

Justice Committee

Railway Policing (Scotland) Bill

Supplementary written submission from the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

I am writing to you in connection with the Justice Committee's call for evidence associated with the Railway Policing (Scotland) Bill. This brief additional evidence is intended to put a particular focus on the contribution of BTP Police Staff (civilians who work alongside and support Police Officers) and is intended to be read in conjunction with TSSA's detailed submission about railway policing which was sent through by e-mail on 27th January 2017.

Home Office Review – a model for Scottish Policing

In the first instance, however, we want to draw attention to the UK Home Office's review of Infrastructure Policing that includes the BTP in England and Wales and in particular to the decision not to merge forces but to develop a three-year plan to improve the way the forces (including the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, MoD Police and Home Office airport policing) work in conjunction with each other. Our contention is that this decision shows an alternative route for Scottish policing and that to ensure there is no loss of the specialist skills, knowledge and experience of BTP Officers and Staff, merging British Transport Police's D Division with Police Scotland should be withdrawn and a closer working relationship developed instead.

Police Staff jobs

On the question of Police Staff in BTP, we want to highlight some of the roles that they carry out in order to show that their jobs are not just administrative but highly skilled and crucial to operational policing. Amongst those civilian jobs are:

- *Scenes of Crime Officer* who attends any incidents with potential for forensic evidence to be gathered to support investigations by documenting, recording and examining such scenes whilst also giving forensic advice to all officers to ensure integrity and best practice;
- *Property Store Manager*, responsible for the storage and handling of all items seized when a person is arrested on railway property and ensuring processes allow for effective audit and control of items.
- *Vulnerable Person Coordinator* that reviews and assesses the vulnerable people who come to officers' attention on the rail network and risk assess the incident for referral to appropriate agencies and local authorities.
- *Camera Enforcement and Industry Liaison Officer* responsible for operating a Mobile Safety Vehicle whose function is to deter and detect offenders who misuse Level Crossings, a high priority for BTP and Network Rail;
- *Crime Prevention Design Advisor* which look at intelligence led policing where criminality can be reduced by crime prevention through environmental design;
- *Career Development and Talent Management Advisor*, part of a department responsible for delivering the People Strategy that supports the development of both Police Officers and Staff as well delivering leadership training and developing policies;

- *Crime Operator and Criminal History System Administrator* which provides a complete administrative and systems interrogation support to Officers including updating victims;
- *Crime and Justice Unit Manager* is responsible for the administration of all Crime and Justice matters generated by BTP Scotland and also any transferred matters from other Forces which come under BTP Scotland Jurisdiction including the submission of all BTP Scotland prosecution reports to Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal service, ensuring those reports (including fatality reports) adhere to evidential sufficiency standards and COPFS and Lord Advocate's guidelines;
- *Crime Analysis Manager* carries out research and analysis into crime, incident and intelligence data in relation to the rail network in Scotland, with the objective of informing tactical and strategic options in relation to policing and safeguarding
- *Case Progress Officer* involves the occupant ensuring that reports submitted by Officers have sufficient evidence, are properly structured and contain all the required information to ensure that offenders are prosecuted and Police Officers can remain on the 'front-line' for longer periods of time;
- *Intelligence Unit Researcher*, evaluating intelligence and providing real and slow-time intelligence to officers.
- *Financial Support Officer* provides a financial service, including dealing with the pay and expenses of Officers and Staff together with payment of invoices and dealing with suppliers.

This list is not exhaustive.

Examples of differences in pay between BTP Scotland and Police Scotland

One of the issues that we would draw the Committee's attention to is that of the differences that exist in pay between BTP Police Staff in Scotland and those in Police Scotland. This fits in with the Committee's request to provide evidence about how the role or terms and conditions of BTP officers could be affected.

In a recent series of job adverts for Police Scotland:

- the role of Research Assessor in the Concern Hub was put in the salary range of £19,254 – £21,243. In BTP Scotland, the same post is known as the Vulnerable Persons Coordinator (part of the BTP Community Safety Bureau, equivalent to Police Scotland's Concern Hub) is graded as A006 with a salary of £25,707 to £30,629;
- Business Support Administrator is similar to the BTP's business support functions. But that is where the similarities stop because the job in Police Scotland is paid an annual salary in the range £18,006 - £19,254 whilst in BTP it is grade as A004 and attracts a salary of £19,918 - £23,475.

The point in raising these significant differences is to highlight:

- the inferiority of Police Scotland pay when compared to that of BTP Scotland
- but also to show how BTP staff potentially transferring to Police Scotland are alarmed to see how their pay could be frozen (if not cut) if they were to be assimilated into the latter's pay system at some point after they are transferred. The Minister for Transport and the Islands in his letter to TSSA

General Secretary Manuel Cortes, quoted in TSSA's January submission to the Justice Committee, gave assurances about jobs and conditions but the fear is about what happens after transfer as Police Scotland attempt to harmonise or make alternative roles conditional on accepting revised pay and conditions.

Intentions of BTP Scotland Staff

TSSA wanted to gauge the intentions of existing BTP Police Staff in the event the merger went ahead amidst reports that staff were considering their future with the Police Service. We did this by a short survey conducted over the period Thursday 23rd February to Tuesday 28th February which showed that whilst 62.5% cautiously said they intended to stay, 37.5% indicated that they would be intent on leaving, some through retirement but many through an expectation that they will be made redundant post transfer. These figures, representing a third of respondents intending to leave, are far higher than what we have experienced in the large number of TUPE-like transfers we have dealt with in other organisations and should be a source of great concern for the Justice Committee.

We look forward to the Committee's response.

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TSSA
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