



Scottish Police Federation

5 Woodside Place Glasgow G3 7QF

JCC Circular 45 of 2019

Ref: CS/DH/LS

11 October 2019

Dear Colleague

Police Service of Scotland Promotion Processes

Police Scotland's promotion processes have been subject to a number of modifications over the last few years. Most recently the Force introduced a flexible merit score that is separate from the competency pass mark. To qualifying for entry into the promotion pool, candidates must attain not just the competency mark but the merit score too. The merit score is set at the conclusion of the assessment process and is adjusted so that the number of successful candidates match the number of forecasted vacancies.

When this was first proposed, the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) made it clear that we did not support this measure as there could be an occasion where the merit score was higher than the competency score. We felt that this was a moving goal for officers and would be viewed as unfair and demoralising. Despite these concerns, Police Scotland's Senior Leadership Board approved the policy and implemented it.

On the first occasion this process was applied, the competency mark and merit score were the same and no issues arose. In the last two processes (Inspector to Chief Inspector and Sergeant to Inspector) there have however been discrepancies between the two scores. This has caused frustration and disappointment to those affected and is as demoralising as SPF had warned.

Last week, an SPF official sat as an observer at the National Moderation panel for the Sergeant to Inspector Promotion Process. The Panel did sample assessment scoring and the merit score was set in line with the forecasted vacancies. The process was followed as per the Standard Operating Procedure and SPF can assure members that there was nothing irregular about the decision making at that group. At that meeting the representative again stated that while they were content that the process had been applied appropriately and fairly, that they remained unhappy about the process itself.

A significant number of our members adversely affected by this policy have contacted SPF expressing dismay at the personal outcomes of this process and seeking assistance. Whilst sympathetic to their situation, as an organisation the SPF is legally prohibited in representing officers on "questions of promotion affecting individuals" (Section 59 (1) of the Police Act 1996).

The SPF has however advised the Director of People and Development of the continuing disquiet over this policy and consequently a review of the promotion processes is to be

undertaken. This review will involve the Police Staff Associations. We do not however expect this review to affect the decisions made in respect of any processes run to date.

If any officer believes they have grounds for appeal please encourage them to refer to the Promotion SOP that was published at the commencement of this process and follow the procedures outlined in Appendix E.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Calum Steele', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the signature.

Calum Steele
General Secretary