New look for Conference 2017
Chairman’s overview

By Tim Wilcox, chairman of Gwent Police Federation

I hope that you are all as well as can be expected and are having some time to enjoy the little bit of sunshine that has so far been bestowed upon us in this rainy isle.

Yet again I am writing this missive in the shadow of a terrorist-inspired attack, this time the third in a city on our shores in as many months. Neither the Manchester suicide bombing nor the London Bridge attacks had any political, military or governmental value. But rather they were chosen solely to increase the angst and fear of the ordinary people of this country and others watching around the world by the very nature of targeting the everyday occurrences of the normal pattern of life.

Yet again the emergency services of this country proved a value way beyond monetary considerations, as they demonstrated tirelessly a worth counted in humanitarian concern and actions. Heartfelt good wishes to all who were involved; let us hope that they all get the ongoing support and consideration that they may well all need also.

The abundance of hot turbulent air brought about by the massed ranks of politicians attempting to curry voters favour is always a (perhaps not so) welcome relief from the real world that we all inhabit. However, it has been pleasing that the topic of policing has made it to the fore. Principally, this has been centred around the cuts to police budgets over the last seven years and the attendant reduction in numbers of officers in each force. Every officer, in every force throughout the country has noticed the effect that this regime has had. Less of everything to go around including time to deal with things properly and goodwill; which as I know you all know, is the true barometer of police morale and wellbeing.

Much of this edition of the magazine is concerned with content from the recent Federation conference. This year, as a visible result of the modernisation programme, the conference moved to a central location in Birmingham and was reduced in length to two days. I thought it was a considerable improvement in that it focused the debates upon the most important national issues and moved the more specific matters to fringe events. It pleased me that both the PCC, Mr Jeff Cuthbert, and his deputy, Ms Eleri Thomas, joined us for the Home Secretary’s speech. Mr Farrar was also a welcome guest.

I cannot tell you that the Home Secretary’s speech was redolent with praise for the police nor a promise of more cash. I could probably write enough about it to fill a short graphic novel but will hopefully convey to you its content by writing this: if one closed one’s eyes it could have been Mrs May speaking. Quite.

I am pleased to say that the new Gwent Police Federation website was due to go live on Monday 12 June. It has taken a little while to get it into being but it is a considerable improvement on the old site. As well as being much more user-friendly there is a forum facility that I would urge you to sign into. It will enable you to inform us and comment upon issues that are important to you. I would much rather your views drive what the Federation does rather than mine or those of a national Federation agenda perspective. Please let me have your views about it and any features you would like to see on it. The site is also available as an app for android from the launch of the main site and within five days of this launch, an IOS app will be available. I am going to ask the Force that the app be allowed on the Force-issued Samsung device and I will let you know how that goes.

Following on from the announcement of the Chief Constable to take retirement, for which I am sure we all wish him health and happiness, we are due to have some changes in the top level of management within the Force. At this moment we are waiting for the PCC to appoint the new Chief and begin a new chapter in the history of Gwent Police. I am hopeful that this new chapter will see a continuance of the excellent welfare work that has been ongoing, particularly the focus upon mental health wellbeing, a subject that many of you will know, I have a particular interest in. We are very fortunate in Gwent Federation to have one of our number, Inspector Amanda Williams, back as force lead on this subject. She is both exceptionally keen and knowledgeable.

You will see that in edition I have been asking the head of human resources, Neil Lewis, about his role and how he makes a difference to you, who work at the most important end of policing. Neil has also demonstrated a huge commitment and belief in the welfare of staff as being a foremost consideration.

Please let me have any feedback on the magazine, the new website, the app or indeed anything else you feel like. Be safe and well all.
A crowd of rank and file police officers heard their Federation chair make a plea to the new Government – make policing a priority.

Steve White addressed the Federation’s national conference in a keynote speech delivered to Home Secretary Amber Rudd.

Steve said: “...politics and politicians will move on, but policing, its officers and people’s safety will always be needed. No matter who is in Government. Put policing before politics, put the people before politics, and put those who pledge to serve before politics.”

The chair then turned his attention to the Federation’s Protect The Protectors campaign, which received cross-party support in Parliament earlier this year.

He told the Home Secretary: “Many of your colleagues from all political parties were vocal and stated their support for a change in legislation. Many expressed support for a change to see harsher sentences for those convicted of assaulting officers.

“And so, today I ask you and every politician seeking to be elected – can we have a firm commitment to make this happen?

“We want a commitment that you will give the police officers of England and Wales the support and protection needed to do their job. That is, support in numbers. Support in equipment. And support in law. For, without that support, without the numbers needed, we can’t continue doing everything.”

He continued: “When she was Home Secretary, the Prime Minister told us we should have a single mission – to fight crime.

“Home Secretary, you cannot put a price on the value of policing. And no Government can cut tens of thousands of police officers and expect us to pretend that it won’t make a difference. For it does.”

And while speaking about how the police could not ‘do everything’ he called on the newly elected Government to ask the public what they wanted from the police.

He went on to mention provisions needed for officers to effectively do their job – including a wider roll-out of Taser. The new X2 Taser model is approved but many forces are struggling to fund its introduction.

He spoke about police pursuits and how the current test of dangerous driving is ‘outdated, misinterpreted at best and downright ridiculous at worst in the way that it applies to police officers’.

He called for exemptions in law to be put in place to ensure that an officer, doing their duty and engaging in a response or pursuit in a police vehicle, is not unfairly processed through the court.

Police pay was also brought into focus with Steve urging the Home Secretary to remove the shackles from the Police Remuneration Review Body, allow it to take pay decisions through the court.

And while speaking about how the police service learns from its mistakes.

He presented the Protect The Protectors campaign very well and put key questions to the Home Secretary,” PC Claire John

Federation national chairman Steve White.

scheme of Government budgets it’s negligible,” he explained.

The chair closed his speech by summarising what he and the Federation want from the Government: a national system of welfare provision for police officers, legal protections for officers doing their job, the right protective equipment for officers, no further budget cuts, an immediate halt in the reduction of officer numbers, and a progressive culture and an open environment where the police service learns from its mistakes.

He said: ‘And finally, we want a Government that supports the police. Not just in words. In actions too.’

And concluded: “We are proud to be British police officers. We are proud to do our duty. All we ask is that Government does its duty too. And Protectors The Protectors.”

So, 3,000 is not just a number. It is much, much more than that:

- It’s 3,000 fewer police officers patrolling and protecting communities;
- 3,000 fewer cops investigating crimes and supporting vulnerable victims;
- 3,000 fewer tackling cyber-crime, dealing with historic offences and tackling the atrocities of terrorism.
- A sorry total of 20,000 police officers over the last four years. A powerful message for you and for all seeking to be elected next month.

Policing is on its knees. It is fighting for its life.

[PC Claire John]

“I didn’t think this was as good as previous speeches and felt the graphics used were awful as they cheapened things.” Sergeant Maria Henry

“He presented the Protect The Protectors campaign very well and put key questions to the Home Secretary.” PC Claire John

“I didn’t think this was as impactive as it has been in previous years.” Vickie Day, Gwent Police Federation secretary

“He didn’t say anything new.” PC Nicky Ryan
‘It’s not for me to tell the police how to do their jobs’

A staggered 4.5 million hours of police time have been saved thanks to a cut in red-tape – according to Home Secretary Amber Rudd.

She made the claim during her speech to a packed hall on Day 2 of the annual conference in Birmingham.

And she said that if her party was re-elected on 8 June more top officer jobs will be opened up to those outside of policing.

“The public don’t pay their taxes so that the police sit in their office filling out meaningless forms,” she said. “And you didn’t come into policing to waste your time on paperwork when you could be out serving the communities you swore to protect. So we have cut pointless red tape. With 4.5 million hours of police time saved – that’s the equivalent of 2,100 police officers no longer sitting in a back office and instead fighting crime in their community.

And we’ve taken steps to significantly restrict the circumstances in which a police station may be a ‘place of safety’ with £15 million invested into health-based alternatives.”

She continued: ‘And if I’m re-appointed as your Home Secretary I will continue to work with the health secretary so that the police do not do the jobs of other public servants, so you are not the service of first resort.

“You asked me to bring in a new two shot Taser gun, and I’ve done that because you keep us safe and it’s right we keep you safe too. You asked us to better fund mental health services for officers up and down the country. And if I’m returned to this post in 22 days, signing off that bid, Steve, will be one of the first things I do.”

Her first ever engagement after becoming Home Secretary in July was the Police Bravery Awards – which is where she heard about the Nice terror attack.

She told the room: “That moment will stay with me for the rest of my life. As I watched our brave police officers being recognised for their extraordinary acts of courage, the horrible events on the streets of Nice were unfolding. The best of our values, embodied in the actions of our policemen and women, set in stark relief against the very worst of human behaviour.

“We owe you, the police, an incredible debt, for the courage and bravery you exhibit in the line of duty. For your willingness to put yourself in harm’s way, day after day, in order to protect the rest of us.”

She went on to pay tribute to PC Keith Palmer and the other officers who have lost their lives in the past year, before pledging her commitment to support the new UK Police Memorial.

And she insisted the decisions her party had made which weren’t well received by officers had been in the best interests of the country.

“You haven’t agreed with the steps we’ve taken to bring more people from outside policing into the force. But it’s been right for the country and the public. And if the Conservatives are re-elected we will go further and open up the very top jobs in policing so that we get the broadest possible skills and talent at the very top of our police forces.”

OUR REPS SAY:

“She didn’t say a lot really – kept reiterating that changes had to be made and also that if the Tories were elected in June she would look at things then. She appeared quite defensive when pushed with questions.”

Sergeant Maria Henry

“Due to the circumstances surrounding the General Election, I thought she gave vague answers, incorrect figures and came across as unsympathetic despite her pledge to Protect The Protectors.”

PC Claire John

“This speech was the same old political blurb. However there was a moment during the Q and A session where it looked as if the reality of policing and Tory cuts dawned on her.”

PC Nicky Ryan

“She’s a very professional individual who comes across as knowledgeable and interested but at the same time wouldn’t be an easy push-over. She does need to be better advised though as she seemed to lack knowledge of the reality of policing resources around the country. Her speech seemed to get into the realms of a party political broadcast.”

Vickie Day, Gwent Police Federation secretary
Amber Rudd was put under tough questioning from Federation reps when she took part in her first Q and A session.

Delegates wasted no time in raising their concerns on issues including pay, funding, mental health, spit guards and demand. Here is a selection of the questions and answers.

Steve White: “... Are we going to see investment in the police service? Because we either invest or divest and you can’t keep fudging it and saying it’s down to the chiefs when they don’t have the money.”
AR: “We have made a commitment to maintain the police budget from 2015-2019/20 and I expect that to continue... I believe it’s right to say the police should be locally run and that chief constables working with PCCs is the right way forward.”
SW: “I think you’re saying ‘no’.
On a pay rise, AR: “It’s not for me to offer a pay rise. It’s important to have a remuneration committee. The public sector pay rise has been fixed at one per cent and I understand that’s difficult and unwelcome but we need to have a stronger economy so there has to be public sector pay restraint. The pay restraint will remain until 2019/20.”
SW: “Does that include politicians?”
AR: “The expenses scandal meant MPs’ pay was put into the hands of an independent regulator and ministers’ salaries were cut.”
Ian Collins: “Give me a moment while I just weep quietly over that at the podium.”

John Apter, Hampshire: “... the reality is that the Force Welfare Fund, a charity, is now seeing officers come for food vouchers to put food on their table or fuel in their car to get to work. Is that right for the public and the country?”
AR: “I’m sorry to hear that, I understand that must be difficult. An average officer’s earnings is about £40,000 (there was lots of sniggering and scoffing at this point). Again, I don’t want to make misleading commitments about pay but we have to make sure we get the borrowing numbers down and get back to a stronger economy. We have to... make sure we continue to limit expenditure to protect the economy which will be better for you and your families.”

Louise Bates, Bedfordshire: “Assaults while on duty result in mental health issues so officers are away from work, leaving fewer officers to deal with the workload. How will you support officers injured on duty?”
AR: “Mental health is incredibly important and the Prime Minister has said there will be new legislation put in place for mental health issues at work. Steve has put a bid into the Police Transformation Fund and I hope to be able to support that if I’m re-elected.”

Paul Bennett, Northumbria: “Do you accept there is a direct link between officer workload, mental health and morale and what are you going to do to help us?”
AR: “I would acknowledge that link in any form of work, any walk of life and in policing on the front-line and with events we’ve seen recently, even more so, yes.”

AI Secker, Avon & Somerset: “We want you to tell the public that we don’t have the capacity to deal with your incidents. Our Chief Constables have to tell the public but we want you to tell them, we want you to be honest with them and tell them we’re 20,000 cops down so we can’t go to some of their cries for help because of your policies.”
AR: “The independent crime survey has stated very clearly that, until the recent rise in violent crime over the last year, which is a different issue, crime has fallen by a third. Also, the PEEl reports show different areas having different successes so some areas are able to have strong responses and they are not the forces with the largest amounts of money but they have got excellent leadership. So I don’t agree it’s all about numbers and money, it’s about great leadership being able to deliver with a tighter budget.”

Nick Smart, West Yorkshire: “(Chief Constables) don’t have the money to deal with demand. Will you give us more money for more cops? This is happening everywhere and if you’re being told it’s not happening, you need to change your advisors.”
AR: “I’m sorry to hear the description of your force. I have visited forces over the past eight or nine months now and I haven’t seen that situation.”
Nick: “Until you tell other agencies not to place the burden of first resort service on us, until you resolve that, we are always on the back foot.”

AR: “We are trying to address the issue of making sure the police isn’t the agency for every issue. I accept your invitation to come to West Yorks if I’m in position after 8 June.”

Andy Symonds, Norfolk: “We’re relying on officers’ goodwill because HR cannot fill the gaps. We are firefighting and officers have had enough.”
AR: “I don’t have an answer to that but when I go on a tour around after 8 June, I’ll come to see you...”
Andy: “But when you arrive at a force they’ve probably got officers on over-time they wouldn’t normally have and jobs will be withheld while you’re touring round so I implore you to put a surprise visit in and see what is actually going on in forces.”
AR: “Andy, you’re going to be my first surprise visit.”

Phill Matthews, Nottinghamshire: “Can I ask you to show your support for our members and police officers up and down the country to devote some Parliamentary time for looking at increasing sentences for those that assault our members, the police officers out there trying to keep you all safe?”
AR: “All assaults on public servants are treated as an aggravated crime so sentencing already reflects that and we have the legislation to do that. But I will keep it under review and keep looking at the numbers of crimes against police officers which are reported separately.”
Prospective parliamentary candidate for Halifax, Holly Lynch, has called for the issues surrounding the Protect The Protectors campaign to ‘dominate the agenda in Parliament’ after the General Election on 8 June.

She told the Federation’s national conference that there should be increased police numbers and stiffer sentences for those who assault them.

With the help of the Federation, she has drafted new legislation which will lead to tougher sentences and better protection if adopted.

Also addressing the conference, the chair of West Yorkshire Police Federation, Nick Smart, agreed something needed to be done quickly as he believed that police officers had become ‘society’s punch bags’ and that there was ‘no deterrent’ for those who assault them within current legislation.

Ms Lynch has been a strong advocate of stiffer sentences for those who assault police officers, staff and other emergency service workers since she went out on patrol with the West Yorkshire Police in her constituency and saw exactly what officers have to deal with.

She told delegates she was so scared for an officer’s safety at one stage during an altercation that she called 999 from the police car to request back-up.

“I saw for myself how quickly situations can escalate and how vulnerable officers are when they are out on their own,” she said.

“To assault an officer shows complete disregard for law and order and our shared values. If officers are not safe, then our communities are not safe.

“If an officer is assaulted at any time, it must be recorded and must be subject to a robust investigation. Officers must have the confidence that those involved will be investigated and prosecuted accordingly.

“An assault on an officer is an assault on society. This severity of violence directed at police officers is just unacceptable.

“With the Federation, we have looked at drafting a new piece of legislation. My bill would open up much tougher sentences and the second part of that bill will deal with the hideous acts of spitting and biting.

“These changes need to be on the agenda of every candidate seeking election so that this issue dominates the agenda in Parliament after 8 June,” she added. “We need to restore and protect the brave men and women behind the uniforms.

Nick Smart said that everyone in the room needed to put pressure on those in power to make urgent changes after the election.

“At last year’s conference Theresa May said that some of the sentences (for assaulting officers) were too soft and that was wrong. But 12 months later, we are still fighting for officers’ rights and stiffer deterrents, for spit guards, for increased roll-out of Taser, for protection for drivers – and it’s quite a frustrating thing to constantly plead for something that should already be there,” he said.

“There is stuff going on to cops on a daily basis and it is stuff that the public don’t see.

PC Mike Bruce (second from left) is interviewed by facilitator Ian Collins (left) as West Yorkshire Federation chair Nick Smart and Holly Lynch look on.
It's a sacrifice that they are making and a lot of the time, the sentences do not reflect the physical and mental injuries sustained.

"Less than 10 per cent of offenders get a custodial sentence. That is not justice. Our cops don’t think it is and that is why they don’t bother recording it because they have no faith in the criminal justice system.

"The vast majority of MPs agree with us – so that begs the question: why is it so damn hard to change legislation to bring in stiffer sentences? It is our responsibility to continue the debate.

"We are calling for stiffer sentences. If there is no deterrent, how are people going to change their behaviour? Assaults are going up and more violent assaults are going up. Something needs to change.

"We have drafted legislation for the Home Office. It’s there to go. It’s there to go for aggravated assault on a police officer. We are in a position where MPs will listen to us and listen to what we are doing. My plea to you is help us campaign for this for the right reasons. We all need to put pressure on those in power.”

Speaking at the end of the discussion on the Protect The Protectors campaign, a West Midlands officer, who endured injections, medication and ‘six months of worry’ after being spat upon by an assailant, has also called for politicians to help change legislation to give police more protection.

OUR REP SAYS:

“This slot didn’t encourage much audience participation. Considering this was the message of conference, I am surprised it didn’t make centre stage with the panel debate.” Vickie Day, Gwent Police Federation secretary

Modern slavery: ‘the greatest human rights issue of our time’

Modern slavery is the ‘greatest human rights issue of our time’, the UK’s Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner told conference during a Tuesday afternoon break-out session.

Kevin Hyland, a former head of the Met’s anti-trafficking unit, also admitted that it was a sad reflection on today’s world that his post - established under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 - was even needed, given that slavery was abolished 180 years ago.

He said this ‘hidden crime’ affects 45.8 million people today, equivalent to the population of Spain, compared to around 11 million people before it was abolished.

Many of the victims of modern slavery can be found working in factories, fields, in the fishing industry, and car wash outlets. They were, the commissioner explained, often housed in squalid conditions.

“There has been a huge growth in the problem. Our approach has changed significantly for the better. It has been a steep learning process but the expertise to deal with vulnerable victims and serious organised crime already exists within policing,” Mr Hyland told delegates.

He said there had been 3,805 allegations of modern slavery recorded by the national referral mechanism but only 117 prosecutions and just 31 convictions. The attitude in the past had been to pass on the problem rather than tackle it and he had been shocked to find incidents catalogued on spreadsheets and not being tackled.

The commissioner went on to call for improved training for officers through the College of Policing to enable police to detect slavery and recognise the victims, rather than charging them for being complicit in cannabis farms, prostitution or other criminal activity. He also said there needed to be greater commitment by forces to record allegations and investigate incidents, backed with the necessary financial investment.

A West Midlands officer, who endured injections, medication and ‘six months of worry’ after being spat upon by an assailant, has called for politicians to help change legislation to give police more protection.

PC Mike Bruce told the Federation’s national conference in Birmingham that he had ‘spit dripping off his face’ after an incident outside a pub in Holbrooke, Coventry in April last year. His colleague, PC Alan O’Shea, had blood spat in his face when he came to help.

It was the start of a long process of tests to make sure that neither officer had contracted HIV or Hepatitis B or C and also led to PC Bruce’s two children, aged one and nine, requiring blood tests too.

None of that worry would have had to have been endured had legislation been in place to make the arrested man take a blood test to see if he had any of the diseases that could be contracted.

And PC O’Shea’s ordeal would not have happened either had PC Bruce had a spit guard at his disposal. West Midlands Police are currently discussing that possibility.

“Myself and Alan were just about to go off duty when we heard an almighty scream of a back-up call over the radio from a response officer,” said PC Bruce.

“When we arrived, I saw a colleague struggling with two men, a father and son. “I pulled the father away and he started throwing punches and kicking me. We went on the floor and I was trying to restrain him but he turned round, looked me in the eye and spat in my face. It went in my left eye and down my mouth. I had spit dripping off my face. It was disgusting. I would rather have been punched in the face.

“PC O’Shea came over and was acting as a peace-maker. The guy had a bit of blood in his mouth and spat that blood in Al’s face. If we had the spit guards, I would have pulled it out after I had been spat on and that would have protected Al.

“We were carted off to hospital because it went in our mouths and eyes and was treated as a needle injury. We had injections and medications to stop the onset of possible HIV and Hepatitis B and C.

“There was six months of worry. Within my first month of medication, the GP told me I tested positive for Hepatitis B, which later proved to be a false reading. At the time, my whole world collapsed. We had a young child. My wife and I were thinking about having a third child and I thought we were never going to be able to do that because of a positive test. My one and nine-year-olds had to have blood tests and AI and I went back every two weeks for more blood tests.

“If there was legislation in place for the prisoner to have a blood test, it would have stopped all of that worry but he is under no obligation. He was charged with assault on me and AI. He got a suspended sentence and had to pay me £250 and AI £500.

“These spit guards are solely there so that if someone is spitting or trying to bite, there is something there to protect us. I would invite politicians to come out with us and see what goes on. It’s about getting out there and educating them.”
Diane Abbott under fire for spit guard scepticism

Shadow home secretary Diane Abbott came under fire from delegates for her sceptical views on spit guards during her conference session.

Ms Abbott delivered a speech in which she praised police for their work in a difficult climate and reaffirmed the Labour Party’s commitment to introduce an extra 10,000 officers if they win the upcoming General Election.

But at the end of her address, she was put on the spot during a question and answers session, having been cautious towards the use of spit guards in the past.

She explained that she needed to see more evidence on the health implications of using them before she was prepared to back a nationwide introduction.

“I have been looking at the evidence in relation to spit guards and I continue to look at that evidence,” she said. “I have never said I am against them in principle but like any fresh equipment or power, I want to see the evidence of what they would do, particularly in relation to the health risk.

‘Among the groups that I have consulted with are groups who represent those with Hepatitis C and those with HIV, and they argue that you don’t catch Hepatitis C or HIV from being spat at. It’s about looking at the research and coming to a view.”

Delegates seemed unconvinced when police minister Brandon Lewis claimed crime had fallen by a third since 2010.

Making his conference debut having taken over the post last summer, Mr Lewis took part in the conference’s simply titled Political Session.

He acknowledged that there were now 20,000 fewer officers than there were in 2010 and said: “As these police officer numbers have changed we’ve actually seen crime fall by about a third since 2010.”

While officers seemed to laugh at his claim, he did admit recorded crime had increased but said it was a good thing as it showed victims of crime had more confidence in coming forward in the first place.

He started his speech by saying he wanted to focus on three key areas – professionalisation, IT and Protect The Protectors but first paid tribute to PC Keith Palmer who he said had given his life in the line of duty and that he was owed a debt of gratitude before going on to praise all officers who he said risked their lives to ‘enable us to be safe and feel safe’.

“We truly do have the best police service in the world,” he told delegates, adding that the Government’s reform programme had been about recognising the professionalism in evidence in policing every day.

Police minister addresses delegates

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Yvette Cooper believes the country stands at a crucial moment for policing and security ahead of the upcoming General Election.

The former shadow home secretary called for more immediate work to be done to help the police service deal with the new challenges it faces in tackling crime and protecting communities.

Ms Cooper was invited to speak at conference as the chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee working on the inquiry into the Future of Policing.

Ms Cooper praised the work of officers across the country and paid tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

She also welcomed the Federation’s work on officer assaults.

“Your work on the Protect The Protectors campaign is immensely important to make sure that the police are not stretched to the limits,” she explained.

Ms Cooper said she disagreed with claims by Theresa May, when Home Secretary, that the purpose of policing is crime, no more, no less.

“The purpose of policing is never less and is always so much more about the security and safety of our public and making sure we have strong and resilient communities and keeping people safe for now and in the future,” she pointed out.

Facilitator Ian Collins was applauded by delegates when he offered some clarity on the use of spit guards.

The shadow home secretary, in answer to a question on the issue, said she wanted to see evidence as to what they would do, particularly in relation to health risks.

Ian said: “Let me help you out, I am not an expert on this but I think the theory is if someone spits in your face you use the spit guard to stop them doing that.”

Our reps say:

“I thought Diane Abbott was unprofessional and unprepared. She appeared to be making things up and clearly didn’t appreciate the importance and benefits of spit guards which is very disappointing.” Sergeant Maria Henry

“This was a low point. She came across as unprepared, ill-informed and embarrassing.” PC Claire John
More support needed for officers with mental health issues

There is robust evidence police officers’ mental health and welfare is being put at risk by high workloads and falling numbers - and it would be ‘nothing short of negligence’ if chief constables fail to act on it, conference was told.

Che Donald, the Federation’s national lead on mental health and welfare, warned: ‘The real threat facing policing now and in the future is the lack of care, compassion and welfare provision for our members.’

He said a nine-point plan for police forces to help tackle identified issues in these areas is soon to go out to consultation. It has been created using the 16,000 responses to the Federation’s welfare survey.

Che hopes a final version of the plan will be adopted with the same support as the seven-point action plan on assaults.

He received reassurance from Chief Constable Sara Thornton, chair of the NPCC, that chief constables would be fully involved in the consultation and in improving mental health and welfare for police officers.

Che said the latest Federation welfare survey results revealed: “Increased demand and decreased capacity is taking its toll on our members, it is affecting their mental health and it is impacting on the service we provide to the public we swore to keep safe.”

Sir Thomas Winsor, chief inspector at Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary.

He also highlighted a need to focus on the availability and quality of training to help support officers experiencing mental health difficulties. Only 21 per cent of line managers said they had had specific training.

Sara Thornton acknowledged a demand/capacity imbalance, pointing out that those crimes that are rising in numbers - such as sexual and violent crime - are often the most complex and complicated.

She added: “Honour-based violence, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, all again take more skill, more knowledge and more time. So, I think, it is probably uncontested that there is more work, fewer people and the work has got more complicated.”

He said policing can and should be made more efficient but warned the ability for more effective policing with the resources in question is jeopardised and impaired if the officers themselves are impaired physically or mentally or both.

He praised the ‘can do, will do’ attitude of the police but said it was not an excuse for failures higher up in planning, demand management, resource deployment, equipment provision and personal support for individual officers.

During the Q and A, a delegate asked whether Sir Thomas Winsor’s view of the police force had changed since he had become chief inspector at HMIC.

He replied his ‘admiration for the police has increased exponentially because of the arduous work that is done’ but insisted that in his review he had been guided by expert advice.

He said: “The police cannot meet all demand – we do not even know what all demand is but you have to have the best assessment of what that demand is, crime and non-crime which is a huge proportion of the demand on the police, latent and patent demand. Until those things are assessed, the condition of the assets are properly understood, you cannot have the honest debate with the public because you know what, I think that if you have a proper assessment of the demand, the assets to meet that demand and the money you have got you are going to find it does not add up.”

It’s time we talked...

Simpson told delegates about the turmoil he went through before his depression was identified.

He traced the start of his illness back to his work as a family liaison officer and an incident where the ‘shield’ protecting him fell apart.

“The job that did it was a 17-year-old lad that had been killed in a car accident. I went to the mortuary with his parents and there wasn’t a mark on his body. When we walked in, the mother screamed, a scream like I’d never heard before. It was like an opera singer hitting that high note and shattering the glass. I felt grief, horror, and that changed me forever,” he said.

“I didn’t understand how I could be depressed because I wasn’t sad. I felt like the service I’d always wanted to be in had abandoned me. Individuals didn’t, but the police service did.”

After six months off sick, he was put on half pay.

Equal measure should be given to both mental health support and protective equipment.

He explained: “Investment is needed in policing because you can’t have single crewing, not just for safety but for being able to talk to colleagues properly. The number one priority for chiefs should be the mental health and wellbeing of officers and staff.

“To think you want to kill yourself is the worst feeling. You’re not thinking rationally, a horrible low point to be at. Too many cops end up as a statistic. It’s too many. We’re not talking about it. You need to make sure it’s on the agenda.”

He highlighted an alarming statistic - in 2013, 29 police officers committed suicide – and suggested that if 29 officers were killed on duty in one year, more would be done.

OUR REP SAYS:

“This was a highlight of conference. Ed Simpson was honest, open and engaging. His story resonated with a lot of people.”

PC Claire John

Ed Simpson brought home the realities of officers suffering mental health issues.

Chief constables’ number one priority should be the mental health and wellbeing of officers and staff, according to a former officer who gave an account of harrowing incidents he dealt with during his time with North Yorkshire Police.

In a conference break-out session, entitled Mental Health – It’s Time We Talked, medically retired sergeant Ed

Sir Thomas Winsor, chief inspector at Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary.
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Lucy Williams
Lawyer in Family Law at Slater and Gordon
The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) has come under scrutiny for its handling of firearms incidents. The chair of the IPCC, Dame Anne Owers, outlined plans for structural changes at the police watchdog in her address but was on the receiving end of most of the questions from delegates afterwards with officers raising concerns about the length of inquiries.

The session began with Phill Matthews, the Federation’s lead in this area, stating that police conduct should move away from blame and punishment and towards learning and development and that the system needed to be fairer, quicker and more effective.

Phill said: “We want to encourage forces, the IPCC and PCCs that a more proportionate way of dealing with complaints is to look at everything through the spectrum of performance from the very start.”

Vic Marshall, professional standards lead at the Superintendents’ Association and a Police Federation advisor, echoed Phill’s views.

“Yes there will be times when cops fall short but that does not make it bad and naughty behaviour; it is not all about misconduct,” he told the conference. Where officers did not get it right, he explained, forces needed to be brave enough to say sorry, explain what went wrong and learn from that experience.

Dame Anne then told delegates that investigations – they were now carrying out around 600 a year - were often hampered by a lack of co-operation from witnesses but also acknowledged blame and accountability needed to be separated.

The watchdog chair said moving forward she would like to see joint investigations that took into account not just what was going on in policing but what was going on in health care too because too often there was focus on the incident the police were involved in rather than how did it get that way.

She explained: “We all have to work together to get a system which does work in the way that it should, and be able to properly deal with people who have done things that police officers shouldn’t be doing or those whose incompetence is too great for the job they are doing.

Witnesses or suspects?

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) has come under a withering attack for making firearms officers involved in a serious incident ‘feel like suspects rather than witnesses’.

Che Donald, national Federation lead on firearms, accused the IPCC of showing a ‘lack of trust’ in firearms officers.

Later in the Firearms Officers – Witnesses or Suspects? session, Sarah Green, deputy chair of the IPCC, outlined the processes they had to go through.

Che said from April 2015 to March 2016, there were 14,753 firearms operations but they were only discharged seven times.

Officers in England and Wales who volunteer to carry firearms were the best trained and most restrained in the world, he told conference.

However, he explained: “Once a firearms officer discharges a weapon on behalf of the state and in order to protect themselves or the public, they are meant to be treated as professional witnesses. However, if you speak to many firearms officers about this point, they will tell you a different story,” he explained.

“An overwhelming majority will say the way they are currently dealt with makes them feel more like a suspect. There is only one reason for this, the IPCC. Many officers believe that IPCC investigations start to establish blame not fact.”

He claimed that the issue of separation was the main cause of concern in PIPs. He said there were grave concerns about the IPCC’s insistence that officers should be separated at the post-incident suite to avoid ‘collusion’.

“They stress that separation is not segregation but there is a perception of a lack of trust by the IPCC. It infers that officers will collude. I believe the issue of separation is flawed and unnecessary,” he explained.

“The IPCC are there to ensure that the incident is investigated. The problem I have is that we are currently in a position where the police force is struggling with trust, faith and confidence in the IPCC and this is not a healthy place to be.”

Ms Green said that out of 25 investigations into firearms incidents since 2010, there had only been three cases where officers were served with notices of investigation.

The IPCC had only used its powers of arrest once and she added that a member of the public involved in a death would not be given 24 hours to compose themselves before questioning, so there was a case for equal treatment towards officers.

“We believe that having clear procedures will protect officers and ensure consistency in approach,” she said.

Tony Long also told conference about his 25 years as a specialist firearms officer and trainer with the Met covering incidents in which he had fired a weapon. Investigators looking at the incidents later had the benefit of hindsight, freeze-framed videos and took months, and sometimes years, to review those decisions officers made in a split second when facing a life-threatening situation.

**OUR REP SAYS:**

“This was a highlight, I enjoyed this session though the IPCC was still insisting that video footage couldn’t be viewed before officers gave their statements.” Sergeant Maria Henry
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Pay reforms on their way, says NPCC lead

Plans for officer pay including the introduction of the controversial Licence to Practise for high risk roles, a possible introduction of the Licence to Apprentice of £19,773 would leave an individual with just £35 of disposable income after living costs.

CC Habgood said: “Ultimately police pay is to be fair for people who work for forces and also for taxpayers.”

Delegates expressed concerns that apprenticeships and old roles and those with families, as the average start age for new police officers is currently 28. A potential starting salary for apprentices of £19,773 would leave an individual with just £35 of disposable income after living costs.

CC Habgood said: “Ultimately police pay has to be fair for people who work for forces and also for taxpayers.”

The plans align closely with a review of rank structure, which Chief Constable Francis Habgood also discussed during his presentation.

“In my view, increments based on time served don’t have a role to play in the future. I don’t think regional pay works. But as an example, I could imagine top level constables earning more than entry level sergeants.”

Delegates expressed concerns that apprenticeships, expected to start next year, could bring a starting salary drop of 20 per cent from the current entry level.

Officers said a low salary could exclude older entrants and those with families, as the average start age for new police officers is currently 28. A potential starting salary for apprentices of £19,773 would leave an individual with just £35 of disposable income after living costs.

CC Habgood said: “Ultimately police pay has to be fair for people who work for forces and also for taxpayers.”

Evidence is becoming much more important, data is becoming necessary and needed facts and figures are required.

Morale Survey is now the largest workforce survey in the UK and the data it produces is valuable for pay review bodies, for publicity and for other issues.

“It’s helping to get the message out that morale is low and that significant numbers of officers are leaving... It is getting the message out that we are not crying wolf but presenting credible data.”

Barry Fletcher who sits on the Change Board described improvements made on transparency, professionalism and governance in line with the recommendations of the independent review.

He said: “To be the best police service in the world we must have the best in staff association in the world.”

North Wales Police Federation’s Mark Jones said the work of the workplace rep should not be underestimated, and described his extensive caseload - a caseload replicated by hundreds of Fed reps around the country.

Bedfordshire Federation secretary and treasurer Emma Carter revealed her ‘rollercoaster of learning’ since taking on the role.

She said: “As a rep, and more specifically as a secretary, I have been shouted at, ignored, hugged, bled on and cried on - tears of sadness and of joy. I know we do not always get things right and sometimes it will not always go the way the officers hope that it will... but I am hopeful we are on the right path. We need to do this together.”

Delegates gave Tobias Ellwood, the MP who so memorably went to the aid of PC Keith Palmer after the Westminster terrorist attack in March, two standing ovations when he addressed conference.

Officers stood to applaud Mr Ellwood after he was welcomed on stage by national Federation chair Steve White who said officers were touched by the efforts he had made on 22 March.

Mr Ellwood was visibly moved after being presented with the Police Federation shield and coat of arms.

He said: “I was just sorry that I couldn’t, and those others with me couldn’t, do more to save Keith Palmer’s life but we owe you such a debt of gratitude for what you do day in and day out and it’s very humbling for me to receive this award.”

He added: “What came home to me after the Westminster incident was just how closely knit your fraternity is and just how you don’t really, and yet every day you put your uniforms on and stand in harm’s way so we can continue our work.”

“When these events occur - tragic and rare, thankfully that they are, we don’t just carry on, it gives us even more determination to defeat this sort of extremism in the way that we know how, to defend our values and make sure we stand up to this so the terrorist does not win and that is something that resonated right across Westminster.” he explained.

Mr Ellwood said his thoughts continued to be with Keith Palmer’s family, friends and colleagues and concluded by paying tribute to all police officers saying: “Thank you for the work you do day in, day out. It’s not said enough but it is appreciated.”

Delegates gave him another standing ovation as he left the conference.
Dogged determination seems to have paid off for Tim Rogers, the national Federation’s response driving lead, who has been spearheading a campaign for a change in the law to give better protection to police drivers.

West Mercia’s Chief Constable Anthony Bangham, roads policing lead at the National Police Chiefs’ Council, signalled at conference that he would work closely with the Federation on the issue.

Tim, who is also deputy secretary at West Midlands Police Federation, was making a reluctant return to the conference stage, having outlined the Federation’s campaign at conference last year he had been hoping for more progress in the intervening year – given that the Federation has been calling for a change in the law for seven years.

Instead he had found more officers were being prosecuted for simply doing their job.

Heading a panel made up of Mr Bangham and Mark Aldred, a barrister and former police officer involved in the campaign, Tim introduced the session explaining the lack of legal protection for officers in pursuit or response drives.

The current legislation means that officers in pursuit or response drives...

Lord Stevens, who had himself been a Federation rep 50 years ago, was speaking as part of the launch of a public appeal for the memorial which will bear the names of 1,400 fallen officers and staff.

Lord Stevens explained: “A new UK Police Memorial will not replace local and regional memorials but will complement them, just as the Cenotaph complements the Armed Forces memorial at the Memorial Arboretum and the thousands of other military memorials throughout every village, town and city in our country.”

Lord Stevens said that if sufficient funds are pledged by July when the Police Bravery Awards ceremony takes place it would be feasible to dedicate a new memorial in the National Memorial Arboretum next year.

To find out more about the memorial, its design and the digital projects around it go to www.ukpolicememorial.org.

Help raise £10 a head for each Federation member by July and a new UK Police Memorial could be dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum next year - that was the appeal made by Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington, patron of the Police Arboretum Memorial Trust, at conference.

Lord Stevens, who had himself been a Federation rep 50 years ago, was speaking as part of the launch of a public appeal for the memorial which will bear the names of 1,400 fallen officers and staff.

The police, Lord Stevens said, are a family that comes together as a sign of unity and support when one of their own dies. The new memorial, he told delegates, was ‘absolutely essential’ and ‘important to...
**Quick guide to regulations**

**By Gwent Police Federation workplace representative PC Nicky Ryan**

The theme for this magazine is meal breaks and over-time. This is a large and complex area of Police Regulations, however, below are a few of the more commonly asked queries.

Gwent Police has agreed that the Force working day for police officers starts at 0700hrs. Supervisors should avoid advancing the working day unless in exceptional circumstances, however, where this is deemed to be necessary, officers should be given as much notice of the change of duty as possible.

The term ‘exigency of duty’ is frequently used to justify a shift change or lack of a meal break. However, the term ‘exigency of duty’ relates to situations where: ‘a pressing demand, need or requirement is perceived that is not reasonably avoidable and necessitates a change of roster’ (Police Negotiating Board Circular 86/9).

At this point it would be worth me directing you to the workforce agreements which are on the Gwent Police Federation website and can be accessed by all. These set out the rules and regulations as agreed by the Chief Constable around start and finish times of each agreed shift pattern and the length of meal breaks as set down by Police Regulations and Working Time Regulations.

In short, Police Regulations state that refreshment periods for a 10 and 11-hour shift will be one period of 45 minutes and one period of 15 minutes per 10 or 11-hour tour of duty. These periods will be taken at separate time and are not to be combined. A nine-hour shift attracts a refreshment break of 50 minutes. These breaks are subject to the exigencies of duty.

But regardless of the exigencies, the working time regulations entitle officers to an uninterrupted meal break of at least 20 minutes which should be taken away from your workstation. Supervisors should allocate meal breaks and ensure that they are taken.

This area of regs will be continued in the next addition of Forum magazine and will include information around recall to duty from annual leave, cancelled rest days and information for part-time workers.

### Over-time

**Sergeants and constables only**

**Over-time worked on a normal working day**

Regulation 25 Appendix C of the Determinations –

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Casual over-time</th>
<th>Planned over-time</th>
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<tr>
<td>is over-time which you are not informed of at the start or prior to the start of your shift.</td>
<td>is over-time you are informed of at the start or prior to the start of your shift.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You become involved in an incident and are unable to leave at the end of your shift.</td>
<td>You are warned that you will have to work an additional two hours at the end of your shift for a planned event or exercise.</td>
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<td>Time and a third of time off in lieu for each completed period of 15 minutes worked. with the exception of the first 30 minutes on the first four occasions in any one week (Mon – Sun).</td>
<td>Time and a third or time for each completed period of 15 minutes worked.</td>
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**Working through a normal duty day into a public holiday**


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<tr>
<td>Rostered shift is 10pm – 7am and you continue to work beyond 7am into the public holiday.</td>
<td>If you work from a normal duty day into a public holiday for a period of less than four completed hours you may have payment or time off in lieu at double time for four hours plus A day off in lieu which shall be treated as a public holiday and allocated within four days of being informed of the change.</td>
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**Working through a normal duty day into a rest day**


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<td>Rostered shift is 10pm -7am and continues to work beyond 7am into a rest day.</td>
<td>Scenario 1 – where you work up to one hour on the rest day – ie you continue to work up to 8am on the rest day. Payment or time off in lieu for each completed period of 15 minutes worked up to the end of the first hour of the rest day which immediately follows a normal tour of duty. Scenario 2 – where you work in excess of one hour on the rest day – ie you continue to work until 9am on the rest day. Minimum of four hours’ payment or time off at time and a half, but no entitlement to travel time as no additional journey has been made.</td>
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Putting mental health to the fore

By Inspector Amanda Williams

Most of you will know that previously I was the operational lead for mental health for Gwent Police but in March 2016 my role changed and I became a Bronze Inspector.

Nevertheless, my interest in all things mental health and policing continued and since January 2017 I have been delivering both Training Days 10 and 11 (both of which have been mental health inputs).

As of 5 June, I again took on the role of dedicated operational mental health lead. This role has two elements:

1. Working with partner agencies to improve the service we deliver to those vulnerable people living in our communities who have mental health problems. This will include looking at incidents that have gone wrong and finding ways to improve; developing policies with partners in this field of work and finding ways to reduce the unnecessary demand that mental health calls place on Gwent Police.

2. To improve the mental wellbeing of officers and staff in Gwent Police. In relation to the second element of this, I hope most of you who know me or who have been present at Training Day 11 at the Parkway Hotel realise that this is something to which I am extremely dedicated.

Over the next two years I will strive to improve the mental wellbeing of all officers and staff through a series of initiatives including:

- 1-2-1 support
- Group support
- Training a cohort of mental health champions
- Resilience training.

I may also be looking to run surveys around this very important topic to get an accurate picture of where we are right now so I’d ask you all to please help me out by filling them in and when I do it. I can only try to influence change with your help.

If you have any other thoughts or ideas on how we could have an impact on taking care of our workforce then I’d be really interested to hear them so please contact me.

I’ll be dividing my time between offices in HQ and Abergavenny but drop me an email with your ideas and I’ll get back in touch with you.
In our latest Q and A style profile piece, Neil Lewis, head of people services, puts himself under scrutiny.

What is your role and what is the structure of your department?
I’m the head of people services; I have responsibility for human resources (HR), payroll, learning and development, occupational health and health and safety.

What is your background?
I was born in Llantwit Fardre and went to school and played rugby in Beddau. Rugby has been a huge part of my life and I’ve played for Beddau, Llanharan, Bedwas and Cardiff. I’ve also managed to get on the last three Lions Tours which have been superb. Two young children means I’ll be dipping out of the NZ tour this year, but I’m hoping to make it to SA again in 2021! I’ve worked in HR for the last 20 years in both the public and private sector, the last 12 years I’ve worked in the Gwent region and I’ve loved every minute of it.

How do you feel that you can assist our officers on the ground?
Having spent time ‘on the ground’ with a number of officers, it’s clear we’ve still got a number of challenges and issues we need to address, but I sincerely feel we are now moving in the right direction.

We recruited 160 new officers in 2016/17 and will bring in another 120 this year; I recognise this isn’t a quick fix in terms of resources. There will also be another 40 CSOs recruited this year and an investment in the Special Constabulary and Cadets. We are also investing significant monies and resources in relation to talent management, first line manager training, mental health, trauma resilience training, TRIM (a trauma focussed peer support system) and additional wellbeing activities.

I genuinely and sincerely feel that some of the initiatives and changes being made will have a positive impact ‘on the ground’. The development of the intranet will also ensure documents and forms are all located in one place making it easier and quicker for staff. Self-service options will also be extended and we are currently reviewing all processes to make sure they work for officers and staff and aren’t driven by the centre. We need to make things much easier and slicker for staff to progress things and remove unnecessary bureaucracy.

Many of our officers will say they feel uniform policing in particular has been relegated to an also-ran in terms of perceived importance to the Force. Do you feel that you can affect this in any way?
Uniform policing is of critical importance and significance to the Force, it’s important we engage with these officers to ascertain what has led to this and to ensure we make any necessary changes. We will be working with an external provider this year and engaging the workforce far more proactively to ensure we can address this, I’d also encourage all officers to complete the staff survey when it’s launched in the summer.

There are an awful lot of policies for officers to follow; are they all necessary?
I completely agree, we have far too many long and unwieldy policies. I adopt the principles of trust and empowerment, it’s clear that some of our policies and practices are at odds with this. We are currently reviewing all our policies, when these are launched as part of the new intranet later this year, staff will see they’ve been reduced significantly, have helpful guidance and flow charts and simple forms to complete, all of which can be submitted electronically. A move to a new HR and payroll system later this year will also provide additional self-service functionality which will hopefully assist.

What changes have you initiated?
I arrived at Gwent Police 20 months ago, during that time I’ve strived to improve lines of communication, to be more visible and to ensure our services enable and support. One of the key challenges when I arrived was to set the strategic direction for the service. A People Plan was created through engagement with key stakeholders to set priorities and direction for the Force. The priorities all link to our people and focus on wellbeing; staff development, capacity and capability; delivering change; talent management; and being more representative of the communities we serve.

We also launched the Voluntary Exit Scheme and a number of police staff also left the Force via voluntary redundancy. Reducing levels of sickness absence has been a priority, 2016/17 saw a reduction in levels for the first time in 10 years, the number of days lost reduced by 26 per cent.

This is an excellent news story, however, there’s still a significant amount of work to do and the roll-out of a new policy and training for line managers, together with additional training and support for all staff will hopefully ensure we continue to make reductions in this area and create an environment where all staff feel valued and supported.

The service has recently been restructured, the HR team will now operate as business partners and you will start to see the service change meaning they get more involved in the issues which add the most value with lower level admin tasks sitting elsewhere within the department. As I mentioned earlier, we’ve invested significantly in mental health, wellbeing and talent management and staff will start to see a number of new initiatives over the next 12 months.

How do you expect these to benefit officers?
The changes will allow officers to spend time doing what they do best and hopefully remove the unnecessary paperwork some of our current policies and arrangements currently dictate. The changes will also provide additional opportunities for all officers to train and develop, not just for those who want to be promoted.

The DCC is a huge advocate of the wellbeing agenda and you can expect to see some significant investment in this area this year. Any ideas/suggestions officers have, please e-mail wellbeing@gwent.pnn.police.uk. The annual staff survey will shortly be launched and I’d urge all officers to complete this so we can ensure we appropriately prioritise. I’m also more than happy to engage directly with groups of officers with the Federation and to work through some of the issues and look at appropriate solutions.

I don’t have a magic wand… but I genuinely do care and want to ensure we make a difference.
Your Police Federation Claimline

By Lorraine O’Brien, principal lawyer in personal injury at Slater and Gordon

Accidents happen, especially in police work. Injuries can happen at the worst of times and treatment can sometimes go wrong. And it may not only be you who’s affected – your loved ones, your colleagues and even your finances may feel the pain too.

Over five decades working with Police Federation members we’ve gained a wealth of practical experience across a wide range of personal injury cases. We have detailed knowledge of the police service, including police pay structure, pensions, promotion prospects and issues related to medical retirement.

Through our successful partnership with the Police Federation, we provide members with a dedicated PF Claimline for personal injury cases. The service is provided as a benefit of your Federation membership and covers you and your family members. We’ve put together some of the most commonly asked questions by Federation members about the PF Claimline.

What is the PF Claimline?
The PF Claimline is a telephone and online based service provided as part of your Federation membership, which members and their family can access to start a claim for any type of personal injury accident free of charge.

Who provides the PF Claimline?
The Police Federation works in partnership with Slater and Gordon to provide the PF Claimline. We’ve been working with the Police Federation for more than 50 years. During that time we’ve developed extensive experience of the problems faced by police officers and have a proven track record of providing the guidance and support required as well as fighting and winning difficult cases.

What does the PF Claimline cover?
You are covered for injuries and accidents both on and off duty, this includes members of your family injured in the same or separate incidents. Your cover includes:

- Road traffic accidents (either on or off duty)
- Fatal accident claims
- Defective equipment
- Dog bites
- Accidents in the workplace
- Training injuries
- Tripping or slipping
- Occupational deafness
- Clinical negligence claims.

How do I start a claim?
If you have suffered a personal injury, either on or off duty you can simply call the PF Claimline and one of our advice team will take down the details and verify with your local Federation branch that you’re a contributing member of the Federation. A lawyer will look at your case within 24 hours of you making the call. Your claim will be handled quickly and efficiently by a specialist.

How much will I be charged?
You will retain 100 per cent of the damages we recover on your behalf. Most lawyers will charge up to 25 per cent of a client’s damages if they bring a claim for injuries caused by other people’s negligence. By way of example, if the damages awarded were £4,000 then you may only receive £3,000 but through PF Claimline you would receive the full £4,000. We regularly speak to officers at Federation roadshows who are unhappy they lost 25 per cent because they had gone elsewhere.

If you or a family member wishes to bring a claim please contact the PF Claimline on Freephone 0800 917 1999 or visit pfclaimline.com where you will get advice free of charge. We hope you don’t need us, but if you do, we are here to support you.
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