

ICPRA Conference Copenhagen 25-27 May 2010

British Transport Police Federation

Background

The BTPF represents 2,900 police officers and is the specialist railway police service for Britain. Officers have the same terms of pay and conditions of the UK Home Department police services. The BTP is an unarmed police service.

UN Update

The BTP has no officers deployed overseas. We have no objection in principle to the seconding of officers to a UN posting or to the police service of another legitimate Government. The opportunity to avail of such a posting has not arisen.

Police Wages compared to other Industry Sectors

BTP enjoy largely the same pay terms and conditions as agreed at Police Negotiating Board on behalf of the Police Federation of England and Wales, the Scottish Police Federation and the Police Federation for Northern Ireland, around 160,000 officers in total. One important distinction is that the BTP pension is funded through the railway industry pension fund arrangements and therefore, like most private sector industry pension funds, is subject to the pressures of the current global financial difficulties. The pensions of other UK police officers are paid from current government revenues rather than out of accrued provision.

BTP officers are in the same position as the rest of the UK police service in that we are in the second year of a three year pay deal. The Government has announced that it will honour the third and final year of the deal at 2.5% increase but there will follow a review of police pay and conditions. The public sector had been warned that public expenditure would be severely curtailed for some years because of the size of the UK budget deficit. So far it has been the private sector which has suffered most in the recession. Jobs have been lost, wages cut and working hours reduced. The loss of jobs has not been as severe as it might have been because of flexibility shown by employers and employees to taking a wages cut or a shorter working week rather than to losing jobs. The attitude of the general public to the public sector will not be sympathetic. The new coalition Government is likely to reflect that hostility in its dealings with the public sector and the police service.

Violence against the Police

BTP officers have a particular vulnerability because officers are isolated on trains and cannot gain assistance until the train reaches a station. However the introduction of tasers and CS has reduced the incidence of violence against officers and improved officer protection. We are concerned about the move towards single officer patrolling as likely, perhaps inevitably going to lead to more aggressive confrontation with lone officers. This situation will be closely monitored by the Federation.

21st May 2010