



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

North Wales Police morale levels at a new low

Jul 14 2008 by Carl Butler, Daily Post.

POLICE inspectors in North Wales are so stressed out some of them are avoiding people and struggling to cope with the job.

A shock survey put the **force's 92 inspectors and chief inspectors** amongst the most stressed out and discontented in the country – with some even having difficulty concentrating and listening to people. The independent “**well-being at work**” survey of all **44 police forces** carried out for the Police Federation, puts **North Wales in 43rd place.**

Chairman of Inspector's Branch Board in North Wales, Insp Steve Williams, admitted he was “**shocked**” by the findings which were “**very, very worrying.**”

In virtually all sections of the survey, North Wales inspectors gave poor scores.

In a section on risks to psychological well being, their scores hit the “**poor**” mark for:

panic or anxiety attacks, constant irritability, **loss of sense of humour**

constant tiredness, feeling unable to cope, avoiding contact with other people

mood swings, unable to listen to other people, difficulty concentrating

In their working relationships the links with senior officers was not rated highly.

Poor scores were highlighted for:

aggressive management style

support from others, isolation at work

unclear what boss expects

boss is forever finding fault

others take credit for my achievements

poor relationship with colleagues

A superintendent has met with representatives of the inspectors' board to try and sort out the reasons behind the dissatisfaction.

Inspectors and chief inspectors are regarded as middle management in the force and have to bear a lot of responsibility.

The survey results were unveiled at a recent police conference.

“I was taken aback when I discovered we were so low in the pecking order,” said Insp Williams.

“We are looking to pilot a study of stress related conditions in the workforce within the inspector ranks to identify what needs to be addressed, because this survey is very, very worrying. There is an awful lot of pressure on people and they feel it,” he said.

“I have been an inspector for 14 years and am quite happy with the role I do. I was really shocked by these results, I didn’t appreciate the wealth of feeling and frustration.

“Since the survey, I have spoken to more people and the feeling is very strong and some people are in danger of dropping off the edge.”

Modern police forces are driven by performance targets and North Wales is a high achiever – so Insp. Williams is hoping senior officers will be just as driven to make sure North Wales do much better in the next well-being at work survey.

“There are lots of areas where we perform well, but if middle management is stressed out, long term it will effect performance,” he said.

Assistant Chief Constable Ian Shannon, said: *“The Force was supplied with the results of the survey and we will consider the content. **We value our staff and continue to have a constructive dialogue with Federation representatives.** We strive to provide a high quality service to the public and to make North Wales a safer place to visit and this can only be done with the support and commitment of staff at all levels.”*

The PPP comments We have always felt for the rank and file officers working in the strange, distorted, world of Brunstrom’s and Wolfendale’s NWPF. The comments by Inspector William’s and the platitudes from Ian Shannon just highlight how weak and out of touch these people are. As in all organisations the middle management are squeezed until the pips squeak and if they don’t perform the whole structure collapses.

This situation is mirrored in our armed forces currently, where the stress levels must be mind blowing. The common denominator is the government by incompetent meddlers who destroy everything they touch. Anyone with any experience of a real job in the real world & with an ounce of sense would realise the dangerous consequences of their knee jerk new laws, initiatives, targets and PC attitudes.

The PPP would like to say to all the many good, caring and real police officers in NWPF we support you completely, take care, the mad and the bad are on their way out and better days are coming. We say to the Police federation you have, it seems to the PPP, locally, mostly sat on your hands and let this happen. We and you **NEED** a strong federation that protects it’s members **AND** it’s customers from the mass meddling that has and is taking place. We hope that Jan Berry’s successor provides this drive and leadership.