

No 103: Dara Calleary TD to Alan Shatter TD, Minister for Justice, 6th June 2012 (Questions 689-691)

689. Deputy Dara Calleary asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if An Garda Síochána has any policy on the retention of Garda station logbooks; if any logbooks have been retained by the State for Garda stations in Divisions which contained Magdalene Laundries; if so, if they will be made publicly available; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [26973/12]

690. Deputy Dara Calleary asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if it is his position that any gardaí who took women and girls to the Magdalene Laundries or assisted in returning women and girls who had escaped from the laundries were acting entirely outside their authority as Gardaí and without orders; if so, his explanation for the witness and documentary evidence that gardaí in different geographical divisions consistently took women and girls back to the laundries over a period of several decades; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [26974/12]

691. Deputy Dara Calleary asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if, in view of the witness and documentary evidence that gardaí in different geographical divisions consistently took women and girls back to the Magdalene Laundries over a period of several decades, he will encourage serving and retired gardaí with relevant information to share it with Senator McAleese's Inter-Departmental Committee, including in particular any information as to whether they were acting under orders in taking and returning women and girls to the laundries; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [26975/12]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): I propose to take Questions Nos. 689 to 691, inclusive, together.

I am advised that records are maintained by An Garda Síochána in compliance with the Criminal Procedures Act 1993, the National Archives Act 1986 and the Data Protection Acts 1988/2003 with appropriate instructions issued for the information and strict compliance of all members of An Garda Síochána.

An Garda Síochána is also working with the Inter-Departmental Committee, independently chaired by Senator Martin McAleese, to assist in the matters under examination by it. The Deputy will be aware that the Committee was set up by Government to establish the facts of State involvement relating to the Magdalen Laundries. Its interim progress report was published on the 25th October 2011 and is available on my Department's website at www.justice.ie.

The Committee's final report is expected to be presented in mid 2012 and will be made public.