



policebeat

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The News Magazine of The Police Federation for Northern Ireland

We wish all our readers a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year



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Chairman's Christmas Message



Remember work colleagues this Christmas

One of the abiding

memories I have of 2017 is sitting and listening to the very personal story of an Officer who was forced to move his family from their home because of a terrorist attack.

He was factual and matter-of-fact with not a trace of angst. He spoke with conviction about having to make one move after the other before finally settling where he and his family now reside.

Thankfully, few of us really know what it's like to up sticks at short notice because a gang of would-be killers has identified you as its target. There's the shock and trauma first of all, quickly followed by the turmoil of moving. Deep-rooted ties are

broken, and relationships are placed under strain.

All of the nuts and bolts of a hastily arranged move have to be dealt with such as new schools, buying a replacement car and, for you and your partner, having to deal with work issues.

The drastic action of relocating, forced by the actions of individuals hellbent on causing misery, can also have knock-on consequences for the psychological wellbeing of the individual.

In straightforward financial terms, from 2016 to date, there have been twelve Officers relocated at a cost in excess of £2 million.

But it's the human cost I want to focus on in this Christmas Message. I want those who have suffered, and continue to deal with the upset of it all, to know that we stand four-square with them and their families.

They are not alone, and shouldn't feel isolated or vulnerable. We have a duty to give them as much support as we possibly can. We have taken practical steps to do just that, an

example of which is the funding the PFNI has put in place for counselling services for partners and children of Officers directly affected.

Christmas is a wonderful time for families, and I know you won't be found wanting when it comes to offering those in need a helping hand or simply a call to let them know they are in your thoughts.

Throughout the Service, we have Officers under unacceptable pressures. Some are suffering from long-term psychological illnesses and we are doing our best to address their plight. It's tough on them, but it's also a heavy burden for families.

This Christmas, please remember work colleagues who are in a dark place. On behalf of all of us at the Police Federation, can I wish each and every one of you serving in one of the most professional Police services in the world a Happy Christmas and a safe and rewarding 2018.

Mark Lindsay,
Chairperson, PFNI

Chief Constable's Christmas Message

Federation 2017

This is a busy time of year with people enjoying the festive season – shopping; socialising; school nativities and time with family. I know all of you are facing the same busy festive expectations and celebrations.

I also know that the Police Service does not stop over the Christmas period, and while some of you may be preparing for leave, many others will be working right through the holiday period. For many of you the festive period will mean hard days and long nights, which can often come at the expense of time with your families and friends.

As people enjoy the festive season, police officers and staff will be working

hard to prevent and detect harm on our roads, in our busy city centres and protecting the vulnerable behind closed doors.

The last year has been challenging, as we continue to deliver a service with less money and less people; all against the continued backdrop of a severe terrorist threat. But despite these challenges, your commitment to Keeping People Safe by Policing with the Community continues and you remain a constant source of inspiration and pride to me and the rest of the Service Executive Team. Your commitment to your job has led to the latest independent surveys showing confidence in policing at just over 90% - our highest figures to date.

On behalf of myself, and the Service Executive Team, thank you for your

continuing professionalism and commitment and we wish you your family and friends, a safe and peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Chief Constable George Hamilton
Police Service of Northern Ireland



EDITORIAL**Government should end dithering over pay**

Pay, or rather the failure to get the 1% hike with a 1% bonus from the beginning of September, rumbles on without a satisfactory conclusion.

The collapse of devolved institutions means there's no one in the Ministerial chair to sign off on the annual pay round. In the absence of devolved Ministers at Justice and Finance, the ball was passed to the Government.

However, the Government seems to be in a bit of a quandary. On the one hand, it wants to make the award but is reluctant to give the 'green light' for fear that it is misinterpreted as Direct Rule. It's time for Ministers to get real.

We all know the Stormont Executive and Assembly are in 'cold storage' for an indeterminate period. Essentially, politics has crashed to a juddering halt.

All of which means that if its good enough to fix a Budget, and pass legislation at

Westminster to give it effect, then in effect, we have Direct Rule. As the saying goes, 'if it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, then it is a duck.'

We say to Ministers, particularly the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, James Brokenshire, to end the pretence and get on with running the region. And that means giving Officers the pay rise recommended by the Pay Review Body.

In an exchange with the East Belfast MP, Gavin Robinson, on the floor of the House of Commons last month, Mr Brokenshire declared: "I will have further discussions with David Sterling (Interim Head, Northern Ireland Civil Service) about whether there is any way to resolve that issue in the absence of an Executive. I know that this issue has been and continues to be a particular concern among a number of public sector employees. It is a result of the gap that we are currently in, so we need to get this resolved quickly."

Weeks later, "quickly" seems to have taken on a whole new meaning, and there's

still no sign of the pay settlement being implemented. In fact, this Federation has already commenced work on submissions for the next round of pay discussions, which is a ludicrous position to be in.

One thing we have called for is that whenever Ministers get their act together, that the pay increase, miserly though it is, is backdated to the first of September.

Police Officers, indeed the entire Public Sector, are victims of political failure. Unlike MLAs who are still on full pay at the moth-balled house on the hill, our men and women are left short-changed.

That is a scandalous state of affairs, and one, in the word of Mr Brokenshire, deserves to be "quickly" rectified. We are victims of the political game between the parties and the Governments and we deserve better.

All we want is what we are due. That could be the best Christmas present Direct Rule politicians could give Officers this Christmas.

