



## **DEFENCE POLICE FEDERATION**

Established by Act of Parliament

9<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Dear Member

### **BREAKDOWN OF THE FORMAL OFFER ON TERMS & CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE OFFICERS**

This breakdown is designed to assist members in understanding the impacts of the formal offer, from the Department, to our officers on their Terms & Conditions of Service (TACOS).

The DPF National Executive Committee (NEC) have asked me to give an explanation of the offer, on their behalf and in some areas the impacts and background involved to assist you in coming to a decision on whether or not you wish to accept this offer.

The offer is presented as a package, but can be broken out into individual elements for discussion purposes and below is our position and understanding of those elements. This is such a longstanding issue that the National Executive Committee believe that the decision is one for the serious consideration of all members and as such a ballot will go live on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 for you to cast your vote:

### **TACOS FORMAL OFFER**

#### **Pension Age**

The DPF has been negotiating on our pensions for some time and the last position of the Government was to offer us an Effective Pension Age of 65 years of age or three year reduction on the State Pension Age (SPA).

It must be understood that this is not the position that the DPF requested and neither is it acceptable, however it is a better option than the current position, which for a significant proportion of our members is a pension age of 67 or 68.

We will continue to seek to reduce this to a level equal to our colleagues in every other police force, but at this time the Government have made it clear that it is this offer, or the State Pension Age. They will not move any further on this at this time.

The Minister stated in her letter that the pension age offer was at no cost to the individual members, but that it was subject to an agreement on an overall TACOS offer. In short this means that although we do not have to pay the cost of the pension age reduction directly, it is funded from changes to our TACOS and as such this element of the offer has an impact in other areas of the TACOS offer. This, and the NPD removal, requires the Force to save an additional £68 million over the next ten years.

It is unfortunate that the Government has chosen to ignore our request to allow officers to retire at 60 years of age at no cost to public funds, but rest assured, and regardless of the outcome of this process, we will continue to push for an equitable and fair outcome on this issue.

### **MDP Occupational Fitness Standard**

The current position in Home Office Forces is that all officers are required to meet a fitness standard equivalent to a level of 5.4 on the 15 meter Multi Stage Fitness Test (MSFT). The standard is 7.6 for Firearms officers.

As a result of discussion with the Force and Department it was agreed that we would engage the Institute of Naval Medicine (INM) to review the standard necessary for the MDP and identify a level suitable for our role.

From those examinations, the INM have suggested that the relevant standard, as a consequence of the tests they carried out, is equivalent to a level of 5.7 on the MSFT.

The DPF support the need for a relevant and proper test, that is carried out safely and offers the support and guidance necessary to protect our officers, ensuring that those who have difficulty reaching that standard are given the necessary time and support to improve.

We would want to see this implemented fairly and in line with the INM's recommendations.

This could not be altered without a similar exercise being carried out by scientific experts in the future.

### **Management of Officers on Limited Duties**

This element is in place across all of the Forces of England & Wales and represents a parity position which we have to uphold. Parity is the basis of our position on all pay negotiations and although later in the offer, the Force and Department have chosen to avoid implementing parity, we cannot choose to do the same. On this area, if an officer is unable to meet the full range of duties and is not deployable, then the Force MAY choose to remove the x factor (8%) from that individuals pay. This will only occur a minimum of 12 months after the review commences (meaning it will not apply to any MDP officer for at least one year).

## **Net Pay Deduction (Clawback)**

Clearly this is one of the major subjects that affects all of us.

Whilst we are disappointed that the offer does not meet many of the issues our members have on this subject, not least of which its improper application over many years and the backdating of repayments to officers, set against the backdrop of the current climate this is as far as the Department and the Force are prepared to go on this subject.

If it is accepted, then this issue will be closed from further negotiations and will not affect any MDP officer going forward.

## **Annual Salary**

The DPF does not believe that the issue of the pay increase from 2014 should be contained within this package.

On the issue of pay relativity, which was one of the areas to be examined by this review, we do not believe that this has been done to the extent necessary, however in the current climate it is good to see that pay relativity is reaffirmed.

It is our understanding that, if accepted, this element (1%) will be applied for immediately.

## **Working Hours**

This is an area of significant concern. It is our position that the change to new entrants TACOS, to increase their working week by 2 hours, 1 day per month, 12 days per year, will break parity and this is an area that must be considered seriously by you our membership.

The question for our members is are we content to have a 2 tier force?

## **Freeze on Pay Progression**

This is an area which causes significant concern for the National Executive, as we have a different understanding of why the two-year pay scale freeze was not introduced within the MDP back in 2012 when it was implemented by Home Office Forces. The reality is that this was missed by the Department and the Force and the TACOS offer now seeks to address this situation.

Unfortunately the Department and the Force do not feel the same way about backdating the removal of the Net Pay Deduction, but regardless of this, the facts are that there was a two year pay increment freeze on officers in the Home Office from 2012, that concluded in 2014 and this application to our

members will give equality, albeit some officers who would have been affected by this will now be on their top pay point and as such will not feel this impact.

The impact of this will be, that officers to whom this applies, if accepted, will lose up to £4000 over the period, due to the freeze and their inability to move forward on the pay scales but this is a parity issue and will realign our officers with those in the Home Office Forces.

### **Linking Pay Progression to Performance**

This is a clear parity issue and as such the NEC believe it should be applied to us.

That said we need to ensure that where an officer is in a specialist role, where the requirements are higher than for other officers, they are not precluded from pay progression as a result of falling short of that higher requirement but are still achieving the standard routinely required for MDP officers.

The Force and the Department have assured us that this will not be the case.

### **Overtime**

The standards being offered to the MDP in this package mirror those applied to the Home Office, but members need to understand that as part of the overall package, this will generate a reduction in income for some officers.

This is a pay parity issue and as such needs to be implemented within the MDP to enforce our position on pay relativity.

### **Maternity Pay**

This is an element that should have been applied to us some time ago. We would not oppose this element as it brings us in line with other similar groups and is a benefit to our members.

### **Competency Related Threshold Payment (CRTP)**

This element is again a parity issue.

Our colleagues in the Home Office Forces have seen this allowance reduced at a progressively reduced rate, over four years.

In this case it seems unfair that the Department wish to totally remove CRTP with effect from April 2016, which again demonstrates the difficulty that these negotiations have had in relation to fairness and parity when placed against the need for the Force and the Department to reduce costs and come within their budget.

## **Special Priority Payment (SPP)**

This payment has been removed for the Home Office and as such generates a parity issue.

However the Chief Constable has recognised the need for a payment to assist in recruiting officer to and maintaining officers at certain locations or roles and is proposing to approach the DPF with a replacement allowance.

We have, as yet seen no documentation on this subject and await it eagerly, as the Force announced earlier this year that there will be no SPP payments for 2015 onwards.

## **Attendance Management**

On the issue of the reversion of rest days, there is no legal challenge to stop this practice as it has no direct financial impact. If accepted as a package, this would then apply to all officers who reverted to rest day due to illness, not any other reason i.e. domestic distress

## **Allowances**

This is a clear step away from pay parity, where our colleagues in Home Office Forces receive payments for Unsocial Hours, On-Call, Away from Home allowances and additional Overnight allowances.

This will widen the gap in pay, between our officers and those of the Home Office significantly and it does become difficult to accept that when it comes to assurance and standards our officers must meet the same standards as those in the wider police service, but when it comes to pay and allowances we do not need to.

## **Variable Shift Arrangements**

On this area we have had many exchanges of correspondence, specifically in relation to the AWE rosters and then more generally. The protocol attached to the offer on TACOS outlines the position the Chief Constable would wish to adopt, which in fairness is broader and more protecting of officers in the MDP that that applied to the Home Office Forces, but it must be seen significantly reduces our current position, where negotiation is necessary, not consultation.

This protocol does require a demonstration of where the current pattern is falling down, if a move to change is taken forward and does also require the Force to accept the members proposition, if it meets the needs driving the change, but it does dilute your current position and as such you need to fully consider that position.

## **Drug & Alcohol Testing**

The changes to this and its acceptance formally will increase the pool of officers under its umbrella, but it must be pointed out that that increase is one which the DPF have been advocating since we began testing and as such the NEC support this section of the package.

## **Summary**

In closing, this is an offer which falls significantly short of what we believe our members deserve, but must be viewed in the environment in which it is offered, one of severe austerity and a newly elected majority government with a clear cost cutting mandate. As such I do honestly believe that this does demonstrate the most the Department is willing to offer at this time. We have managed to obtain significant movement to reach this point and this offer is far better than that originally tabled by the Force and Department, but the decision on whether or not to accept this, has to be one for our members.

On the subject of the ballot, if you adopt this package it will come into force, as per the timescales stated. If however you choose to reject it, we will have to return to negotiations and it is possible that some of the aspects may be removed from the discussion.

As such I would encourage you to discuss this in detail with your colleagues and families and consider it carefully before you make a final decision and cast your vote.

I am confident that our members will consider this fully and come to the right and proper decision for you as individuals and for us the DPF, to strengthen the professional standing of the MDP as a modern day police force.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Keating', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Eamon Keating**  
**National Chairman**