



Established by Act of Parliament

Police Federation of England and Wales

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From the Chairman's Office

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

17th December 2007

Dear Member

Police Pay Award 2007

By now you will be aware of the underhand and dishonourable way the Home Secretary has behaved in reaction to the decision of the Police Arbitration Tribunal (PAT). By refusing to honour the 2.5% increase from 1st September she has robbed police officers in England and Wales of more than £30 million.

This is nothing less than deplorable and pours scorn on the bitter disappointment we already felt at the 2.5% award.

We want to take this opportunity to update you personally on how we have reached this unacceptable position, what we have been fighting for and how we prepared for and reacted to the Home Secretary's decision. Also, without wishing to patronise anyone, to congratulate you on continuing to carry out your duties with dignity and professionalism despite the anger and bitterness you may feel towards the government's decision.

We are clear that we must maintain the pressure on the Home Secretary and continue building on the significant support we are receiving from both the public and politicians. As ever we need your support and involvement as we continue to campaign to get her decision reversed and restore the trust and confidence police officers must have in their pay arrangements. Keep an eye on the website www.polfed.org, get involved where you can and have your say too.

How have we got to where we are?

Since the late 1970s police pay has been increased annually on 1st September by an index that seeks to ensure that in the absence of the right to take industrial action, officers' pay does not fall behind other groups of workers. Whilst the index has changed over the years it has provided overall fair pay rises.

Joint Central Committee

Last year the government chose to unilaterally move away from the index and following disagreement the arbiters found in our favour. The then Home Secretary, John Reid, ratified the arbiters' award but, no sooner than the ink was dry on his authority he was announcing a review of police pay arrangements. Sir Clive Booth was commissioned by the Government to undertake the review which was to include a new index for 2007.

UK police officers' pay is negotiated at the Police Negotiating Board (PNB). This year negotiations proved impossible as the Home Office again sought to impose their will on all parties. We turned down a "majority" offer from the Official Side of 2.325% for a number of reasons as it fell well short of the increase our previous index would have delivered and, secondly, even if we were able to negotiate a different index it had been made very clear that the Home Office would seek to stage any award that exceeded 2%, reducing the 2.325% to 1.85%.

On 29th November 2007 the Police Arbitration Tribunal (PAT) determined to increase police pay by 2.5% from 1st September 2007. The Arbiters decision is binding on both sides of the PNB but must be ratified by the Home Secretary.

The Home Secretary claims she has ratified the PAT decision. This is untrue as she has refused to implement it until 1st December 2007, three months after it should be paid and resulting in a below inflation rise of 1.9% - a pay cut in real terms. The Scottish government however has acted with honour and will pay 2.5% backdated to 1st September 2007,

Our case

The Staff Side of the Police Negotiating Board presented an extremely strong, well argued and thorough case to the arbitration hearing. You can read our submission on our website: www.polfed.org.

We entered negotiations in good faith and expected others to do likewise, when the finding of the Police Arbitration Tribunal was announced – we had to respect and accept the decision. We didn't like it but accepted it. What is totally clear now is that whilst we and most of the Official Side honoured the negotiating process; Home Office officials and the Home Secretary never intended to honour any agreement unless it delivered the pay cut they intended from the start.

The government has demonstrated, despite their platitudes, that they have no respect or regard for police officers. Our trust and confidence in their ability to deal fairly with our pay and conditions has been shattered. The weak arguments they have presented since the decision are laughable.

Affordability:

Police Authority's have budgeted for at least 2.5%

Inflation:

The Bank of England says pay deals of up to 4% across the public sector will not cause inflation.

Preferential Police Pay & Comparisons:

The government is being selective comparing our salary increases over a 10 year period. We could do likewise and show that over the last five years police pay has not risen as much, whilst public sector pay has increased by more than double – we are not comparing like with like.

£30 - £40 Million

Whilst no one wants to lose about £200, and for some £200 is a lot of money particularly if you have taken a pay cut to join the police, this is not about the money. This is about a principle

that the government has failed to honour an independent arbitration tribunal for the one group of workers who can do nothing about it.

Federation membership

Officers of all ranks are rightly very angry at the way they have been treated, we understand this and place full responsibility for this firmly at the door of the person responsible, the Home Secretary. We have, and will continue, to fight for fair pay alongside a negotiating structure that police officers can all have faith in and trust. We hear calls from some that we should seek the right to take industrial action, others suggest working to rule. We will conduct a ballot of all officers to gauge your views and, as we do so, we would also counsel against any form of work to rule. Despite the provocation police officers have continued to demonstrate their professionalism and sense of public duty throughout this campaign. We must continue to do so.

If this government want a fight then they have a fight and we will leave no stone unturned in our campaign for fair pay. We can't do it on our own though, you can also play your part, please contact your local Federation who are on hand to advise, support and update.

Your subscriptions enable us to provide you with the very best legal representation, advice and support on all matters from pay to pensions. As a united body with 140,000 members we are powerful and influential– which will be key to a successful campaign, shaming this government over their unjust decision. There is clear evidence that the pressure we have consistently applied is beginning to have an effect as the public, the media and an increasing number of politicians recognise the injustice and call for the Home Secretary to reverse her decision. We must maintain that pressure. It is unacceptable that the one group of workers who can do least about the imposition of an unfair pay arrangement is taken advantage of in this way.

What we are doing – what you can do

On 12th December an emergency meeting was held in London of all UK police officer staff associations. At the meeting:

- A vote of no confidence was taken in Jacqui Smith as Home Secretary;
- A call was made for Jacqui Smith to resign as Home Secretary as police officers no longer have any trust or faith in her ability to deal fairly with police pay and conditions;
- It was agreed that a full ballot of the 140,000 police officers in England and Wales would take place early in 2008 to ascertain whether, in the absence of binding arbitration on the government, you want the Police Federation to start to lobby for full industrial rights for you. Please bear in mind police officers are currently legally prohibited from taking any form of industrial action;
- That a rally and meeting will be held in London early in 2008 to show the strength of anger amongst the membership at this betrayal of trust;
- That a meeting will take place in the New Year in the Home Secretary's constituency of Redditch;

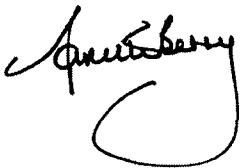
Also,

- We have started legal action regarding the Home Secretary's decision on this matter – we will update you as soon as we receive this;
- We have sent a letter to the Home Secretary outlining our utter disgust over the contempt she has shown us. Her office has now been in contact to arrange a meet – we will update you when this has taken place;
- We are continuing to lobby MPs and urge you to use the tool on the website to do this locally – please feel free to adapt the letter template;

- Home Affairs Select Committee – we have been invited to give evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on the 18th December.
- Parliamentary Briefings – we are sending regular briefings to MPs to update them on our position, to correct government spin and ensure your views are heard;
- Press Briefings – together with Joint Branch Boards we are briefing national and local media on a daily basis;
- Letter to MPs contradicting Home Secretary's arguments;
- Letter to Prime Minister asking that this scandalous decision be reversed;
- Letter to Leader of Opposition, asking for their support and expressing disappointment in their silence so far;
- We will continue to brief key opinion formers on this matter;
- We are doing daily newspaper, radio and TV interviews and your local Federations are doing the same – details of coverage can be obtained from your local JBB and on the national website www.polfed.org;

It is us who have the moral high ground on this issue. Support is growing every day, with more politicians and even ministers coming out in support. We must continue to conduct our duty with dignity and professionalism and use our strength and unity to shame the Home Secretary into reversing her traitorous decision.

Yours sincerely,



Jan Berry
Chairman



John Francis
General Secretary