

Police Federation
Of England and Wales



Ffederasiwn Heddlu
Lloegr a Chymru

Established by Act of Parliament

Federation House, Highbury Drive, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7UY
Telephone 01372 352022 Fax 01372 352078
Email GenSec@polfed.org www.polfed.org

FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE

IR/sg

26 August 2008

JBB CIRCULAR NO : 71/2008

Dear Colleagues

POLICE INJURY BENEFITS

On Monday 25 August, the Home Office launched a public consultation exercise on a review and proposed changes to police injury benefits, ie, the awards payable under the Police (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006 where officers are permanently disabled or killed as a result of an injury received in the execution of duty.

The aim of the review is stated to be to ensure that there is "a system that is appropriate to the needs of modern policing and recognises the demanding and often dangerous roles that officers carry out" so that help is effectively targeted where most needed.

The review includes some proposals which would improve the current position as well as some which would represent a worsening of the current position.

A copy of the Home Office note for forces' communications to be sent to members is attached, which sets out further details of the key proposals.

Injury benefits are a critical element of our members' terms and conditions. The Police Federation and Staff Side of the PNB will be responding in detail to the review and further updates will be provided as the review proceeds.

Yours sincerely

IAN RENNIE
General Secretary

Represent · Influence · Negotiate

Note for police force communications to circulate to officers

PROPOSED REFORM OF THE POLICE INJURY BENEFITS SYSTEM

At the Police Federation conference in May, the Home Secretary announced her intention to launch a consultation exercise on the review of the police injury awards scheme this summer. The consultation was launched on 25 August.

The main objective of this review of police injury awards is to ensure we have a system that is appropriate to the needs of modern policing and recognises the demanding and often dangerous roles that officers carry out so that we can effectively target help where most needed.

It is important to note that these proposals will affect officers serving at the time of implementation, whether or not they have already sustained an injury. The changes will **not** affect officers who have already retired at the point the changes are implemented. They will still be dealt with under the system as it currently stands, even if they have not yet applied for an award.

Key proposals include:

- The introduction, as announced by the Home Secretary, of life-long adult survivor benefits and the extension of survivor benefits to nominated unmarried and unregistered partners in cases where an officer dies in the line of duty. At present survivor benefits for death in the line of duty are restricted to bereaved spouses and civil partners and are stopped on remarriage or cohabitation.

Officers who have an unmarried or unregistered same-sex partner should note that there will be a requirement to make a declaration nominating that partner in order to make them eligible for a survivor award. More details will be given nearer the time of implementation.

- Simplifying injury and survivor awards so they are easier to understand and apply. For instance, if an officer dies or is totally disabled within one year of an injury in the line of duty, financial support will as a matter of course receive five times their pensionable salary. Currently financial support is based on four times the officer's actual total salary if that works out to be a lesser amount.
- Making injury and death payments fairer. The pensionable salary on which lump sum awards are based will be changed so that it is based on average pensionable pay. This will take account of a person's working hours averaged over his or her police career rather than simply the pensionable pay at the time the officer ceased to serve. This should make the system fairer for officers who have not worked full-time throughout their career or have reduced their hours shortly before the injury.

- Revising the eligibility criteria and clarifying the definition for injuries received in the line of duty. This clarification will mean officers will be specifically covered for injury benefits as a result of a terrorist attack and will focus benefits on those injuries received in the line of duty. Proposals will also include withdrawing cover for injury or death sustained on a journey to or from work where the cause was not related to police duty - to bring injury benefits for the police service in line with injury benefits for other public servants.
- Clearer definition of eligibility to apply for injury awards.
 - In order to make a clearer link with police duty proposals include introducing a 5-year time limit for new post-retirement claims, except in the case of specified progressive illnesses and specified conditions with a long incubation period.
 - Introducing an absolute cut-off for new claims at age 65 or State Pension Age at the time if over 65.
- Replacing injury pension reviews at age 65 (or the State Pension Age at the time if over 65) by introducing a new minimum retirement income guarantee. Previously officers injured early in their career could have suffered a large reduction in financial support in their retirement if the review took them to the lowest pay banding. The new income guarantee will protect them from this.
- No longer paying injury pensions in cases where a former officer has suffered only a very slight loss of earning capacity as a result of the injury. In cases where the loss of earning capacity is 10% or less the former officer will receive a lump sum payment in recognition of the injury. This will allow benefits to be targeted where they are needed most.

In line with Cabinet Office recommendations that public consultations should last no less than 12 weeks, the closing date for comment is 18th November 2008. The consultation is open to all parties including individual police officers at the following address, www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/haveyoursay/current-consultations, and we would encourage everyone to have their say, using the communication channels below:

You can email us at:

policeinjury.awardsconsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

You can write to us at:

Government Proposals for a Revised Injury Award Scheme
 Police Pensions and Retirement Policy Section
 Police Finance and Pensions Unit
 Home Office
 6th Floor Fry, SE corner
 2 Marsham Street
 London SW1P 4DF