

Minutes

NPCC FELWG, TVP, WEDNESDAY 15TH JANUARY 2020.

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Attachments @ paragraphs:	<u>None</u>

1. **ATTENDANCE**

1.1 Apologies –

Nicola Murphy, PSNI
Fiona Smith
Police Scotland

1.2 Present

Dave Orford, Durham Constabulary - Chair
Neal Bickford, Durham Constabulary
Zoey Evans, TVP
Jonathan Cumberbatch, Staffs Police
Martin Parker, NaBIS
Graham Widdecombe, Home Office
Michelle Moore, D & C police
Bridget Hodgson, Northamptonshire Police
Joe Cooke, Devon and Cornwall Police
Darren Miller, Hampshire Police
Tony Hill, Hampshire Police
Suzanne Hassel, Merseyside Police
Chris Downs, Met Police
Richard Kennett, Norfolk / Suffolk
Sara Williams, South Wales Police
Karl Eenmaa, South Wales Police



2. Action Log

NB to respond to Consultation on draft stat guidance on behalf of FELWG–COMPLETED–DISCHARGED

Main Agenda

Home Office updates

GW gave brief updates from HO;

- Implementation period for leaving the EU continues until 31st December, as such EFP must still continue to be issued. – **ACTION** – Reminder to all forces on the same to ensure consistency.
- New notifications on deactivations is now in place, HO do not envisage any issues.
- Transposition issues remain including marking requirements, but this is still to be worked out.
- Dealer to dealer notification of transactions remains an issue from a tech / database perspective but long term solution is not clear; DO – there are multiple solutions to this issue, but will be costly, and the responsibility is with the HO.
- Stat. guidance and medical arrangements received 11,000 responses to the consultation. No timetable yet for publication of the statutory guidance.
- Air weapons review – no indication of when review conclusions will be issued.
- The issue of fees will be up for discussion in the near future. DO made the point that he is more than willing to invest police resource in to any review, so long as there is an acceptance and understanding that the findings are based on evidence of true cost, rather than a negotiated position not based on true cost to policing. DO is reluctant to invest significant police resources if there isn't the appetite to recover true costs. DO understands this is a complex issue and is not currently pushing for full cost recovery due to the challenging landscape.
- MARS compensation arrangements are expected to be finalised within the next 6 months.

Medical

DO Gave update re. recent brief discussion with policing minister, and his intent to meet in the near future to discuss medical arrangements.

The issue of start-up business doing medical checks was discussed, and NB critically asked for clarity for all forces whether policing should accept medical screening not completed by an individual's GP. DO drew the analogy of locum doctors, and how he would find it difficult to argue against the views of a locum, provided they had full access to an individual's medical records, but we should not forget the overarching secondary aim of enduring medical markers, and forces must ensure there is some method in place to satisfy this need. DO suggests until the stat guidance comes out, his recommendation is that third party screening is accepted so long as it is signed off by a GMC registered doctor with full access to an individual's medical records - The correspondence should include a declaration to this effect. Notifications for enduring medical markers must also be sent to the applicants GP by licensing departments on grant. **ACTION** – NB to circulate the FELWG position until the HO guidance is clear and addresses the same.

ZE; Positive experiences with MedCert thus far – a view echoed by CD from the Met.

Firearms Rules – security / wording

TH has come up with some suggested wording around security for U/18's so to ensure national consistency. RK and GW asked for a couple of tweaks; **ACTION**; RK to amend accordingly and circulate.

To confirm, none of this will be retrospective / back record converted; Consensus view is that this should be effective from next grant/ renewal cycle.

NABIS update delivered by MP

- MP gave update re. Recent Dyfed Powys case re. SLP used for humane dispatch, and the subsequent costs, circa £50,000 awarded against the appellant in favour of the police.
- NABIS have observed a significant increase in shootings, notably Merseyside of late. There is also an increase in the number of rounds discharged.
- MP gave an update as to the various weapon types that are being used.
- There is a significant increase in the number of lost and stolen shotguns.
- TH / MP introduced voluntary cartridge retention, and whether FELWG should replicate the initiative that Hampshire have begun, so long as it is clear in the communication that it is not compulsory. MP; - We should support this from a voluntary perspective. DO; Agreed; - FELWG fully support this; **ACTION**; NB to circulate Hampshire letter as best practice – regional reps to cascade.
- MP reminded all forces that any classification for court purposes must only be done by staff who are ISO accredited.

NFLMS update

- Helen Rees has stood down as regional rep for North & West Wales. Replacement yet to be identified.
- The main focus for the past 3 months has been:
 - Improving quality of releases - painfully aware that many staff hours are lost every time a new release causes problems for the users.
 - Improvements to infrastructure - Hendon have overcome some of the problems caused by the aging infrastructure which have enabled progress on upgrading unsupported software.
 - NCA data sharing - data has been transferred to NCA
- Volunteer forces to assist testing – Agreed at NuG that each region will commit to providing 'at least' one force to work with HO/Civica on User Acceptance Testing. Many problems could/should be picking up before a release is put into the live system. It is clear HO and Civica are really working to address this and each force needs to assist with UAT (There is a risk it will be the police being the weakest link in this process if we don't supply staff to assist with testing – they need end users who know the system well)

- Home Office Quality Assurance team have been reviewing the release processes at Civica. Working alongside Civica to ensure testing catches issues before release. Additional testing will be performed for future releases
- SOH More forces continue to be on boarded. Some teething issues for those forces that require a GP Letter as part of the application process and we will discuss at the NUG.
- Reminder to all that the NuG is the 'User Group' for SOH Firearms Licensing processes/development – Forces need to route through their regional rep any issues not got go directly to the SOH team.

Progress against FEO standards

Each region gave an update to DO re. Progress against FEO standards. There were some pockets of good practice, but in general progress was slow. Various reasons cited, including turnover of staff, lack of support from L&D, organisational priorities focused on uplift of police officers, and lack of medium to collate evidence. DO of view that these issues should not be insurmountable, and as such he will be writing to all Chiefs asking them to fully support this, in addition to writing to HMICFRS asking them to include Firearms Licensing in future PEEL inspections, with particular focus on FEO training.

ACTION; Do to write to Chiefs and HMICFRS in relation to FEO training.

Transfer of files and checks

RK raised an issue that has already been discussed in FELWG, re. transfer of files coming in to forces with no notes or local intelligence checks – DO; - this process cannot be allowed to continue; A discussion took place as to why, with many forces citing the fact that they have robust arrangements that check police systems on a 24/7 basis, and thus further checks on transfer out would be completely arbitrary, as they know with confidence that there will be nothing of note; DO; This is perfectly acceptable, but there must be a form of words included with any file transfer explaining as much, and outlining what systems are checked as part of this process. **All forces to adhere to this direction.**

AOB

RK will no longer be involved in FELWG, and a new rep will be attending in future from Essex. DO thanked RK for all is work.

Next meeting – Tuesday 5th May 2020, Durham Constabulary