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Our Ref/Ein Cyf: VRD/SLP

Your Ref/Eich Cyf:

18 February 2015

Mr Craig Guildford
Deputy Chief Constable
Gwent Police

Dear Sir,

The contents of this letter are the Federation response to the consultation regarding the proposed shift pattern for 'response' shifts.

We have received significant numbers of emails and telephone calls from officers, the following areas are consistent throughout the vast majority of them:

- Less time to spend with family and friends - this is predominantly linked to officers being advised that the proposed pattern will incorporate shifts that will not allow contact with their family for several days at a time. This will have a greater impact on those officers with caring responsibilities for children or elderly relatives. The lack of an Equality Impact Assessment does not assist in demonstrating that the force is an employer of choice or even considerate of these individuals.
- The proposed 9am start will reduce the number of officers to cover such matters as scene guards, hospital duties, etc. particularly when resources are needed to take over from night workers.
- It is considered that the 60%/40% split will not meet the demand. There are not enough officers to support the shift pattern - officers have been advised that decisions relating to the new operating model are based on demand analysis. This analysis has not been shared (if in fact it has been done) and so the requirement for varying start times is not evident to those affected.
- It is considered by many that the 4 on 4 off (12 hour) shift pattern is the best option for both officers and the force.

- There are not enough vehicles to cover the overlapping shifts - this will render any variances in start times ineffective.
- Officers believe that they will be unable to plan for a work/life balance - the reduction in numbers and varying start times will reduce the opportunity for annual leave and other unplanned time off.
- Briefings will become disjointed due to different start times.
- Sickness levels will increase - there is clear evidence that this is already occurring having had some insight into the force attendance management process. The force occupational health unit has identified a clear increase in demand for their services which directly relates to the proposed changes for staying ahead.
- Low morale - there appears to be a great deal of confusion regarding potential disruption of rest days which will soon incorporate a training day. There is also a great deal of uncertainty around implications to flexible working arrangements and how the force will manage this area of business.

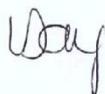
The Federation remain extremely concerned that the proposed pattern will impact adversely on the public and officers. Whilst acknowledging the need to meet the demand from the public, there needs to be an element of give to allow for a work/life balance. Without this it is likely that service to the public will fall.

Whilst these views have been expressed to the Federation, I am sure that similar views will have been shared by individuals with the Staying Ahead team.

Many officers across the force consider that these changes are very much 'a done deal'. They consider that the force is only paying lip service to the consultation on shifts.

This letter will be circulated to our members so that we can demonstrate to them that we have been reflective of their views. Once you have considered the results of the consultation process we would be grateful if you would respond to these views so that we may again circulate them to colleagues.

Yours faithfully



Vickie Day
JBB Secretary