



Law Society of Ireland

News Release

26 March 2014

Law Society shocked by Garda revelations; welcomes the establishment of a Commission of Investigation

The Law Society of Ireland has expressed shock and concern at revelations of recording of telephone conversations to and from a large number of Garda stations, which, it says, undermines the fundamental and constitutionally-protected right of citizens to speak freely to their solicitor and to receive advice on a confidential basis.

Director General Ken Murphy said, "The allegation that conversations in and out of Garda stations have been recorded for decades is disturbing and has widespread implications."

"The protection afforded to conversations between clients and their solicitors for the purposes of obtaining legal advice is central to the constitutional right to a fair trial and to the justice system as a whole."

"It is too early to identify the full legal consequences of these revelations; however, these issues are at the heart of the constitutional rights of citizens and our criminal justice system. Conversations between solicitors and clients seeking legal advice are protected in law and citizens have the right to protect themselves from self-incrimination. "

"We welcome the establishment of a Commission of Investigation by the Government the findings of which must be published in a timely manner. Citizens seeking legal advice from their solicitor need to be assured that their rights are protected and any abuse of these rights must be identified as quickly as possible."