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TAYSIDE POLICE

federation NEWS

A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY

A warm welcome to our latest newsletter which was planned to go out with an update of the decision from arbitration on our 2008 pay award. Be assured that I was as surprised as you when the offer of the three year deal was put on the table.

I have already responded to a small number of officers who rightly have raised their concerns with me, particularly around the fact that we have signed up to a three year deal. I have already made my views on the matter known in my article on the matter which is published on our website and also on the intranet. I will also continue to address personally any queries on the agreement that are brought to my attention.

The deal is now cast in stone unless we, the Staff Side, wish to employ the reopening clause in the event of significant changes to the financial outlook and we can demonstrate retention and recruitment issues for the police service. Perhaps that will allow us to move on and concentrate our efforts on other important work which has been shelved for some time at the PNB.

VSA SHIFT PILOT – We need your views on this matter as only then can we hope to evaluate it from your perspective. I understand that there has been a reticence to criticise the current pilot arrangements due to a fear of returning to seven day working. As a

result I consulted with the Force Executive and that culminated in the Chief Constable's extremely helpful and positive statement which should allay some of the fears. If you have not read this statement, it can be found on the back page of this newsletter. **PLEASE GIVE US YOUR VIEWS** on the form which can be located on the intranet feedback section.

REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL POLICING – Chief Superintendent Matt Hamilton is responsible for this review and a full-time team has been formed to gather the information required. There is no coincidence that this piece of work follows the Best Value Review of Our People and is taking place at the same time as the interim review of the shift pilot. All aspects of operational policing are being considered and it is your opportunity to provide the team with your views and opinions. Once again, forms can be located within the intranet feedback section.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE TESTING – We have recently been consulted on this matter and have reached agreement with the other staff associations in the force on how such a policy should operate in Tayside. Our policy is very similar to an ACPOS policy which has already been consulted upon with the Federation nationally. Basically, the force will only be testing those staff in high risk posts, applicants to join, probationary constables and those members of staff about whom good quality intelligence has been received.

When the matter has been approved at the Policy Committee the force will undertake a process to let their staff know how the system will operate. Any queries on this matter can be addressed to me at the Federation Office.

CYCLE TO WORK – We have had queries about this process and if you are interested and have submitted something for the two reviews mentioned above, you will have noticed that an opinion poll on the matter exists in the same feedback section.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH – I have heard very little in the way of feedback since OHSAS took over the contract earlier this year from CIGNA. If you have had any experiences of the system which you would like to share, good or bad, I would be grateful to receive them in order that I can share them with the force. Send me an e-mail with any feedback.

Finally, now that we are into November, I think that best wishes for the forthcoming festive season can legitimately be passed to you all and your families from the Joint Branch Board.

Malcolm Gibbs

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BEN FUND GOLF DAY

On 06 June 2008 we hosted a charity golf event and auction at Kinross Golf Club and the Windlestrae Hotel.

We were blessed with one of the few warm, dry and sunny days last summer and enjoyed a great days entertainment. 14 teams were entered into the event which was won by the team representing the Tayside Branch of the Superintendants Association. Despite the fact that we even set up a firearms incident in the hope that one or more of their team would have to leave, the wonders of modern telephony enabled them to complete a fantastic round of golf!

Mr Vine, former Tayside Chief Constable and the Convenor of the Joint Police Board, Mr Ian Mackintosh, attended the dinner in the evening and Mr Vine presented the prizes. Both he and our Chairman, George Loudon prepared speeches which were well received by the assembled guests.

We were inundated with fantastic donations of raffle prizes and auction items and are extremely grateful to all staff who either donated prizes, scrounged prizes or bid on auction items. Whether you won an item in the auction

or not, your participation in the intranet part of the auction ensured that we raised as much money as possible for charity.

We raised over £9000 and from that sum we donated £1000 to the Northern Police Convalescent and Treatment Centre and £1000 to the Police Dependants Trust. The remainder was donated to the Benevolent Fund. The money which went to the convalescent home was used to purchase 3 "spinning" bikes and these were handed over formally recently by Malcolm Gibbs and Alan Kidd who had arranged and run the golf event.

A massive thank you to all staff who participated in any part of the event which was a great success.

Photographs show our Chairman clearly showing signs of stress and the winning team taking a break from their role as silver commanders. It would appear, surprisingly as it may seem, that between the 4 ASPs reps they managed to make decisions on both tactics for firearms deployment and what clubs to play, all in one day!



BEBO BEWARE

Police Officers 'Bebo' sites targeted by the media

Your Branch Board reps have learned that members of the media are targeting the 'Bebo' and 'Facebook' social networking sites and are particularly interested in profiles belonging to police officers or their families.

Certain tabloid newspapers and other media agencies constantly scan such sites and chat rooms for references to police officers in an effort to obtain material which they can publish which will embarrass police officers and their respective Forces.

If a police officer, or member of their family, has placed photographs or video clips which show them in uniform doing whatever, then they may be used by the media.

All police officers should be aware that we are responsible for our actions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, both on and off duty.

If you own such a site or account you are advised that you should never reveal your personal details and **under no circumstances should you make reference to being a police officer or display anything which clearly shows that you are a police officer.**

You will be targeted by certain members of the media who will scrutinise everything that you write and publish and may even endeavour to entice you into doing or writing something which leads to you committing a discipline offence or worse.

Recently, members of the media accessed a child's 'Bebo' site and used a photograph to embarrass an officer's family and their Force.

The advice of your JBB is:-

Never reveal that you are a police officer on any such internet sites.

Never place any photographs or video clips showing you or a colleague on duty and/or in uniform.

Never make reference to any aspect of your police duties on any such sites.

Check your children's websites for any such references.

Should you or a member of your family or friends use such sites then make them private and only accessible to persons that you know.

RETIRALS

since last newsletter

Graeme Hobbs	Alison Kennedy
Alan Grieve	Gavin MacKillop
Ronald Menzies	Doug Laurie
Roger Gilroy	Jim Tait
David Coates	Rod Wigley
Graham Currie	David Ruthven
Gary Daly	Jim McNally
Sharon Finnigan	John Turner
Leslie Bovill	George Brand
Stuart Anderson	Iain Bell
Tom McLevy	Michael Money
Jackie Yardley	Sandy Smith
Ian McCall	Alistair Brown
Allan Macfarlane	Robert Stirling
Paul Fagan	James MacIntosh
Barbara Tough	Paul Ainley
Charlie Sharkey	David Mackay
Paul Soutar	George Airth
Derek Lawson	Kathleen McIrvine

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FEDERATION ELECTIONS

In our winter magazine of 2005 we informed the membership that the local Federation Joint Branch Board triennial elections would take place early in 2006.

We cannot believe that, three years on, we are in the same position and genuinely hope to interest some of you in standing for election. Only the Constables' Branch Board required an election three years ago so it would be great if the other two ranks could also achieve a similar level of interest.

The elections will be held in February 2009 with further details, nomination forms etc being made available nearer the time.

Being a federation rep carries a significant responsibility and hopefully reps will possess a real desire to want to make the working conditions of their fellow officers as good as they possible can be. Our motto is 'Welfare and Efficiency' and there is no coincidence that the word 'welfare' comes first. If your welfare is not being looked after and considered at all times, there is no way that you will be efficient and able to make our force run efficiently.

Being a federation representative is without doubt a challenge. It requires listening skills, negotiating skills and having the ability to provide correct advice to any given enquiry, which may not always be what the officer would want to hear. We are fortunate that in this day and age, the amount of research information available on the internet is incredible, but you need to know where to look and how to disseminate it.

Training is provided nationally for all new reps and covers your basic role and possibly either health and safety or fairness and equality. You may also be required to undertake training in respect of the Conduct Regulations in order that you can provide advice and represent officers who are unfortunate enough to find themselves at a discipline hearing.

As a local rep you may be required to sit on the Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee, the Joint Central Committee, the

Health and Safety Committee, the Benevolent Fund and/or the Uniform and Protective Equipment Group to name but a few.

Such meetings are held in addition to the four statutory Joint Branch Board meetings held each year throughout the region. Due to the fact that the formation of Joint Branch Boards is enshrined in legislation, the Chief Constable grants us duty time for the quarterly meetings, subject of course to the exigencies of our duty.

Our full-time office bearers rely on the reps to provide them with up to date information on what is happening on the frontline of policing in Tayside Region. Without reps who are based across the region and working in different roles they would not be fully aware of how the ever changing working conditions were affecting our membership.

The strength of our Board is that we have differing opinions and perspectives on policing matters. Let's face it, there will always be issues where Inspectors and Constables see things differently and the Sergeants are caught in the middle! We debate such matters respectfully and in most cases, will come to a consensus view on the matter. Only very occasionally is there a need to deal with matters on a rank specific basis.

The nature of some of the business we undertake means that there will always be a minority of officers who for one reason or another do not have many good words for the federation. I would advise those of you who think that you may be able to do a good job as a rep to make up your own mind. Speak to a current rep or any of the office bearers about the role. If you wish, you are more than welcome to attend as an observer at any meeting of the Board, particularly the next one on 2 December 2008 in Perth, if considering standing for election.

Contact the office on Ext: 6660 for any further information relating to the elections or the duties of a rep.

CANCELLED REST DAYS – E MAIL NOTIFICATION

We have recently had a number of enquiries at the Federation Office regarding officers being notified by e-mail to work on what was a rest day, and whether or not this was acceptable notice given the article in POLICE (England and Wales Federation) magazine of September 2008.

The article stated that if you are required to work on a rest day you should be notified in person or via a telephone. The sending of an e-mail is not an appropriate way of communicating the fact you are required to work.

Having discussed this at length we are of the view that e-mail notification is no different from that of a telephone call. What is important is the notification period and the controversy that e-mail notification can sometimes cause particularly when you are on days off or leave.

For the avoidance of doubt here are the facts and our opinion on the matter –

If you receive an e-mail regarding working on a rest day the notification period commences on the day after you read the e-mail and NOT the date it has been sent to you. It should go without saying that if you have been at work it would be normal to deal with your mail every day!

In calculating the notification period, you should not include the day you are required to work in the calculation of the less than 5 or 15 days notice period.

What is important is that you are advised of the cancellation of a rest day in good time and in a proper manner. An e-mail in your inbox that you have not accessed is not a notification until you read it and become aware of the need to take duty on that day.



PRESENTATION TO POLICE WIDOW

One of the pleasurable sides of our work with the Benevolent Fund is making the lives of others easier.

In June of this year we, along with SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association), presented an electric buggy to Mrs Eva Dougal of Eyemouth.

Eva's late husband, Jim, served in both Northumberland County and Dundee

City Police before retiring as a Constable in 1973. Prior to joining the police, Jim had completed his national service in the RAF hence the link with their Benevolent Fund.

Mrs Dougal was absolutely delighted with her new wheels and wishes us to pass on thanks to all officers who contribute to the Benevolent Fund.

DISCOUNTED CAR/ HOME INSURANCE – ROLAND SMITH

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A NINTENDO WII

We have recently negotiated a discounted car and home insurance package with Roland Smith. Those older members of staff may recall that London and Edinburgh Insurance (Policeguard) previously did a great deal for police officers. Roland Smith bought over L&E and are looking to provide similar quality products for police officers and support staff.

The company have a specific Police Schemes Department who will tailor a quote to your requirements.

To obtain a quote you should contact **01512 427640** or visit www.rolandsmith.co.uk

Hopefully you will have received, attached to October pay slips, a free entry form for a Nintendo Wii which requests renewal information.

POLICE PAY AND CONDITIONS AGREEMENT

The PNB Police Pay and Conditions Agreement 2002 introduced a competence related threshold scheme which is available to officers in the federated ranks who have served for a year at the maximum of their pay scale and who satisfy the requirements of the scheme. Application can be made up to a maximum of three months before the anniversary date.

It is the personal responsibility of officers who meet the criteria to apply for the payment, which is pensionable, by the completion of the standard application available within the Appraisal Menu of SCOPE

Full details of the scheme can be found on the force intranet pages.

TAYSIDE POLICE STRESS AUDIT

Following a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Inspection earlier this year, Tayside Police plan to run a stress audit in accordance with HSE guidelines.

An HSE stress questionnaire has now been prepared and will be made interactive on our intranet.

A letter will be sent out as a payslip attachment in the very near future along with an HSE guidance leaflet for employees. The Federation encourages everyone to take part in this important piece of work.

Do not think of this as a back covering exercise by the Force. We are convinced of their desire to learn the truth of the matter and provide some meaningful data with which to work with in the future. Your JBB will monitor the results very closely.

The audit will in the main be carried out through a link button on the Tayside Police intranet, with paper copies being made available to anyone who does not have access to the intranet.

This in our view is a very important piece of work which will assist in ensuring your working environment is as stress free as it possibly can be.

We would urge officers to make full use of this survey and take part in the audit.

SHIFT PATTERN ASSURANCE BY KEVIN MATHIESON, CHIEF CONSTABLE

I've met with a number of operational staff from across the Force in recent weeks and have picked up a growing concern about the shift patterns we are currently piloting as a VSA. I've also been advised that staff are reluctant to formally voice their various concerns for fear that the Force will simply revert back to the traditional eight hour, seven day shift patterns.

Can I use this opportunity to allay concerns that the Force only has a single choice between the existing VSA and reverting back to the old shift pattern. We don't. We need to remember that one of the reasons for the introduction of the VSA was to find a way to move us away from the old seven day shift pattern and our desire to find a suitable alternative still exists.

If the current VSA isn't working as well as we thought it could, we need to fully understand the reasons for this and explore what, if any, adjustments and changes could be implemented, which could then be consulted upon and piloted in slow time.

We do need your honest opinion and experience of the existing VSA, good and bad, so that we end up with the shift pattern/s that best suits our needs. Please be assured it's my agenda to work with Federation colleagues to find the best possible solution and I have no plans to simply revert back to the old shift pattern.

I would really appreciate you taking the time and effort to make your views on the existing VSA known so we can move things forward.

CONTACT US

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