

## **Transcript of RTE interview with Chief Superintendent Tony McNamara - 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009**

“Gardai say that considerable damage has been caused at Glengad County Mayo where the Corrib Gas Pipeline comes ashore. Fencing was damaged after a gang of more than a dozen masked men entered the site overnight.

I’m joined now by Chief Superintendent, Tony McNamara who is in Castlebar.

Q: Chief Superintendent, how serious was the situation last night?

**TMN: It was quite a serious incident, and a full garda investigation has been launched this morning by the Gardai of Belmullet. At about half past eleven last night, a group of masked men wearing balaclavas and carrying iron bars and chains entered the Corrib Gas Project Site at Glengad. A number of security men were on duty there but these men entered in what looked to us like a well planned, almost military style operation and you could say took over the site. The security men obviously were concerned for their safety and ran away. The people then, obviously with knowledge of machinery, commandeered a machine belonging to the company which was on their property and proceeded to do quite an amount of damage on that site to fencing which they had commenced to install that day.**

Q: And you had made enquiries Shell did not need planning permission to do what they were doing?

**TMN: That’s correct. Yesterday during the course of the day, we received a number of complaints from a number of people who were concerned that Shell did not have authority to carry out the works that they were carrying out at Glengad. We had enquiries carried out with the Local Authority, the Planning Authority for the area, and we were quite satisfied that they were within their rights to carry on their business on that day.**

Q; Do you think that there could be an escalation of protests at Shell?

**TMN: Well , we would hope not. There has been a history of protest attaching to this project but it has certainly never been anything at the level of what occurred down there last night which was absolutely frightening to local people in the area. I have spoken to a number of local people that I know well in Belmullet this morning and they are absolutely aghast at what happened there last night. What we would say to people who are not happy with the operation there, to engage with the North West Mayo Forum which has been set up by the government to deal with any people who have objections or problems with it but we would**

**ask people in particular to stand back and take stock of what happened down there last night.  
People are absolutely entitled to protest but it has to be peaceful and within the law.**

I'm sure they are indeed. Thank you very much, Chief Superintendent."

End.