



Irish Council for
Civil Liberties

**ICCL Update: Monitoring rights during the pandemic
4-10 July**

Covid 19-related advocacy work

Launch of covid tracker app

The publication of our [report card](#) on the covid tracker app last Friday received much coverage in light of the app's launch on Tuesday.

Our Information Rights Policy Officer Olga Cronin's article in The Irish Examiner on the app from a civil liberties perspective can be read [here](#).

Olga's overview of our [framework of principles](#) published to guide the development of the app can be viewed [here](#).

ICCL staff were also interviewed on numerous national and regional radio shows and on the main evening RTÉ 6-1 news in response to its launch. Extensive media coverage in relation to the app can be found below.

Surveillance Tech

We [expressed concern](#) in relation to the reported use of surveillance technology, namely Hikvision CCTV cameras, in a Dublin bar to monitor temperatures of customers. We have previously voiced our [alarm](#) regarding the growing and unnecessary use of Facial Recognition Technology in other contexts in Irish society.

Spit Hoods

We [wrote](#) to Garda Commissioner Harris in March opposing the use of spit hoods on the basis that their use may constitute inhumane or degrading treatment and, last week, we wrote a joint letter to Commissioner Harris with Amnesty International drawing attention to reports that the PSNI had questioned their effectiveness in preventing infection. We urged the Commissioner to immediately end the use of spit hoods, pending information on any technical and scientific evidence of the efficacy of the spit hoods procured by An Garda Síochána.

A [survey](#) carried out by the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors, comprising just over half of its 2,285 members published this week, found that 9 out of 10 frontline garda supervisors are in favour of retaining spit hoods as part of gardaí protective equipment after the expiry of the Covid-19 regulations.

We reiterate the need to ensure that regulation and oversight are in place for all Garda equipment, taking full account of the principles of necessity and proportionality, and a clear understanding of the risks of their misuse, particularly against at-risk population groups or

health-impaired individuals.

We believe that their use, due to be reviewed in September, should be discontinued.

COVID-RELATED MEDIA WORK & COVERAGE

Covid tracker app

Executive Director, Liam Herrick took part in numerous interviews this week regarding the app.

Newstalk:

<https://www.newstalk.com/news/thousands-covid-19-tracker-1041868>

Today with Sarah McInerney:

<https://www.rte.ie/radio1/today-with-sarah-mcinerney/programmes/2020/0707/1151857-today-with-sarah-mcinerney-tuesday-7-july-2020/?clipid=103447227>

Last Word programme on Today fm:

<https://www.todayfm.com/podcasts/the-last-word-with-matt-cooper/400000-download-contact-tracing-app-work>

Liam also spoke on RTÉ 6-1 main evening news and on kFM radio on Tuesday (7 July).

Our work on the app was also referenced on the Ryan Tubridy show on Tuesday (7 July)

In the print media, our position and advocacy work on the covid tracker app received extensive coverage:

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/use-covid-tracker-app-if-you-wish-but-be-sure-to-wear-a-face-covering-1.4298624>

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/concern-over-ability-of-covid-19-tracking-app-to-fully-protect-user-data-1.4294933>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/privacy-concern-over-covid-tracing-system-1009874.html>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/qanda-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-new-covid-tracker-smartphone-app-1009867.html>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/thousands-register-for-covid-tracker-app-ahead-of-launch-1009655.html>

<https://www.98fm.com/news/thousands-register-new-hse-covid-tracker-app-1041835>

Spit hood use by An Garda Síochána

Our opposition to the use of spit hoods is referenced here:

<https://www.thejournal.ie/spit-hoods-gardai-5144378-Jul2020/>

<https://www.rte.ie/news/2020/0708/1151953-agsi-covid-19-policing/>

<https://www.breakingnews.ie/ireland/garda-supervisors-want-spit-hoods-retained-after-coronavirus-1009875.html>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/garda-supervisors-want-spit-hoods-retained-after-coronavirus-1009875.html>

Policing during the pandemic

Our monitoring of the extraordinary policing powers during the pandemic referred to in the Southern Star:

[:https://www.southernstar.ie/editorial/garda-handling-of-restrictions-4207792](https://www.southernstar.ie/editorial/garda-handling-of-restrictions-4207792)

Prospect of mandatory quarantine

Our concerns about mandatory quarantine referenced here:

<https://www.thejournal.ie/government-expected-to-put-travel-green-list-on-hold-until-20-july-as-cabinet-meets-5142353-Jul2020/>