



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

Fit for Duty



Strategy for a Healthy Police Service 2003–13

Developed by Organisational Health, Welfare and Safety Sub Committee May 2004

Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Promoting a Healthy Workforce | 4 |
| Fitness for Employment | 5 |
| Legislative Compliance | 6 |
| Management of Sickness Absence | 7 |
| Major Health Matters | 8 |
| Rehabilitation and Redeployment | 9 |
| Ill Health Retirement | 10 |

This document sets out strategy of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland in respect of Occupational Health, Health and Safety and Welfare support. The strategy supports the ACPOS People strategy and focuses primarily on the strategic goal of creating and maintaining a positive working environment.

ACPOS intends that this strategy will be led through by the Organisational Health, Welfare and Safety committee in terms of the provision of national guidance and support and by individual forces in terms of their commitment to improving the health and well-being of all staff. It is recognised that ultimately the health, safety and welfare of staff lies with Police Boards and Chief Constables.

The broad aim of this strategy is to follow an individual's progress from pre-employment to retiral recognising the challenges and issues that will be faced by both the service and the individual in making this a positive, safe and healthy experience.

Work delivered through this strategy will have the aim of:—

- maintaining and improving the health of staff
- Reducing injuries and ill health
- reducing the number of people absent from work through work related illness, and
- Reducing the number of ill health retirements through effective case management

The document identifies seven key stages through which an individual may pass in their journey through the organisation. This document sets out under each of the key stages how the service would wish to look like in 10 years time. The document also addresses the programme of work that will be required under each of the stages to ensure the service is fit for the challenges of the 21st century.

Key stages in the journey of an individual through the Scottish Police Service

- Promoting a Healthy Workforce
- Fitness for Employment
- Legislative Compliance
- Management of Sickness Absence
- Major Health Matters
- Rehabilitation and Redeployment
- Ill Health retirement

In addition to the key stages in the journey there are a number of overarching principles and themes addressed in the document. These include:—

- Well-being of an individual is a partnership between the service, the individual and their family
- All individuals should be physically and mentally capable of performing the roles they have been assigned by the service
- Commitment by the service to the Work Life Balance agenda
- Provision of appropriate information, education, training and equipment
- A commitment to monitoring effectiveness and benchmarking
- Access and awareness for all staff to the professional support available

The strategy takes account of the challenges and changes that are likely to face the service in the next 10 years stemming from the changes that are likely to take place in the wider employment market.

The strategy recognises that with a reducing population there will be challenges placed on the service to continue to recruit the right workforce and to retain skills in the service and the issues this raises in terms of an ageing workforce. At the same time the strategy recognises the changing dynamic of society and the increasing expectations of individuals joining. Finally the strategy recognises the pressure placed on all public services to increase efficiency and ensure Best Value for the public.

Promoting a Healthy Workforce



The Scottish Police Service recognises the importance of good health and well-being for all staff and is committed to proactive initiatives for the benefit of all staff. Identified priorities in this area include healthy eating, exercise and health checks. Wherever possible the service will work in partnership with all staff groups to deliver a safe and healthy working environment.

The strategy also recognises that in order to drive forward improvements in health, safety and welfare staff and Line Managers must have access to quality advice, information, support and training.

Work ongoing in this area:—

- Continuing development and review of proactive policies e.g. in relation to Blood Borne viruses
- Commitment to preventative approaches e.g. through Smoking at Work policies in all police buildings
- Commitment to proactive initiatives e.g. Scotland's Health at Work Award Scheme
- Review of Health and Safety inputs at the Scottish Police College
- Review of qualifications of staff working in Occupational Health, Health and Safety and Welfare and consideration of continuous professional development for such staff



Fitness for Employment

The Scottish Police service believes that it offers wide ranging and fulfilling career opportunities. In order to meet the challenges of such careers the service believes that individuals require to be physically and mentally capable of performing the roles demanded of them.

In order to achieve this the service is committed to appropriate job related health screening for all roles and the provision of advice and guidance to individuals who have difficulty in attaining the standards required.

The service is committed to the principles contained within the Disability Discrimination Act and will take all necessary steps to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that appropriately qualified candidates are able to take up employment with the service.

The service recognises that fitness is important not only at the point of entry but throughout employment and is therefore committed to providing opportunities for individuals to maintain fitness throughout their career.

Work ongoing in this area:—

- Developing revised standards for eye sight in Police Officers
- Reviewing other medical standards for recruitment of Police Officers
- Reviewing job related fitness testing for Police Officers



Legislative Compliance

The service recognises that as employment patterns and expectations change new legislation will be introduced. The service welcomes any changes that are to be forthcoming in support of the well being of individuals and will work to implement them effectively within the service.

Work ongoing in this area:—

- Working group established to review the implications of the DDA for Police Officers
- Consider the implications of the introduction of Age Discrimination legislation
- Consider the impact of changes to Police Regulations and the wider implications of the 30+ scheme.
- Prepare for changes to Noise at Work Regulations and review exemptions.
- Review compliance with HSG(65) Successful Health and Safety Management
- Review of the Working Time Regulations to ensure compliance and commitment to the Work-life Balance agenda

Managing Attendance

The Scottish Police service recognises that staff are the most valuable asset and that healthy staff are critical to the Force's ability to deliver the services which society needs and expects. Sickness absence and serious injury have a major impact on efficiency in terms of absence, additional costs associated with overtime and stress for staff (and their families) who are left to cover for absent colleagues. Ensuring maximum attendance is a key aim of this strategy.

Staff will be absent from work for a variety of reasons not all of which relate to health issues but reductions in sickness absence can only be achieved when all health related issues are addressed. In considering the whole employment experience of an individual the strategy aims to tackle the underlying reasons for absence and not merely focus on the reported reasons for absence.

Work ongoing in this area:—

- To ensure each Force has in place appropriate policies and processes for managing attendance
- To ensure that wherever possible accidents and injuries are recorded consistently across all the Forces
- Reviewing criteria for benchmarking between forces on this subject
- Consideration of changes to Efficiency Regulations to incorporate sickness absence



Major Health Matters



The Scottish Police service recognises that because of the unique nature of policing some health issues may be more likely to surface and cause significant problems. Statistics would tend to indicate that Musculoskeletal injuries and Stress present the service with major challenges. The service is committed to rigorous risk assessment of all activities and the protection of staff from risk whether this is through the provision of protective equipment or training. In addition to this the service will strive to ensure that best use is made of available technology to support individuals to do their job effectively.

Work ongoing in this area:—

- **Developing policy on Stress Management and psychological support for specific roles.**
- **Developing Substance Misuse policies and appropriate funding and support for alcohol/drug support**
- **Reviewing generic risk assessments**
- **Promotion of Work-life Balance, Flexible Working and Home Working**
- **Consideration of family friendly and childcare support policies**
- **Consideration of fast-track medical treatment through private health care route**



Rehabilitation and Redeployment

The service understands that while individuals may not be able to perform the role to which they were recruited, either on a short or long term basis people in general benefit from attending work and therefore sickness absence should be kept to a minimum wherever possible. Wherever possible management and occupational health will work together to determine the possible steps which a force can take to help an individual recover and return to full performance.

In addition the service recognises that through the Disability Discrimination Act there is a requirement for organisations to consider suitable alternative employment for individuals who become disabled through employment. This could range from simple adjustment to shift patterns to more major reconfiguration of roles

Work ongoing in this area:—

- **Responding through participation in Home Office review of the Implications of the DDA on Police Officers and considering the impact on the service**

Ill Health Retirement

The police service recognises that it will not always be possible to retain staff and that ill-health retirement will be appropriate on some occasions. In considering the option of ill health retirement the service is committed to effective occupational health, safety and welfare policies and sound human resource management practices that work effectively from the outset. This should help to ensure that ill health retirements in the police service are reduced.

The service will ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect and are provided with the appropriate support to take them through this process.

Work ongoing in this area:—

- **Review of Police Pension Regulations**





DESIGNED AND PRINTED BY THE SCOTTISH POLICE COLLEGE
TULLIALLAN CASTLE, KINCARDINE, FIFE, FK10 4BE
Tel: 01259 732000, Fax 01259 732100
www.tulliallan.police.uk