19.10.04;  
*Alcohol Related Offending* – Enniskillen – 14.12.04;  
*Drug Offending* – Enniskillen – 12.04.05;  
*Dangerous Offending* – Monaghan – 21.11.05;  
*Reducing Youth Offending* – Monaghan – 18.01.06;  
*Preventing Sex Offending* – Armagh – 24.03.06.
- 4.9 As noted, all six seminars were held at or close to the border in order to facilitate the border teams to attend. This was in keeping with the spirit and intention of the project.
- 4.10 Seminars followed a consistent approach. Largely they were a mix of formal presentation, workshops and breakout sessions. All of these were one-day sessions.
- 4.11 Attendance, as noted, was from a range of different organisations and internal parts of the two organisations (see Appendix 3). So, for example, the first seminar in Enniskillen on Domestic Violence included representatives from:

- Government officials/policy makers;

- Senior management from both Services;
- Area based staff at both senior and main grade from the seven border teams;
- The Community Safety Unit;
- Members of the Police Services from both jurisdictions;
- Women's Aid; and
- Local Health and Social Services Trusts.

4.12 Each seminar had clear aims and clearly stated outcomes. Each had a number of both Probation and external speakers. So, for example, the agenda for the Alcohol Related Offending seminar had the following inputs to the programme:

- *The Irish Drinking Culture – Consumption Drinking Patterns and Drinking Related Harm.* Presented by:  
     Dr. Anne Hope – National Policy Advisor, Department of Health and Children, Dublin.  
     Dr. Carol Weir – Northern Ireland Community Addiction Service.
- *A Place for Motivational Interviewing in Probation Practice.* Presented by:  
     Dr. Hilda Loughran, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University College Dublin.
- *Community safety – a local perspective regarding alcohol related behaviour.* Presented by:  
     Neville Armstrong – Community Safety Manager Enniskillen
- *Never Ever Drink and Drive – a Multi-Agency Approach to Reducing Drink Driving with Convicted Offenders.* Presented by:  
     Ricky Henderson – Police Service for Northern Ireland  
     Terry McLaughlin – PBNI  
     Jimmy Moore – PBNI/PROTECT N&S

4.13 In addition the Preventing Sex Offending seminar in March 2006 dovetailed with the PS hosting a Conférence Permanente Européenne de la Probation (CEP) Workshop. The CEP is an umbrella organisation of European probation service systems exchanging information and promoting good practice in addressing offending. Delegates from CEP presented three workshops throughout the conference bringing reciprocal learning between European partners and Irish Probation work.

- 4.14 Other contributors at conferences and seminars included voluntary sector participants. These included Women's Aid, Northern Ireland Council and Addiction Services (NICAS) and Opportunity Youth. Voluntary sector partners were engaged as speakers and invited as participants and included members of the Expert Panel.
- 4.15 In addition to the formal input there was space built in for discussion groups and feedback as part of the process. This allowed further opportunity to develop themes presented as part of the formal programme and for networking between participants – in particular the border area teams in both probation services.
- 4.16 All of the seminars were well attended with the average number of attendees being in excess of 35 people. Given the regularity of the process and the other demands on individual's time, and in particular Probation staff, it is a reflection of the standard of the seminars that staff continued to attend over the whole period of the project's life in such constant numbers.
- 4.17 Each seminar had an evaluation form which attendees were asked to complete at the end of the day. This covered a range of questions relating to areas such as:
- Pre-seminar and on-the-day seminar information;
  - Venue;
  - Presenters;
  - Written material; and
  - Opportunity to express views and relevance to work.
- 4.18 Overall the written responses were positive with most participants indicating that they felt the seminars were useful and informative.
- 4.19 Information from the evaluations was collated and this was then presented to the Management Team at the next appropriate meeting. This information was then used to shape the format and input of future seminars and also the programme for the two National Conferences.
- 4.20 For example, a number of staff felt that some of the presentations showed them areas of practice and/or approaches which they might find useful but that there was little opportunity to develop these further. These opportunities for further discussion were then added to ensuing seminar content.
- 4.21 Conversely, others indicated that they found this aspect of the seminars most useful. On a number of occasions information presented at the

seminars formed the basis of developing new areas of work for some staff. A number of new programmes are being developed within both services based on the information presented.

- 4.22 Discussions, as part of this evaluation, with staff from the border teams in both jurisdictions, presented a less positive picture on some occasions than the on-the-day feedback indicates. While staff felt that seminars were useful there was a sense among some staff that they did not have a follow up process and so these were isolated pieces of information without any system or support after the seminar for these areas of interest to be further developed.
- 4.23 However, the key theme coming through from staff in both organisations is that information and expertise existent within the services has been easier to access and share. External presentations, information and potential development have also begun to move forward.
- 4.24 This is at an early stage given the remit of the project. The limited number of staff involved in PROTECT N&S and therefore their potential to target, facilitate and respond to all of the requests for further development was limited. It had therefore proved easier to develop and share expertise between already existing contacts within the organisations. If further resources become available it may be appropriate to link seminars to wider organisational training strategies being developed by the partners.

### **Networking**

- 4.25 Participants found the networking aspects of the seminars particularly valuable. This, at one level, put 'names to faces' and facilitated greater access among the staff with their counterparts on the other side of the border. Staff indicated that it made it much easier to contact someone they knew (and who they now knew had similar issues and concerns) either on a formal or informal basis to exchange information and/or seek help.
- 4.26 Staff were clear that a key output of the project in general, and of the seminars in particular, was that there is now a much closer working relationship between them at a practical working level. Examples of this include better co-operation in terms of:
- Supervising offenders living outside or having moved their jurisdiction to the other jurisdiction;
  - Preparing pre-sentence reports for Courts outside the jurisdiction where, for example, the offence has happened in Northern Ireland and the offender lives in ROI;

- Sharing information on offenders who move between the two jurisdictions; and
- Requests for expert advice, for example, on sentencing options available within the different jurisdictions.

4.27 The seminars therefore contributed to the achievement of the project by increasing networking, sharing best practice and developing both existing and new areas of work. Staff across both organisations indicated that there are greatly enhanced areas of contact at both formal and informal levels. In addition the presentations from each of the seminars (and Conferences) were posted on the project website [www.protectnands.org](http://www.protectnands.org) enabling access for future reference by those present, other colleagues and a potential worldwide audience.

4.28 It should be further noted that the development and delivery of six key seminars in a two-year period is in itself a huge task. Considering that a key staff of three people, namely the two co-ordinators and one administrator, developed these, they are to be commended on their work. This is from identification and briefing of key presenters to choosing venue, evaluation, follow up and publicity plus all of the incidental tasks, queries and problems which preparing seminars of this level of sophistication bring with them. This is also true of the conferences which are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

### **Conferences**

4.29 Complementary to, and interspersed with, the seminars were a number of conferences. These included:

- *Project Launch*, Armagh City Hotel (13<sup>th</sup> September 2004)
- *National Conference*, Castleknock Hotel (24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005)
- *National Conference*, Slieve Donard Hotel (23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006)

4.30 The launch itself was to give the project a high profile beginning and the guest list and attendees reflected the importance the two organisations and other key criminal justice partners gave to this project. The launch had representation from a wide range of organisations including:

- The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform;
- The Northern Ireland Office;
- An Garda Síochána;
- PSNI;
- The judiciary in both ROI and NI;
- Health and Social Services;
- The Community sector;

- The Voluntary sector;
- SEUPB;
- Councillors and politicians;
- Youth Justice; and
- Management and staff from both organisations involved in PROTECT N&S.

4.31 This was an important event in that it highlighted the aspirations of the project to a number of potential stakeholders in both jurisdictions. It highlighted to the wider community the focus of a unique cross-border initiative and thus helped demonstrate the aims of government and of the European Union through SEUPB to a wider audience.

4.32 It also facilitated the process of networking on a formal and informal basis between the two Services and the key partners with whom both Services wished to develop the project. It was, in effect, a demonstration of the level of commitment to and importance which the two Services accorded this project.

4.33 The two key residential National Conferences linked to the project took place at the end of the first and second years of the project (see Appendix 4 for a breakdown of attendees). These will now be considered in turn.

#### **Conference One - 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005**

***Safer Communities: Everyone's Business?***

***Safer Communities: Everyone's Business!***

4.34 The Conference had a number of key objectives and aimed to:

- Promote the role of the community in working in partnership with criminal justice agencies towards enhanced community safety;
- Demonstrate current effective practice within criminal justice services; and
- Identify developing trends and issues in criminal justice across Ireland.

4.35 These areas were developed through a number of different approaches including drama. Input was given by a wide range of conference contributors who included:

- Probation staff from both jurisdictions;
- The voluntary sector;
- Special interest organisations;
- Academics; and

- The community sector.

4.36 Topics covered included:

- Mental Health and criminal justice;
- Electronic Monitoring;
- Responding to Diversity;
- Victim Impact;
- Restorative Justice; and
- Peace and Reconciliation in criminal justice practice.

4.37 As with the seminars the majority of feedback was highly positive. Conference attendees found the process interesting and valued the inputs. Input was viewed as both stimulating and as relevant to practice. Many of the participants (both on evaluation forms and in subsequent discussion with the external evaluator) felt that the conference had put much of the work into a wider context and had given them a vision of how their work linked into wider societal issues such as Peace and Reconciliation.

4.38 Particularly positive was feedback on a range of topics and perspectives from outside the 'criminal justice family'. Attendees found formal and informal input on mental health, Travellers and domestic violence particularly stimulating as this impacted on their day-to-day work.

4.39 Attendees also highlighted access to new or emerging themes such as electronic tagging and race crime as of particular interest. Again, as with the seminars, there was a general consensus that the opportunity to network was a key outcome of the conference.

4.40 The conference was attended by staff from both probation organisations, the voluntary and community sectors, government, health and social services and the business sector. A number of delegates commented on the limited pre-conference publicity and felt that the period of notice was limited. However, it is difficult to strike a balance and it can as easily be argued that too much notice will mean that people forget about the date well in advance. These should be taken as small criticisms in what was largely a positive response.

4.41 Some suggestions were raised on the evaluation returns. There was some comment that a few of the workshops were (a) repetitive of what the main speakers had said and (b) a small number of the workshops tended to be didactic rather than interactive. It was suggested they could be more

participative. Nonetheless, evaluations overall were positive and the conclusion was that the Conference was of high value.

### **Conference Two - 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

#### ***Making Communities Safer: Perceptions and Reality***

4.42 The second Conference was the closing session of the project. The feedback from the first conference had been incorporated to planning and the workshops were designed to be more interactive and were extended from 60 minutes to 75 minutes.

4.43 The aims of the conference were to:

- Promote the role of the community in working in partnership with criminal justice agencies towards enhanced community safety;
- Demonstrate current effective practice within criminal justice services; and
- Identify and develop trends and issues in criminal justice across Ireland.

Attendees included staff from both organisations as well as representatives from government departments, the voluntary sector and the police services in both jurisdictions. Feedback was positive on all aspects of the conference and reflects the comments noted from the first conference.

44 Keynote speakers included academics and criminal justice practitioners. Keynote speeches included government responses to crime. Of particular note is that Lord Clyde, Criminal Justice Oversight Commissioner, gave the keynote after-dinner speech. In his remarks he commended the work of PROTECT N&S.

4.45 A wide range of workshops included topics such as:

- Community Safety – *Increasing Public Confidence*;
- Mental Health and Crime – *All in the Mind*;
- Youth Crime – *Who are the Victims*;
- Sex Offenders – *Responding to Public Fear*.

4.46 Conference outcomes included:

- Strengthening links between staff at local and management levels;
- Demonstrating co-operation in practice;
- Demonstrating best practice to external organisations; and
- Highlighting the value of cross-border co-operation.

#### **Sharing of Resources/Skills**

- 4.47 The conferences, the seminars and facilitation of links at local level were ways in which contact was enhanced between staff in both jurisdictions. This led to the development of a number of areas of good practice.
- 4.48 Key examples of this include the supporting of the development of PBNI's Men Overcoming Domestic Violence Programme in the County Louth and Monaghan areas, through the Probation office situated in Dundalk. Staff from this office have been trained in partnership with PBNI on how to facilitate this programme. This programme is currently being delivered.
- 4.49 In addition to the programme delivery, PBNI staff have helped their colleagues in thinking through various aspects of the programme. For example, the Women's Aid support to the women and children of the men undertaking the programme. Partnerships are also encouraged with other agencies to ensure that there is an understanding and commitment to the programme from social services and Garda.
- 4.50 A further programme on Drink Driving is being developed in the North West where staff in Derry and Donegal are developing this training as well as creating opportunities and awareness to address this on a cross-border referral basis.
- 4.51 Other examples of the sharing of good practice include developing sharing of work on:
- Risk Assessment and Management Training;
  - Domestic violence presentations;
  - Community Service
  - Drugs and alcohol conference; and
  - Visit to Dublin Drugs Project.
- 4.52 These are the key major initiatives where the two organisations formally trained or allowed staff access to their work and will help inform practice within both jurisdictions. These formal procedures complement and build on the sharing of good work and expertise presented in the conferences and seminars.
- 4.53 There have also been a large number of other opportunities to share and develop work. Both Project Co-ordinators attended a number of other conferences and used these opportunities to both promote the project and to gather information from others which could help inform the project.

4.54 Pertinent and useful information which might inform practice was shared either directly into the organisations, to the Management Team or promoted more widely through the project's website and the Irish Probation Journal.

4.55 Conferences/meetings attended by PROTECT N&S staff included:

- SEUPB Value of Partnership conference;
- Irish Association for the Study of Delinquency Conference;
- Protecting the Public – The Management and Assessment of Dangerous Offenders;
- SEUPB - Making a Difference – Peace II;
- Centre for Cross-border Studies
- PBNI Victims Unit Launch; and
- Trans-national visit to Latvia.

### **Dissemination of Information/Practice**

4.56 As previously noted, two key ways of dissemination of information were through the project website and the Irish Probation Journal.

4.57 The PROTECT N&S website ([www.protectnands.org](http://www.protectnands.org)) was developed through an external communications company as a standalone entity for the purpose of disseminating information about the project. Presentations, reports, conferences highlight best practice. There have been a large number of hits and a significant proportion of these have been from outside Ireland and the United Kingdom. So, in effect, good practice is being disseminated far beyond the North/South boundaries.

4.58 The Irish Probation Journal is an annual publication funded by both organisations which acts as a focus for developing practice and highlighting trends and issues within the Criminal Justice system. PROTECT N&S used the Journal to promote and disseminate information coming out of the project. It should be noted that the Journal is not funded in any way from the PROTECT N&S budget. Each edition has been posted on the PROTECT N&S website in PDF format.

### **Joint Senior Management Meetings**

4.59 In addition to the work and networking already noted, PROTECT N&S was instrumental in both probation organisations beginning the more formal process of engagement at a senior management level. Senior managers meet now on a formal basis once per annum and sub-groups with particular interests or responsibilities have formed out of this and work taken forward.

- 4.60 Examples of work being taken forward out of these meetings include issues to do with drug related offending, the development of an awareness of racism in Irish society, IT development and creating opportunities for further joint training initiatives.

### **Joint Protocols**

- 4.61 One of the most far reaching and significant pieces of work that emerged from the PROTECT N&S strategy of promoting partnerships has been the development of joint protocols between the two organisations. There are a number of these at differing stages of development and consultation and both organisations indicate that this will be a key process in the future. These will cover areas such as:

- Supervising offenders from outside the jurisdiction; and
- Sharing information on offenders.

- 4.62 The most significant agreement to-date has been a formal joint protocol on the monitoring and supervision of sex offenders. This was signed off in March 2006 and clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of both organisations where sex offenders move between the jurisdictions. This formal agreement has considerably lessened the opportunities for this particularly dangerous type of offender to use or abuse the close proximity of the border to avoid monitoring and supervision.

- 4.63 Both organisations are to be commended on this development. The Project Management Team are clear that this would not have occurred (at least not within this time frame) without the momentum created by PROTECT N&S.

### **Engagement with Communities**

- 4.64 A key aim of the project was to '*Promote and engage with local communities*'. This turned out to be one of the least successful areas of the project. Concerns over the lack of engagement with local communities were reflected in the Interim Report (produced after the first year of the project) and while some focus was placed on this in the second year it had limited impact.

- 4.65 Some engagement took place with organisations such as the Rural Community Network but little work was done at local level. There was considerable opportunity to engage with communities that straddle the border in addressing crime or fear of crime. A key drawback to this part of the work developing was that there were differences in emphasis between the two jurisdictions on community safety initiatives. In Northern Ireland

community safety is part of a government initiative with a specific funding stream. The focus in ROI is less driven from government and so is more local and sporadic. Therefore in the project staff's view there was little cohesive cross-border work on which to build.

- 4.66 However opportunities were lost to explore work with Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in the border counties who were already engaged in developing cross-border work. There was little consultation with LSPs and limited engagement with local communities who have already begun partnerships and who could have been identified by the LSPs. There was, for example, no engagement with Cross-border Community Safety Partnerships. Both Services have close links into communities and it would not have been insurmountable to create at least one Pilot to stand as a model of good practice in developing strategies to address offending in local communities.
- 4.67 There was some focus into communities through the engagement of local partners in seminars and conferences as both participants and as speakers and/or workshop delivery. This was mainly with specialist organisations rather than with organisations working at a local level and engaged in community development.
- 4.68 It is significant that during the two years of the project no key objectives were set around the proactive engagement of communities as set out in the original proposal to SEUPB.
- 69 In discussion with the Project Management Team, there is recognition that this was not addressed as fully as it could have been.
- 4.70 The lack of resources and small project team in PROTECT N&S would have meant that any initiatives would have been limited.

### **Staff Exchanges**

- 4.71 This was another aim of the project and to-date there have been some staff exchanges. These have been time-limited largely as longer-term exchanges take considerable negotiation in regard to management, cost and status of exchange staff. Human Resources within both organisations and Training Departments are key to developing this line of work. However, both organisations are committed to the idea.
- 4.72 Exchanges have taken place between areas of the organisations such as those with responsibility for example with:

- Drug related offending; and
  - Community Service Orders.
- 4.73 The PROTECT N&S project has proved to be instrumental in beginning the process of staff exchanges and there is now a willingness to further develop this within the two organisations.

## **5. Additional Benefits**

- 5.1 As noted in the previous section the PROTECT N&S project has achieved most of its aims. In addition to achieving its main aims the project has been instrumental in promoting cross-border co-operation at two levels that were not anticipated.
- 5.2 In the first instance the project was instrumental in bringing together key people in government departments through the Expert Panel. This helped to pave the way for the development of inter-departmental structures across a range of areas and highlighted the value of these partnerships.
- 5.3 Inter-departmental bodies may well have begun to develop but there is little doubt that one of the successes of this project was as a catalyst, providing momentum and an example of how this could work. PROTECT N&S developed a model of good practice on how to jointly manage work on a cross jurisdictional basis.
- 5.4 A further development was the setting up of the Public Protection Advisory Group. This is now chaired by the Chief Officers of the two organisations. This has put the two organisations at the forefront of promoting public protection. It has also placed both organisations at the centre of cross-border co-operation initiatives.
- 5.5 Neither of these two outcomes was anticipated but both show how valuable the process of cross-border co-operation can be. The PROTECT N&S cross-border initiative has had a strong influence on promoting wider cross-border co-operation.
- 5.6 A further benefit of the project is that the two Co-ordinators acted as a reference point for both organisations. As the project developed, they were regularly involved in providing advice to staff where there were queries of a cross-border nature. This allowed issues to be solved, joint work to be undertaken and access between Probation Officers to be facilitated. Examples include obtaining key information for important processes in preparation of court reports, making linkage with appropriate staff for cross-border supervision arrangements and information about supervision packages available in each jurisdiction.

### **Additional Support**

- 5.7 The initial request to SEUPB was for £526,150. The PROTECT N&S project received £354,750 in funding from SEUPB. The two organisations committed considerable additional resources to the project.
- 5.8 This additional resource was both direct financial contribution and payment 'in kind'.
- 5.9 In-kind costs included the time that senior management staff spent on the project; the cost of organising and meeting at senior staff level, the line management of the project and the facilities used for meetings and to house the project.
- 5.10 In addition, PBNI managed the finances for the project. It was a requirement of the funding that one organisation take lead responsibility for this. This meant that PBNI finance and administration staff were involved in the day-to-day financial management as well as responding to the needs of the Funding Body.
- 5.11 According to the lead Project Co-ordinator, the direct and 'in kind' costs to the two organisations were estimated at £225,519. The two organisations are to be commended on the support levels given to the project.
- 5.12 The two organisations are to be commended also on the additionality that they developed out of the project and the financial and 'in kind' input that they committed. This resulted in particularly good value for SEUPB in addition to their direct financial contribution.

## **6. Conclusions**

### **Management**

- 6.1 The management of the project was very positive and all of the partners worked particularly hard to make the project a success. The overall achievements of the project are due in no small measure to the commitment of the staff from the two organisations and the key partners who supported them.
- 6.2 There were challenges in managing the project which had Co-ordinators situated in two different jurisdictions and which had organisations with different cultures and processes of accountability. These were in the main overcome and thus ensured that the project had a focus and framework for activity.
- 6.3 If there was a key concern it was that sometimes aspects of agreed direction/planning were not monitored closely enough and the failure to achieve agreed outcomes was sometimes not challenged sufficiently. These aspects of monitoring and accountability would need to be more closely addressed in future partnership work.
- 6.4 Nonetheless the management of the process was positive, showed high commitment and reflected managers' professionalism and commitment to the process. The project partners are to be commended for this.

### **Expert Panel**

- 6.5 The Expert Panel added a key dimension to the project by bringing together a wide range of organisations and individuals with an interest in the criminal justice system and cross-border co-operation.
- 6.6 This allowed for a range of expert advice and ongoing support. However the large range of people/organisations did dilute the effectiveness of the Expert Panel as its membership was perhaps too wide. This coupled with the irregularity of meetings blunted the potential effectiveness of this group.
- 6.7 The potential for the Expert Panel as part of this project is best reflected in the fact that it did make a considerable difference on a number of levels. Firstly, as an advice-giving forum which staff and management of the

project found exceptionally valuable. This was both on a group basis and on occasions from individual members of the Panel. Secondly, in terms of creating better communication between members of the Panel. There was an increased sharing of information between members of the judiciary and the police services on best practice. Thirdly, information on how cross-border co-operation could be improved through legislative change has been shared with and is being considered by the DJELR and the NIO. This would be seen as a key and integral part of the project which, had there been more time for development, would have potentially made a great impact on both the project and wider cross-border and cross-community engagement.

### **Seminars and Conferences**

6.8 Seminars and conferences were organised as outlined in the original proposal. These proved to be invaluable across a range of activities. These included:

- Sharing information on offenders;
- Developing networking;
- Sharing practice;
- Undertaking joint work; and
- Facilitating cross-border cooperation.

6.9 They covered the key areas of the project which were:

- Domestic violence;
- Sex offending;
- Dangerous (violent) offending;
- Alcohol-related offending;
- Drugs-related offending; and
- Youth offending.

10 The input and variety of expertise at the conferences was impressive. There were wide ranges of contributors who included the two organisations, voluntary and community sectors, health and social services, academia and government departments, both national and international. Feedback on the conferences and how the information could be used in the future was, by and large, positive. There is ample evidence of monitoring of offenders and addressing of offender behaviour being enhanced as a result of these conferences.

### **Communities**

6.11 A key part of the project was not realised. There is limited evidence of meaningful engagement with local communities although this was one of the main proposed outcomes highlighted in the original proposal. This is a disappointment as it proves to be a deficit in what was otherwise a successful project. However, while more could have been undertaken in this area, this limited achievement must be taken in the context of:

- The original idea being ambitious in the context of the overall size of the project;
- Not attracting full funding originally requested; and
- Reduced project time frame.

### **Staff exchanges**

6.12 The final key part of the project was to develop a series of staff exchanges. This has happened on a short-term basis and the organisations are currently exploring the opportunities for longer-term exchanges.

### **General**

6.13 Overall the PROTECT N&S project has proved to be of considerable value. It has to a large extent achieved its aims and has undertaken successfully most of the tasks it set in order to meet its aims.

6.14 Additional impacts unforeseen at the start of the project have been that the project has proved to be a forerunner of wider inter-governmental partnerships. It preceded and helped to set the scene for the now considerable amount of inter-agency work occurring between the jurisdictions.

6.15 The Chief Officers of both organisations now jointly chair the Public Protection Advisory Group.

6.16 Without PROTECT N&S these, as well as the many Probation-wide initiatives, would have been unlikely to have happened or at best would have taken much more time to develop.

6.17 This was a first formal engagement between two criminal justice organisations from their two different jurisdictions. It proved to be a successful project and there is much to value and build upon for the future.

6.18 The overall success of the PROTECT N&S project is a reflection of the support the two organisations gave from their own resources in addition to the support from SEUPB.

- 6.19 Both organisations are to be commended on this initiative and the commitment that they gave to it in terms of time and resources beyond the funding from SEUPB.
- 6.20 The work of the two Co-ordinators is to be commended. They were a key element to the project's success and their hard work and commitment, in addition to their administrative support, was central to the success of PROTECT N&S.

## **7. Summary of Recommendations**

- 7.1 If further resources become available it may be of value to give consideration to good practice guidelines which would assist other organisations undertaking similar work in the future. These guidelines may also support similar work between public sector bodies in other parts of the European Union (3.26).
- 7.2 It is recommended that in future work the role of the Expert Panel is reviewed. This is in order to better focus membership and thus the range of issues being addressed. This will mean that energies are not dissipated in agendas that are too wide and are often of limited interest to some participants as well as being outside their sphere of influence (3.38).
- 7.3 If seminars are to be further developed as a means of sharing good practices then efforts to facilitate wider learning will need to be considered. There is potentially a key role for the training departments of the respective organisations to play a more central role in the future. This is in the identification of new areas of development, its implications for practice and the practical delivery of training to facilitate new ways of working (4.24).

### **Recommendations for the future**

- 7.5 Both organisations now need to build structures to develop the achievements of the project. Without further support momentum may be lost and the achievements of the project diluted.
- 7.6 It is recommended that both probation organisations continue to build on this work and seek support to further develop this initiative.

## Appendix 2

### **Membership of the PROTECT N&S Expert Panel**

Chief Executive, PBNI  
 Principal Probation Officer\*, PS  
 Assistant Commissioner, An Garda Síochána  
 Detective Chief Superintendent, PSNI  
 Director, Criminal Justice Directorate, Northern Ireland Office  
 Principal Officer, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform  
 Chief Executive, NIACRO  
 Business in the Community, Belfast  
 Member of the Judiciary, District Court  
 Business in the Community, Dublin  
 Member of the Judiciary, NI Court Service  
 Administrator, Victim Support, Dublin  
 Chief Executive, Victim Support, Belfast

#### ***In attendance***

Two Assistant Principal Probation Officers, PS  
 Director of Operations, PBNI  
 Assistant Chief Officer, PBNI  
 Project Co-ordinator, PROTECT N&S (North)  
 Project Co-ordinator, PROTECT N&S (South)  
 Project Administrator, PROTECT N&S

\* The Director of the Probation Service replaced the Principal Probation Officer in September 2005.

### Appendix 3

## Seminar Attendance

	PBNI	PS	Other	External Speakers	PROTECT N&S	Total
9	14	9	7	2	41	
12	10	5	7	2	36	
7	10	3	3	3	26	
14	18	1	2	2	37	
7	19	10	All from delegate list	2	38	
15	24	27	All from international delegate list	3	69	

Domestic Violence

Alcohol Related  
Offending

Drug Dependent  
Offending

Dangerousness  
(Violence)

Youth Offending

Sex Offending

## Appendix 4

### National Conferences

**2005** 120 delegates

PBNI	39 delegates
PS	35 delegates
External	46 delegates

External delegates ranged from presenters, government ministers, PSNI and Gardaí, voluntary and community organisations and business and academic sectors.

**2006** 110 delegates

PBNI	40 delegates
PS	30 delegates
External	40 delegates

The external delegates again reflected presenters, government, policing, voluntary and community, business and academic sectors.