



Scottish Police Federation
PO Box 27163, Glasgow, G3 9EZ

Joint Central Committee
Health & Safety Subject Committee

Ref: CS/BJ/MF

MINUTES

8 April 2021

1. Attendance and Opening of Meeting

North Area Committee
North Area Committee

Ross Polworth
Yvonne Sloan

East Area Committee
East Area Committee
East Area Committee
East Area Committee

James Gowling
Heather MacDonald
Mark Murphy
Richard Wood

West Area Committee
West Area Committee
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West Area Committee
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Dougie Chalmers
Gordon Cumming
Ian Florence
Iain Gray
Stephen Gray
David Hunter
Michael McCaughey
James Mutter
Craig Fraser
Elaine Sutherland

Chair
Assistant to the General Secretary (H&S) AGSH

Brian Jones (meeting Chair)
Gordon Forsyth

Administrator
Business Manager

Megan Finnie
DJKeil

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. Due to the COVID-19 situation the meeting was done by Video Conferencing. The Chair invited all to take an active part.

Apologies were received from Kenneth Kean, Campbell Smith, Simon Lewis-Dalby and Marc Lorente. Iain Gray & James Gowling were observers.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minute of the previous meeting held on 28 January 2021 had been circulated with JCC Circular 5 of 2021 and was approved.

COVID Update

The AGSH reported some issues over compliance. He explained PSoS were firmly of the belief that all officers were aware of the guidance, so failure to wear the correct PPE was in effect a deliberate act of defiance. The SPF ran a short survey which gave a variety of scenarios and asked which PPE should be worn. Very few officers got all of the responses correct which indicated that while the guidance was available it was not fully understood.

The AGSH further explained the issues regarding wearing of FFP3 masks at large events particularly the gatherings at Ibrox and George Square. SPF felt that commanders at these events were not giving strong enough messages regarding the appropriate use of PPE.

The AGSH reported seeing tightening of some of the instructions, but not across the board. There were clear improvements at the deployment for the Celtic v Rangers fixture. Op Talla providing physical logistical support assisted with that.

The AGSH advised that Lateral flow testing was to be introduced into other areas away from C3, but it would be targeted at training and larger events. The Committee discussed lateral flow testing, specifically in custody in which Stephen Gray referenced a specific case of two officers who were exposed to Covid whilst dealing with a prisoner in custody. Ian Florence said that there was a need to know if an officer had Covid rather than been exposed to it. The Chair explained that the Force deemed lateral flow testing a public health responsibility and that it was voluntary.

The AGSH reported that PSoS are submitting Covid RIDDORS not many other forces if any in the rest of the UK are doing so. 194 reports have been submitted with a further 108 potential reports to be submitted relative to workplace transmission. The HSE has never provided any feedback on any of them. The Chair supported the frustrations felt regarding the lack of support or interaction with the HSE, and said that the TUC was also going to address this as they felt the HSE should have been doing far more during the pandemic.

The Chair said that he had written to the DCC designate expressing concerns about the lack of proper PPE. ACC Alan Speirs replied explaining improvements and his desire to work with the SPF about this. The Chair expressed the hope that members were wearing correct masks and he asked members of the Committee to provide him with any relevant information on this matter.

3 Violence

Assault Data Analysis

The AGSH reported that in Q and L divisions it had been identified that the majority of assaults on the police had been carried out by 12-17 year olds and many were related to Children's homes, absconders and missing persons. A single 15 year old male had been responsible for 18 assaults in Q3 and had been responsible for 42 police assaults in the previous 6 months. Including that youth, six offenders were responsible for 44 assaults. The clear failings of other partners particularly Social Work was highlighted. L Division had higher numbers through the festive period, but had no repeat offenders. The main forms of assault in both Divisions were Kick, Spit, Punch in that order of prevalence with a large number of the assaults occurring in police vehicles or premises.

A discussion took place with the Committee regarding the incident in the Meadows in Edinburgh over the Easter Weekend. Richard Wood confirmed the officer who was assaulted had submitted an injury on duty form. Heather Macdonald advised of the opening of a potential investigation locally within the division. The Chair added that the incident was another example of the lack of planning and preparation.

The Committee discussed accident reporting and a short life working group set up to examine this. It was to develop a guide on how to complete scope reports appropriately. It was generally accepted that the current system was too cumbersome with separate reports being required for each officer injured which could result in numerous reports covering the same incident. The Chair encouraged everyone to submit these reports timeously to ensure an accurate picture was obtained.

4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Body Armour

The AGSH reported that 12 regional hubs are operating well with no issues for delivery once the new sets arrive. The sets ordered for Inverness arrived the day before the meeting, with orders for Aberdeen, Glenrothes and Stirling arriving in the next couple of weeks. 2200 sets of armour had been issued.

Footwear

The AGSH reported that the boots had been issued in Fife over the last month and was nearing completion there. 400 pairs of boots had been issued thus far. He informed that the Forth Valley rollout would commence early next month and would move North and finish in the West area in coming months.

Heather MacDonald reported that there had been an issue raised by an officer in SCD in relation to their reluctance to buy boots prior to potential deployment at COP26 given that they will eventually be issued with a pair by PSoS. Dougie Chalmers added this was regularly voiced by officers in his area. In the interim during the rollout is it still the officer's responsibility to ensure they have suitable footwear for deployment.

Clothing & Equipment Working Group

The AGSH reported that they had not met since the last meeting, but were due to meet again next week.

Dougie McKinley asked about body armour covers and whether there any plans to supply second covers. He said that one cover was not enough especially where it had to be cleaned between shifts. The AGSH said he would take this back to the group.

Shields Working Group

The AGSH reported that the Working Group was required to carry out some more work on the issue. A paper submitted to the YSM group recommended the immediate removal of the short shields from vehicles as they could not be confidence tested effectively and their warranty was expired.

Carriage of intermediate shields in divisional vans could be considered as they have the weight capacity to carry the additional equipment.

The safety shield (buckler) was then discussed. DCC considered that it would be useful to consider other techniques and tactics that could be included in the OST, but also a trial of the safety shield would be appropriate before a wider roll out if they proved to be successful.

The Committee discussed the appropriate response to dealing with incidents involving knives and where taser fitted into that list of options. The Chair reported that there were plans to increase the number of STOs to 2000 across the force. Members agreed this was a step in the right direction. The Committee agreed that it was crucial to get the right people for the job in hand which in the case of knife calls should be armed officers.

Heather Macdonald made the committee aware of a recent review following an incident in P Division which is being chaired by Louise Shelton. There were 21 key findings and 12 recommendations in the review and it had been a very thorough examination of the subject.

5 Operational Equipment

The AGSH reported that a welcome injection of capital funding had been received and this was going to be utilised to replace some of the older vehicles.

The AGSH explained the recent Carbon monoxide incident. They were still trying to ascertain how the gas got into the passenger cabin as it did. The vehicle will be going to Millbrook testing centre in a few weeks following removal of travel restrictions where they will replicate the exact shift using information from officers and the telematics from the vehicle. He also updated re the carbon monoxide detectors which they are still in the process of identifying a suitable model, although a Glasgow based company had been identified who may be of help.

The AGSH explained that samples of the new vehicles in fleet are going to be reweighed at the end of April to assess the requirement for any further safety alerts.

The AGSH advised that a racking system for vehicles has been developed and a further prototype is expected in the next few weeks. Photos of the systems developed for the

BMW X5 and the Peugeot 308 were shared with the committee. They are considered a positive step.

Members of the committee were pleased to note the additional funding. Dougie McKinley said that Northamptonshire seemed to have excellent vehicles and widespread use of tasers. The Chair said he would contact Northamptonshire to learn more,

6 First Aid

Naloxone

The AGSH reported that the Naloxone Test of Change is underway. An updated JCC Circular 6 of 2021 had been issued. Carrying naloxone is voluntary and the SPF was aware of coercive language being used to encourage officers to participate. ACC Ritchie frequently used terms such as “misinformation” and “scaremongering” during media appearances and as a result has been asked to clarify his comments. The AGSH advised these issues have been raised directly with the DCC and the Chief.

The Committee discussed naloxone in general and concerns in relation to training, where no information had been provided about actual delivery or aftercare. It was reported that PIRC and PSD had made certain statements about investigation and prosecution but neither had been able to give any guarantees. Richard Wood explained his personal experience where he had been criticised for explaining the SPF position on naloxone. He asked that his thanks be passed to Woodside Place for the support he had been given by office bearers there.

7 Administration & Governance

The AGSH reported that there were 15 ongoing accident investigations with 8 having been completed since the last meeting. He said there had been a total of 49 investigations in the last two years.

The Chair reported that formal inspections were on hold due to Covid. Unsurprisingly fewer issues were being highlighted but there was some outstanding work to be done.

Dougie McKinley asked if SPF was to provide IT equipment as home equipment was not secure and carrying out SPF work in the workplace was not always easy to achieve. The Chair said this was under consideration and he would raise the matter at the next trustees meeting and with the JCC.

8 Training

The AGSH advised that once safe, training will re-start. The Chair advised he was looking at potential dates to hold training in Dundee, Covid restrictions would be implemented.

The Committee discussed standard driver response training. The Chair said that the biggest risk in training terms was driver training. He explained there were 8000 response officers and 4500 of them had not received driver training. He said this amounted to a backlog on training of between 9 and 12 years. He said that some shifts had no trained drivers.

Elaine Sutherland asked if PSOS was recruiting non-drivers. The chair said that PSOS was currently reviewing its position on this subject but it was understood that a driving licence would be made an application requirement.

9 Area Updates

North

Ross Polworth reported that the last North H&S meeting was held on the 3rd February 2021. The number of officers injured due to assaults and during arrest was below previous year figures. Near miss reports had increased and not just due to COVID. Noticeable incidents had occurred where custodies conveyed within the rear of police vehicles had assaulted officers or injuries caused to officers. The next meeting is scheduled to take place 5th May 2021.

All areas had been reminded to report incidents at the time and not wait until officers return to duty given this leads to late reporting. He said that in North Division a Contactless/card payment machine had been fitted in canteen, Alness Police Station is projected to be replaced within the 2021/22 financial year, process now agreed for new winter clothing and this will be implemented on a gradual basis due to financial restrictions with the area's most in need getting the equipment first.

On housing he said that work was ongoing to refurbish houses in Shetland, planned developments in Fort William and Caithness to build hostels were being considered and a project was ongoing to look at the projected needs for housing within the North Area.

He said that in relation to A Division issues were mainly related to Op Talla such as a lack of social distancing and an increase in near miss reporting. A number of no injury reports had been changed to assault due to kicks and soft tissue damage.

Finally, in relation to D Division issues were mainly related to Op Talla. He said there had been 17 non-injury reports changed to assaults. Some late submission of incident reports month on month were being addressed by division.

East

Heather Macdonald said that the current H&S Investigation picture in the East was an improving one with only 5 current ongoing live investigations. Covid was still the main general focus across the force. Covid Marshalls had been introduced to all divisions. Increased training, the likelihood of shielding ending on 26/4, an eventual return to some office working, risk assessments, following the guidance regarding Covid, were all matters that would require attention in the near future.

The message still needed to be pushed about wearing of FFP3 masks when dealing with the public and not able to maintain 2 metres. She asked that members be advised there is a vast supply of masks therefore no reason to try and minimise their use.

She reported that the SLWG was looking at prisoners arriving in custody, review of processes following the shooting in the Metropolitan Police Area, camera monitoring which measured heartbeats and prisoners waiting in police vehicles and car parks.

Police Assaults – Some really good work ongoing to improve the recording of assaults. H&S adviser Jackie Lambert is preparing a paper for ACC following some analysis work, this will link in with the CJSD work as it is known most of the spitting/kicking assaults are within CJSD.

She also said that in relation to Road Policing Shifts, SMT were to meet on 19th April to discuss several options and come back to SPF.

In relation to Legal Firearms Update re Storm markers she said she had met with ACC Mairs and C3 on morning of 6th April to discuss the work done to address the concerns raised re legal firearms markers. Concern was officer attending misper and not being aware there were firearms within. Measures now in place to mitigate risk but not 100% with new form, will be better again under CAM once full benefits are realised. Custody are also now checking every prisoner and if a licence holder flagging for follow up.

She said a new command and control system was being looked at which would combine all of the systems which don't currently talk to each other. The costs associated with the new system mean that ongoing updates to the current system might not now be carried out.

West

Ian Florence reported that there were 10 live accident investigations all nearing completion. He thanked reps for assisting on these investigations. He advised that since the last meeting, the West H&S Committee had met with the ACC but as this had been the first meeting for some time, mainly terms of reference for future meetings was discussed. He said there was to be unannounced H&S visits and also checks on patrol vehicles.

10 Competent Business

The Chair reported that cleaning within police stations will finally be introduced. He said it had taken around 14 months for it to be accepted that a cleaning regime, involving cleaning everyday, was required.

Working from home was to be reviewed at beginning of June.

The AGSH advised that Professor Harry Burns will provide an input at Conference on Covid.

Dougie McKinley asked if SPF was still utilising the panel of experts in relation to Covid-19 advice. The Chair explained that the panel had provided excellent advice at the start of the pandemic but had not been consulted recently. Dougie McKinley said that the members understood that the panel was still being used and paid for and nothing to the contrary had been communicated to them by the SPF. The Chair explained that he would investigate whether a further communication to members was appropriate.

11 Closure

The meeting Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Date of next meeting: **8 July 2021**