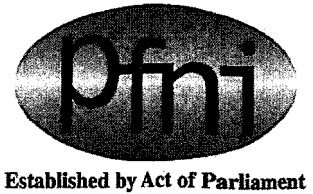




Police Federation for Northern Ireland



Established by Act of Parliament

ICPRA Conference Copenhagen 25th -27th May 2010

Police Federation for Northern Ireland

Background

The Police Federation for Northern Ireland represents 7,800 officers from the rank of constable to chief inspector. The strength of the Police Service of Northern Ireland is 8,000. All officers are routinely armed for their personal protection.

UN UPDATE

The PSNI has a small number of serving officers deployed overseas in Afghanistan and recently (very controversially) Libya. Several hundred ex-officers are working for private security contractors and training companies in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Middle East and various former eastern bloc countries. PSNI officers have particular skills in conflict resolution and policing divided communities which are in demand in certain countries. We would welcome the opportunity for serving officers to be seconded overseas UN operations but current cost constraints imposed by the Policing Board prevent this.

WAGE COMPARISONS

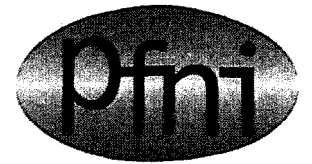
The PFNI is directly represented on the Police Negotiating Board which negotiates police pay and conditions nationally with the Home Office (Government). Currently we are in the second year of a three year pay deal which will mean a 2.5% increase in year three. The new coalition Government has announced that it will honour the third year award but has ordered a review of pay and conditions. The public sector had been warned in the run-up to the election that severe pay restraint will be imposed because of the UK budget deficit. Public expenditure on capital projects will be postponed or cancelled and possibly a wages freeze introduced. Various government agencies may be terminated. The police service is unlikely to be spared its share of the pain.

So far it has been the private sector which has suffered most through a combination of redundancies, pay cuts and freezes. The UK Government walks a tight-rope in cutting the budget deficit by £6billion this year between restoring the public finances and tipping the economy further into recession.

Specifically in Northern Ireland, the local economy is 70% dependent upon the public sector. Efforts to rebalance the economy have made little impact. Public sector wages as a whole are some 40% higher than the private sector, an inequality which makes it difficult for the private sector to compete for labour.



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VIOLENCE AGAINST THE POLICE

Northern Ireland remains almost unique (Basque terrorists in Spain) as a western jurisdiction where terrorists are determined to murder or injure officers purely because they are police officers. The security situation has deteriorated over the past few years despite the signing of the 1998 Belfast Agreement. Dissident Republicans are determined to perpetuate the terrorism and last year two soldiers and a PSNI officer were murdered. The level of violence has allowed the Federation to justify the retention of the Northern Ireland Allowance (a special payment which recognises the extraordinary circumstances of policing here and the threat that is constantly posed to our officers both on and off duty).

Since the beginning of this year there have been 25 bomb attacks directed at Police Officers and stations, 20 gun attacks and the terrorists are now targeting the parents, siblings and immediate family members of officers for under car booby traps. 25 officers and their families have been intimidated from their homes. The Chief Constable has been forced by the level of threat and upsurge in terrorism to retain the services of 225 fulltime reserve officers who were scheduled to leave the service. The Federation remains concerned that the response to the terrorist threat should be sufficiently robust and sustained to eliminate it in accordance with the political wish of the vast majority of the people both in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland.

The Federation also firmly believes that the establishment figure of the PSNI should be increased from the current regular officer strength of 7,500 up to a more realistic figure of 8,500 in order to meet the threat head on. This is especially important in light of the fact that we no longer have the support of the military and have no desire to call them back onto our streets as it could be counterproductive.

HOT PURSUIT POLICY

We also believe, in line with the Shengen Agreement, that legislation should be introduced urgently in both Northern Ireland and the Republic which would allow hot pursuit by police of criminals/terrorists into both jurisdictions. This would also help to close down paramilitary mafia activity such as smuggling contraband, money laundering, drug dealing and movements of drugs etc. which helps fund their terrorist attacks on our officers.

20/5/2010