

## **Annual Conference of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary Federation**

### **Speech on behalf of the Executive by Chairman Peter Storey**

#### **BACKGROUND NOTE**

The conference is attended by some 60 delegates and guests of the Federation including representatives of other Police Federations from throughout the United Kingdom and from Eurocop (the European umbrella organisation for police officer representative bodies).

The address by the Federation Chairman will be responded to by the Chief Constable.

The Civil Nuclear Police Federation represents almost 700 officers from the rank of constable to chief inspector

**The Conference will be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June in the Liner Hotel in Liverpool. The Chairman will speak at 9.00am on the Thursday.**

**Speech should be checked against delivery,**

**For further information please contact Alan Burnside mob. 07501501897 (preferred) or landline 028 91888522**

Chairman, Chief Constable, honoured guests and colleagues, welcome to our conference. We are among the smallest of the Police Federations of the United Kingdom, but what we lack in quantity we, of course, make up in quality. I shall return to that point in some seriousness later in my address.

This is my first conference as Chairman. And although mine is a new voice I am afraid that much of what I say will already be familiar to the Chief Constable.

However, we have an equally fresh ear with the recent appointment of our new Chairman of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, Sir Chris Fox.

As an ex-chief constable of Northamptonshire, Sir Chris brings years of direct policing experience at the most senior level. His appointment is warmly welcomed by the Federation. It is further recognition that the officers of the CNC are fully attested constables, identically trained as probationers and equal in status and have the obligations of duty as police officers anywhere in the UK.

The CNC has a combined strength of 1,000 police officers and support staff. We police 17 nuclear establishments from Caithness in Scotland, to Wylfa in Wales, to Dungeness in England. Along with the Ministry of Defence Police and the

British Transport Police we are only the third such service to have a national remit.

We are not county-based like the Home Department police services.

I make this point not just out of pride but to emphasise the sense of responsibility that we have towards the country as a whole for its nuclear safety and security.

But we are not a small insular police service nor is this Federation limited in its ambition for the CNC. My members share the same vision as the CNC that we are: a world class service for the protection of nuclear materials and facilities. That vision statement could be improved enormously if it were it expanded to include recognition that we also protect the people who work in nuclear establishments and the general public as a whole. Our policing responsibility is more than protecting property, power stations and dangerous loads on land and at sea.

The Government has a vision for the nuclear industry. Under current plans the Department of Energy and Climate Change wants to deploy another dozen or so nuclear power stations by 2025. The Government believes that it is in the public interest that new nuclear power stations will have a vital role in the

UK's energy mix, taking their place alongside other low-carbon sources of electricity.

Policy aspiration and executive delivery on the ground rarely link as smoothly as intended and perhaps no greater challenge will face Government than the building of all the planned nuclear power stations by 2025.

Let me make it clear that as a police federation we are an employee representative body. We hold no corporate position on the argument for nuclear energy. It would not be proper that we should be advocates one way or the other. As police officers we are professionally and politically impartial, unaligned to non-police issues.

The Government's plans are as yet just plans. There seem to be difficulties in persuading the private sector that the nuclear power stations can be built without the assistance of Government funding to some degree. This issue does not directly concern us but it does introduce uncertainty as to how the CNC will be allowed to develop.

Setting the financial problems of the industry to one side there is no doubt that what does excite me – and my members – is that the CNC may be potentially the fastest growing

constabulary in the UK. To police a further 12 establishments will require at least a 30 and possibly 40 per cent growth in our numbers. That growth will provide job security and career opportunity for our members.

So far so good. But I want now to raise issues which will be particularly aggravated by expansion if they are not properly addressed.

Firstly, it may take ten years to build a nuclear power station, a further five or so to commission it, so that lead-in time should be spent now getting things rights for the police service which will be responsible for the protection of the new facilities.

Even the most optimistic of us do not expect the various green and anti-nuclear groups to simply roll-over. The Government's policy – despite the present wide-spread consultation process – is likely to be vigorously and aggressively opposed. The recent G20 protest in London signalled starkly that there are professional protesters in abundance. They are rebels in search of the nearest cause, ready to attend and agitate at every opportunity to frustrate the democratically arrived at decisions of Government.

There has been enough past history to suggest that there will be opposition focussed on the development of the role of nuclear energy. The challenge to CNC will be to retrain and re-

equip to cope with public order protests. The CNC will not only have to expand in numbers but acquire new public order skills in managing confrontation with crowds of determined protestors.

CNC officers are already highly skilled through our fire-arms training. Training in public order has not been a requirement but in view of the Government's plans I suggest that now is the time to make the necessary preparations for all officers to play their part.

And while I am on the subject of training I believe that the CNC needs to do more than just focus on purely the professional police requirements of the job. Officers particularly at middle management level need to further develop people skills; they need to understand and manage diversity issues. They need to develop financial management skills. The CNC like any public sector organisation now has to be run on business lines. We may not have a bottom line in the sense of striving for profit but we do need to see our people as assets to be invested in, to maximise their potential to contribute to this unique police service.

Part of the preparation for expanding the CNC should also be a re-appraisal of the ratio of supervisory ranks to frontline officers. Compared to other police services this organisation is too flat and with all due respect to our senior ranks the

Federation believes that responsibility for the security and safety of some of our establishments is invested at too low a level. Nor has it gone unnoticed by our colleagues who wonder if we are putting in place officers at the right level of command.

I said earlier that some of these points will have been rehearsed before. I make no apology for picking up on a theme which refuses to go away. It remains a grievance for this Federation that we have yet to be awarded pay parity with the rest of the Home Department police service.

There can be only two possible logical objections by the Department to ending this wrong - a mistake first made by the Wright Report in 1979. This constabulary derives its authority from the 2004 Energy Act. We may owe our parentage to the 1955 Atomic Energy legislation but we police in very different circumstance from 50 years ago yet the 2004 Act was a missed opportunity to introduce parity.

When the Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary was first set up, contact with the public was generally unusual, anonymous and unnecessary; now it is routine. During the Cold War period the threat against establishments was theoretical rather than

real; now the threat from Al-Qaeda is indeed very real as MI5 have so publicly acknowledged.

We now have the prospect of our remit extending to public order duties and already we can be called upon to provide mutual aid to our county force colleagues.

From a purely professional view there is simply no justification for withholding that last five per cent of our pay which would bring us parity.

There is a pragmatic justification to be advanced as well. At the moment we are training our recruits as a precursor to handing them over fully qualified and often with good experience to the adjoining county forces. Thanks very much, they say. You have saved us a fortune in training and development costs to provide us with frontline, immediately deployable officers.

This steady loss of our officers of the same quality as the county police officers belies the fact that we are funded by private sector shareholders. Our founders need to think commercially about how their money is being wasted by our officers taking the natural view that rather than go without five percent of their pay and endure the rigour of firearms training they will look for a career in another police service. And who can blame them?

As well as the forthcoming Departmental review which will look at our pay and Home Department police pay the nuclear energy funders should also review this matter urgently from their purely commercial perspective. When it comes to parity we are not talking big money here... not when you consider that the overall annual CNC budget is £60million.

The money involved, by our calculations, is around £1.4m. Spread proportionately around our various national and international shareholders it is hardly more than a whip-round. Given that we are losing around 20 or so officers a year then parity would secure their investment in the CNC, boost morale and surely is a sound business case.

We understand entirely the pressures on the public purse at the moment and indeed for the years to come. But policing by the CNC is one of the rare public services not funded by the public exchequer. It would therefore not be a public burden for the Government to support the case for parity. I can see no sustainable argument against recognising the realities of 21<sup>st</sup> century policing.

This Federation would like parity introduced as soon as possible.

The problem is a direct result of the CNC being the responsibility of a non-Home Office Department. Responsibility for a police service whose major focus is providing an anti-terrorist defence does not sit comfortably with the Department of Energy and Climate Change. When you factor in that we are entirely commercially funded then you can see that the stage is set for friction between the energy operators whose natural function is to maximise profit and the CNC whose purpose is to guarantee security and public safety.

The nuclear energy industry sees us as a cost and as an overhead. Government justifies this tug of war over the police budget with “the user pays” principle. The CNC protects the nuclear establishments therefore the energy companies should pay for the services of the police.

This principle is deliberately blind to the fact that it is the wider public not just the energy companies that benefit from the services of the CNC. The Federation would like to see the CNC come under the direct remit of the Home Office. It is that Department which has the lead role in dealing with terrorism and it is that Department that is best placed to negotiate the

necessary funding with the nuclear industry. Because of our hugely important role in defending against the terrorist threat against nuclear establishments, the Home Office is the appropriate Government Department.

My members firmly believe that moving responsibility for the CNC to the Home Office is the best way to ensure our anti-terrorist capability and to bring our terms and conditions into line with other Home Office police services.

This is the best way to attract and retain the best possible standard of recruit and the best way to prepare us to deliver the vision of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary in the years ahead.

Thank you.