# Garda officers face growing pressure from trivial calls including crisps dispute on Galway bus



In a peculiar incident in Galway, Ireland, police were called to intervene on a bus due to a disagreement over the consumption of a packet of cheese and onion crisps. According to the Irish Mirror, a female passenger was reportedly disturbed by the smell of the snacks, prompting her to contact law enforcement. Sources indicate that she was left frustrated when another passenger refused to stop eating the crisps.

Subsequently, the matter escalated to the point where police were directed to stop the bus, but discretion was exercised by the officer who took the call. As reported by Dublin Live, the garda declined to act on the request, citing the incident as not constituting a criminal matter.

This incident occurred during the annual conference of the Garda Representative Association in Killarney, County Kerry, where discussions included the issue of police being dispatched to what some officers deemed trivial or non-urgent calls. Reports surfaced from various representatives, including Garda Dan Ryan from Carlow, who highlighted incidents such as responding to concerns regarding a dog believed to be suffering from mental health issues and another about a pheasant allegedly causing a disturbance in a pub car park.

Ryan commented on the burden such calls place on police resources, stating, "You would receive calls like this quite occasionally, not specifically about suicidal dogs, but kind of silly calls like those." He expressed concerns over the impact on officers’ availability for more serious matters.

Garda Peter Firth from Waterford elaborated on the reluctance among officers to cancel such calls. He stated, "People are very slow to cancel calls because gardaí are worried that a member of the public might complain or that someone in management might perceive a call that we didn't attend as one we should have." He noted that this approach leads to an increase in requests for police intervention in non-policing matters.

The conference discussed a range of seemingly trivial incidents reported to the police, including one involving the welfare of birds. Amidst these discussions, the Garda Representative Association members voiced concerns regarding a lack of a triage policy in the police control room, which they believe would help in prioritising more serious calls.

In an effort to enhance their operational response, the police force introduced a new computer-aided dispatch system in 2023, known as GardaSAFE. This initiative aims to improve resource allocation and efficiency in responding to public concerns. A statement released by the police indicated that the new system enables trained call takers and dispatchers to manage calls more effectively through regionally located control centres. They emphasised the importance of community policing and a partnership-based approach to law enforcement that addresses various quality of life issues affecting local communities.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/business/arid-30355081.html> - This article discusses a UK crisps manufacturer's TV advert depicting a bus crash scene, which was withdrawn following complaints from viewers, highlighting sensitivities around bus-related incidents involving snacks.
2. <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/drew-harris-baffled-over-garda-representative-association-conference-snub/a1427223073.html> - This article reports on Garda Commissioner Drew Harris expressing confusion over the Garda Representative Association's decision not to invite him to their annual conference, reflecting tensions within the Garda leadership.
3. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/bus-eireann-apologises-to-passengers-after-door-falls-off-vehicle-1.3991028> - This article details an incident where a Bus Éireann door detached during a journey, leading to an apology from the company, underscoring concerns about bus safety.
4. <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/galway/news/vandals-in-galway-smash-up-bus-stop-trees-and-lights-on-recently-upgraded-street/a2086562984.html> - This article reports on vandalism in Galway, including the destruction of a bus stop, highlighting issues of antisocial behavior affecting public transportation infrastructure.
5. <https://www.sundayworld.com/crime/irish-crime/man-20s-arrested-over-galway-firework-attack-which-left-girl-with-serious-injuries/41062379.html> - This article covers an incident in Galway where a young woman was injured by a firework thrown at a bus stop, leading to a police investigation and arrest.
6. <https://www.galwaybeo.ie/news/garda-appeal-witnesses-after-thief-6841730> - This article reports on a theft that occurred on a bus in Galway, with Gardaí appealing for witnesses, highlighting issues of crime affecting public transportation.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14682647/Police-bus-passenger-packet-cheese-onion-crisps.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data