

NATIONAL CONFERENCE - CARDEN PARK

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Tuesday 16 September 2008

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, who is attending her second Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales Conference. I would like to thank the Home Secretary for attending this afternoon and for travelling to Chester immediately after this mornings' Cabinet Meeting.

Tomorrow, Conference will be addressed by the Police Minister Tony McNulty who will be attending his third consecutive Conference. Over recent years we have not had such stability and we are glad that you have both survived recent changes. We value our relationship with you - a relationship that grows in confidence and trust over time.

I spoke last year about our Association's relationship with the Home Office, particularly how we were seen and regarded by politicians and Home Office Officials. I made a plea for a greater understanding of our role in terms of membership of relevant working parties and steering groups and meaningful consultation. I am pleased to say that our relationship has improved significantly

and the Home Office Working Groups now benefit from the views of members of our Association using their considerable operational experience.

During the past twelve months Senior Home Office Officials have attended our National Executive Committee Meetings and we have enjoyed a professional and productive relationship with those officials.

At last year's Conference the main theme of my speech related to the Performance Measurement Framework and the target culture. You will recall that I said the Performance Measurement Framework was a shambles. I said, it was dysfunctional and had led to us losing the confidence of the communities we serve. I called for the Performance Measurement Framework to be abolished in its entirety.

Many thought that my comments were too radical and unrealistic. That included some of you!

I said, at that time, that the Home Office should allow Police Officers, the professionals to make the judgements. I also said that I doubted if ANY Performance Measurement Framework could truly measure what policing is all about.

So, did the Home Office listen?

How many delegates at last years' Conference would have thought that within twelve months we would have a proposal for a SINGLE top-down target from the Home Office - measuring PUBLIC CONFIDENCE and reassurance.

The reaction from different parts of the Police Service to the publication of the Government Green Paper on The Future of Policing has been interesting. I think that matters being dealt with within P.N.B. have had a direct effect on how many officers within the Service feel about Government proposals on the Future of Policing and as a consequence have felt unable to respond positively to what is in reality a major shift in Home Office Policy. Others within the Service have been surprisingly quiet.

Let me say this, if we could have been granted ONE wish at last year's Conference, it would have been to move away from a Performance Measurement Framework that was strangling the Service, to a culture where we interact with the communities we serve and build trust, respect and PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police Service.

So we should give the Home Secretary credit for making this very bold "leap of faith" but rest assured that we will monitor with interest the journey from the current target culture to a more liberated style of policing that is under-pinned by

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE. We will want more detail of how the Home Office intend to navigate the challenging course between where we are now and where we all want to be. I want to believe that the picture the Green Paper paints can become a reality but I do have concerns that this “leap of faith” will not be easily reflected down the “command chain”. The presence of hard performance targets gives reassurance to many.

Whilst we whole-heartedly support this commitment to move away from centrally driven targets, what about A.P.A.C.S., P.S.A.’s and the Policing Pledge? Will these be targets by another name? We will be watching with interest and we will be bitterly disappointed if the public and the Police Service become the victims of Government Spin.

As your President, I have given an undertaking that our Association response to the “Green Paper” will truly reflect the views of the membership. I have written to every member to ensure that we respond to the many challenges and questions set out in the “Green Paper”. We will have a number of opportunities this week to discuss the detail of the “Green Paper” and we have tasked Giles Stogdon, who is recently retired from the Hampshire Constabulary, to co-ordinate our response. Giles is at Conference and available for consultation. Following Conference, the National Executive Committee will meet again on 26 September 2008 to finalise our Association response.

I will return to the Green Paper later in the speech.

Today, I would like to particularly focus on the issue of CONFIDENCE. I would like to discuss both the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police Service and the level of CONFIDENCE of all officers and staff who work within the Police Service.

I believe the greatest challenge facing policing today is the issue of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE. Some of you might be asking, “What about Terrorism?” Of course terrorism continues to be a huge challenge but the solution to terrorism is also linked to PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police Service. It is only when our communities really trust us and have confidence in us that they will support us in our fight against terrorism.

There is no doubt that there is a correlation between the decrease in the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police and a reactionary culture from the press and the public. Let’s be honest and not kid ourselves, some of the media criticism of the Service is warranted. Stories that relate to officers lack of use of discretion and strict adherence to processes have been widely reported and we should concede that adherence to rigid processes has resulted on occasions in officers, **SLIDE**

ONE --- *hitting the target but missing the point.* We should not be too defensive. We do still get it “right” more often than not. Our officers investigate complex enquiries, respond to critical incidents and there are daily examples of Police Officers acting with tact, diplomacy and courage often in difficult, dangerous and demanding circumstances.

However, it is on day-to-day low level encounters that we are judged. There are still too many occasions when we disappoint. We should all celebrate our successes but we should publicly acknowledge that on too many occasions the public still cannot contact us or visit Police Stations. Too often we fail to respond and explain why. Too often we fail to keep victims and callers informed about progress in their crime or incident. Too often our staff are seen to be untidy and don't wear their uniforms with pride. Too often we fail to use common sense or a sense of proportion and discretion.

Having conceded that some of the press coverage may be justified, it is my view that many political commentators and politicians themselves continue to use policing as a football to score party political points. The Media do tend to move in a direction that exaggerates problems and amplifies concerns about crime. Alarming stories about rising crime will always make good news. Steady or falling trends are no news at all. If the Media consistently tell people that crime is increasing then it should not come as a shock if the population at large think that the level of crime is rising. The Media have a huge role to play in raising the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police. They have a responsibility to report and comment accurately, responsibly and objectively. To those that do, we say thank you. To those who don't, I say they should not sacrifice the reputation and integrity of the Police Service for their own motives.

National Polls indicate that the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police has decreased. However, it is interesting to note that many local B.C.U., C.D.R.P. Surveys show an increase in PUBLIC CONFIDENCE. Nevertheless nationally the level of Public Confidence has decreased. Over forty percent of those who have contact with the Police have less confidence AFTER their experience than they had before the contact. This is not a statistic that is reflected elsewhere in the public sector, for example in the Health Service where PUBLIC CONFIDENCE and appreciation does not decrease after contact.

We all know that the overwhelming majority of Police Officers work extremely hard, on occasions putting their lives at risk to serve the public. This is why it is vitally important that we as Senior Police Leaders examine why National Polls show that the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE has decreased whilst officers continue to give of their best. It cannot be simply a question of high public expectation and examples of negative media reporting.

The Service needs to urgently address the gap between the public's perception of crime and the reality of crime. The British Crime Survey shows that crime is down 32%. Burglary offences are down 55% and vehicle crime is down by 52% and yet PUBLIC CONFIDENCE is decreasing.

Many of you will recall that Sir Ronnie Flanagan published his report - The Review of Policing at our Annual Conference last year. I responded on behalf of the Association and broadly welcomed the majority of the recommendations made in the report. I also acknowledged that the Service should accept that changes do need to be made and that there are areas where we can improve.

Sir Ronnie's Report referred in detail to the Risk Aversion Culture within the Service. I believe that the Service cannot move on from the current "just in case" approach until there is an acceptance by ALL that officers will make honest mistakes. By "ALL" I mean politicians, the media, the general public and all ranks within the Police Service.

I believe there is a parallel between the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police and this Risk Averse Culture referred to in the Flanagan Report. Genuine mistakes made by officers and the good intentions of Managers has resulted in more and more "just in case" measures, policies and procedures and heaven forbid, more doctrine. Officers are often criticised and there-after are unwilling to use their professional judgement. Many officers will say that they are not allowed to use their professional judgement and must adhere to strict processes relating for example to the National Crime Recording Standards and sanctioned detection rules. Other frontline officers now adopt an approach of "If I don't make decisions I won't get it wrong".

As Senior Leaders we all know that policing is a “risky” business and on occasions things will go wrong. We have a duty to support officers who have exercised their professional judgement when things do go wrong.

The new Police Officer Performance and Misconduct Procedures brought about by the Taylor Report and Recommendations will be introduced in December this year. Our members will have a crucial role to play in making the Taylor Reforms a reality and changing the culture from one of blame and punishment to one of learning and improvement. Supervisory ranks will need to carry out an assessment on the significant difference between issues of poor performance as against a matter of misconduct. The Taylor Reforms present us with a unique opportunity to change the way the Service thinks about leading our staff in relation to issues of poor performance and misconduct.

Some supervisors have only known a system where misconduct issues are immediately “passed on” to the Centre and we all know of examples of lengthy, disproportionate and damaging enquiries in to comparatively minor matters that can and should have been dealt with quickly at a local level. The Taylor Reforms will require Supervisors to make decisions, sometimes brave decisions, far earlier in the process. Officers of all ranks must work together to ensure that the Taylor reforms result in an increase in confidence both within the Service and with the general public and I look to our members to take the lead.

So what of the public's confidence in the Criminal Justice System? How many times have we read stories of "soft" sentencing, of early release of violent offenders, of repeat offenders breaching bail conditions, of the C.P.S. discontinuing certain offences but taking what appear to be trivial cases to court? Is the Criminal Justice System seen to be supporting the victims of crime or the offenders? Unfortunately a significant percentage of the public do not believe that the Criminal Justice System currently supports the victims of crime or witnesses. It is not acceptable for us to lay the blame at the door of the Ministry of Justice. The majority of the general public do not recognise any difference between the Police Service and the Criminal Justice System and many hold the Police responsible when things go wrong even for issues beyond our control.

Do the public believe that the Criminal Justice System is there to support the vast majority of law abiding citizens? How many stories have we read of members of the public getting involved in incidents and finishing up getting arrested? The reality is that there are relatively few such cases however these cases have a huge impact on public perception.

How many law-abiding citizens would feel inclined to "get involved" or "have a go" when they witness incidents now as opposed to ten years ago? We need to change our approach to dealing with law-abiding citizens. We need to use more discretion when members of the public have carried out what they regard as their

public duty. We need to devote greater resources to victims of crime as opposed to what many view as the disproportionate amount of support offered to offenders.

In order to increase PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police Service we can and should do many things.

What specifically should we do?

We could ask the general public two questions: **SLIDE TWO**

Q1. What do you want the Police to do more of?

Q2. What do you want the Police to do less of?

What would be the top answers? My guess would be: **SLIDE THREE**

A1. Deal with violent crime and anti-social behaviour more robustly.

A2. All of the things that prevent the Police Service spending time on answer one.

The public are absolutely fed up with anti-social behaviour blighting the quality of their lives. There are a number of different approaches that are available to us, but in the short term communities want to see more action now! What are we as

Superintendents doing to confront anti-social behaviour? This is an opportunity for Superintendents to lead the way. Let's all make a commitment to confront anti-social behaviour. Together we can make a huge difference.

Anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol abuse and knife crime are the topics the general public want us to address. The Louise Casey Review produced 32 proposals, which if acted upon will result in a far greater engagement with our communities in fighting crime. The vast majority of the proposals have been included in the "Green Paper" and will go a long way to addressing the continued call from our communities that they want more action to combat anti-social behaviour. However, we must not let the "Green Paper" be some sort of excuse for not doing things now. The "Green Paper" will take time to turn white and to enter the door of the legislative process.

Many believe that the Police in the 1990's failed to tackle low-level disorder effectively. The demands of the Performance Measurement Culture actually worked to the detriment of dealing with low level disorder which was not measured by the Performance indicators at that time.

We are all aware that violent crime involving the use of knives particularly in our inner cities presents the Police Service with one of our greatest challenges. A recent National Newspaper article referred to the 2005 Home Office Survey of

5,000 young people. Of those who carried a knife, 85% said it was for self-defence. Whilst, enforcement and the threat and reality of a long jail sentence may be the answer in the short term, much more needs to be done to prevent our young people finding themselves in this situation.

I recently read an article in the “Times” where a young gang leader on a London Estate was interviewed. He was only 14 years of age but he carried a knife and behaved in a way that brings fear and danger to all. When he was asked what he had wanted to do when he was younger he replied that he wanted to be a “Fire Fighter”. So what had happened in the intervening years? Or what had not happened in the intervening years for this aspiration to die! Who bears responsibility for this? What is the police role in this? Easy questions to ask, difficult questions to answer, but our communities expect us to respond to those questions. If we don’t we run the danger of losing the confidence of our communities.

But, it’s not all bad news. Neighbourhood Policing Teams are now in place and some B.C.U.’s and Local Authorities have actually reduced public concerns about anti-social behaviour but the reality is that these measures have not gone far enough yet to win overall PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.

One of the main factors that negatively impacts on the public perception of the Police and the view that we are not concentrating on the right things is the use of speed cameras. As Police Officers we know that speed kills. We also all know that we must have effective Road Safety Measures.

By highlighting Speed Cameras, I appreciate I run the risk of being accused of calling for their curtailment. That would be incorrect. Tackling death on our roads is and must remain a priority for the Police along with our partners. The problem is that we have failed to convince the public and we have not provided them with the evidence that the use of Speed Cameras is the most appropriate way to address Road Safety.

The high visibility of trained Traffic Patrol Officers on patrol is something that the public do accept. The general public want to see a return to the days when professional Traffic Police Officers dealt with drivers face-to-face, used their discretion and targeted the dangerous and unlicensed drivers. Many Forces have significantly REDUCED the number of trained traffic officers as the number of speed cameras has INCREASED. If we are serious about increasing the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police we must be serious about listening to the public and acting accordingly.

I need to be clear about what I am saying here, PUBLIC CONFIDENCE in the Police is fragile and we need to restore and enhance it by tackling the issues that are a priority to the communities that we serve. Tackling death on the roads is a priority but we must do more to convince the public that enforcement and in particular the use of Speed Cameras is a legitimate and fair activity to achieve this, otherwise PUBLIC CONFIDENCE will continue to be dented and bruised.

The change of Home Office Policy to the single measurement of Police Performance

i.e. measuring the level of PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, will free up the space to do what matters most. If we listen to what the public say we should concentrate on anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse and knife crime. We should re-examine the policy of using speed cameras to address Road Safety issues.

I would now like to return to the Green Paper.

Hopefully you have all had an opportunity to read through the detail of the Green Paper **“From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together”**. I personally believe that the report is very positive and offers us a unique opportunity to shape the future of Policing.

Many of the issues that we have campaigned for have been addressed within the report and the headline news, the move away from the centrally driven target culture, is the most welcome news the Police Service has received for many, many years. The “payback” for this significant change in policy is that we, the Police Service, must sign up to a Policing Pledge with the communities we serve. The Policing Pledge is inextricably linked to the eight month review carried out by Louise Casey “Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime”.

This is our opportunity to fundamentally change the way we police this country.

I would now like to quickly refer to other parts of the “Green Paper”. Earlier, I asked the question, “Is the Home Office listening?” As an Association we have campaigned strongly against the concept of Direct Entry of Police Officers into the higher ranks of the Police Service. We are delighted therefore Home Secretary that you have made an unambiguous statement, “that all Police Officers start at the rank of Constable”. We were also encouraged by your remarks that this will enable recruits to gain a full understanding of frontline operational policing through direct experience. We like that word experience.

The “Green Paper” also addresses the retention of Police Officers in the role of Custody Sergeant. We thank the Police Minister for his recent announcement confirmed in The Green Paper that Custody duties must remain with a Police

Supervisory Rank. Why not go one step further! As we are now all in the mood to restore officer's discretion and increase officer's confidence, why don't we acknowledge the experience and skills of Custody Sergeants and allow them, as opposed to the C.P.S., to make decisions on charging in routine cases?

What a positive message that would send to Custody Sergeants and the Police Service. The Government actually acknowledging that experience does count and that the Government trusts the Police Service to "get it right".

We thank the Home Office for listening to the Service wide held view on Direct Entry and Custody Sergeants and it is both timely and appropriate to note that when the Police Federation, ACPO and our Association speak with one voice it delivers a very powerful message.

Work Force Mix is quite an emotive and confusing subject for many Police Officers and Police Staff. Sir Ronnie Flanagan's Review referred to an inevitable reduction in Police Officer numbers as the Service meets the challenge of reviewing the workforce mix. In the current funding climate some Chief Officers and Police Authorities may be tempted or be forced to balance their books by reducing officer numbers and increasing members of Police Staff. There is a danger that short term expedient decisions may be made to try and solve an issue that needs a long term solution developed with informed and evidenced research and evaluation.

Our Association has always supported the Workforce Modernisation Programme but before we move forward with the Workforce Modernisation Agenda we must have a real and meaningful evaluation of the demonstration sites. Officers in the Service must be allowed to question the value of Workforce Modernisation. Those who express doubts about the value or worth of Workforce Modernisation should not be viewed as traditionalists and opposed to change generally.

Some of you will have read comments in a number of Police Magazines that the days of the omni-competent officer are gone. I strongly disagree. The British model of Policing continues to be regarded as the finest in the world. Our colleagues in the U.S.A., Canada and throughout the European Union still believe that British Policing is the model they should all aspire to. The major reason for this is that Police Officers in this country ARE omni-competent. We do not Police in compartments. Our Officers can and will do anything and everything. We are not against professionalising the Service but we must maintain the bedrock of what British Policing is all about - the Office of Constable.

The status of the Office of Constable is one that we all hold dear. I commend to you the Police Federation of England and Wales document published in May this year which clearly sets out the status of the Office of Constable and highlights the importance of:-

SLIDE FOUR independence, impartiality, accountability and discretion.

Whilst on the subject of Workforce Mix let me say something about Police Community Support Officers. Our members like them! The general public like them! Let us remember that the Police Service was not given a choice between recruiting more Police Officers or appointing P.C.S.O.s.

I would like to take the opportunity today to acknowledge the excellent work carried out by P.C.S.O.s. supporting Police Officers in delivering local policing.

One of my duties as your President involves judging the Police Review Awards. As I read through the forty-three nominations for the Police Community Support Officer of the Year, I was struck by their dedication to duty and their commitment to serving local communities. I also had a wry smile to myself when I read of the many initiatives that P.C.S.O's are involved in with local communities. Several years ago Police Officers carried out those same duties before the hunt for Performance Targets led to the withdrawal of Police Officers from our communities.

I would now like to spend a few minutes talking about accountability versus answerability. The proposed change to the make-up of Police Authorities has

received a mixed response. Our Association has a very sound, professional and valued relationship with the Association of Police Authorities. Many of you will know from your personal experience that Police Authority members are hard working, enthusiastic and strive to do their best to serve and represent their communities. The proposal to move to directly elected members of the Police Authority, whilst maintaining some of the current structure, is aimed at achieving greater LOCAL accountability. Surely we must all support that.

The Conservative Party is keen on the concept of a local Police Commissioner. I am not sure if this is different to an elected Mayor. How does the Conservative Party envisage the working relationship between the local Police Commissioner/Mayor and the Chief Constable? Who is in charge of policing? Is it the Mayor? Or is it the Chief Constable? We may all wish to reflect on current developments in London. It does little for the confidence of Police Officers when the Mayor states that he wants to have more day-to-day control of Policing. What experience of Policing has he got? What message does it send to officers in the Service and particularly in the Metropolitan Police Service. I referred earlier to policing in the U.S.A. where we have witnessed politicians using their political power to remove Police Chiefs from Office not for under performance but for personal and family reasons.

It does not take much imagination to foresee if and when new arrangements are in place what may happen as election time approaches. What pressure will the individual seeking re-election put on the local Police Commander to evidence success? What promises will those seeking election make? Many people who will

seek to stand for such positions will have a very limited understanding of Policing and may have other agendas.

The Local Government Association has recently called for a greater role in the “hiring and firing” of B.C.U. Commanders. I wonder if this means that the Chief Constable will be asked to assist with the appointment of the Local Authority Head of Social Services.

Many B.C.U. Commanders have excellent working relationships with their Local Authority and with their Local Authority Chief Executive. Indeed, some B.C.U. Commanders have more regular contact through the working week with the Chief Executive than their own Chief Officers. This is not meant as a criticism, it is the reality of a B.C.U. Commanders’ job in 2008.

Let me make our Association position clear. B.C.U. Commanders work WITH Local Authorities they work FOR the Chief Constable. This is the difference between being answerable and being accountable.

As Police Officers we are all Constables accountable to the Law not a Local Authority Scrutiny Committee. We must fight as a Service to retain the independence of the Office of Constable. We must also send out a strong message that Policing EXPERIENCE must be respected.

We realise that there will always be an element of politics in policing but we cannot allow political interference to take a grip on the Police Service. I believe it is now time for the whole Service to stand up and say: **SLIDE FIVE**

“KEEP POLITICS OUT OF POLICING!”

Before I move away from the issue of politics getting in the way of policing, I must, Home Secretary deal directly with the issue of Police Officer Pay.

At other recent forums, we have avoided mentioning the “P” word for good reasons, but not today. It is only right that at this forum with Association Members present that I state certain things. It is my view and the view of my members that you got it badly wrong in December last year. To be specific your decision not to honour, in full, the Police Arbitration Pay Award was unnecessary, inappropriate and unfair.

Many strong words have already been said and I am not going to dwell unduly on your decision today or repeat the strong words but don't under-estimate the damage that your decision has done to the relationship between Police Officers and the Government and indeed the level of trust and confidence that officers now have in you and your office.

I never imagined that in my Service I would be part of a protest march through Central London. However, I am proud to say that I was there and equally proud of the disciplined and mature way that officers responded to your decision.

I spoke earlier about confidence within the Service. Your decision in relation to the Pay Award has made it very difficult for officers of all ranks to have confidence in the well established pay mechanisms that have enabled there to be stable industrial relations in the Service for so long, mechanisms that have resulted in fair but not excessive pay increases. When officers lose confidence in both the machinery to deliver their pay and the Government to act fairly and honourably then we are entering dangerous territory. This is not a path that this Association wants to go down.

The fact that we are off to the Police Arbitration Tribunal for the third consecutive year is not encouraging and we still wait to hear of the Government's intentions for the future of the Police Negotiating Board. Will it be replaced by a Pay Review Body? We had hoped that a three year pay deal could have been agreed during the summer giving everyone time and space to discuss other key agendas that need to come before P.N.B. Whatever the future holds we must never see a repeat of the discreditable process that cast aside the award of independent arbiters whose sole purpose is to ensure that when there is a failure to agree, the pay of a group of

workers who do not have the industrial rights and protections of other workers is resolved fairly and transparently. Enough said Home Secretary, I need to move on.

The confidence and morale of all officers is directly linked to leadership. We sometimes all make the mistake of immediately thinking about those in very senior positions when we talk about leadership. Leadership applies to all ranks in the Service. With the change of policy from the Home Office, officers on the frontline will now be encouraged to make greater use of their professional judgement and discretion. There will be more opportunities for frontline officers to show their leadership qualities.

Superintendents recognise how important Sergeants are to the Service. The H.M.I.'s recent report on "Frontline Supervision" revealed that a number of Sergeants feel that they are not getting the support from us that they deserve. I would urge all members of this Association to speak to their frontline Sergeants and address their concerns. Don't be in denial! Don't deceive yourself that it is someone else's Sergeants who feel they are not getting the support they deserve.

The H.M.I.'s Report also raised questions about discipline and values and quoted examples of young constables challenging supervisor's direct orders, scruffiness and inappropriate behaviour. There are those in the Service, who believe that calling Senior Officers Sir and standing up when Senior Officers enter the room is

old fashioned and out-of-date. We are a disciplined Service and we are required to deal with life and death situations when officers need to respond immediately to orders from their supervisors. We need to support Sergeants to uphold the values and standards that underpin our oath of allegiance and the original principles of policing.

A recent Independent Police Complaints Commission Report showed that nearly half of all recorded complaints against the Police were allegations of neglect, failure of duty and incivility. We must all work to reduce the number of complaints against Police if we are to increase the level of public confidence in the Police Service. I believe that greater intrusive supervision by Sergeants will reduce the number of complaints. We all have a role to play in supporting Sergeants.

Whilst, I am talking about support I would like to refer to the issue of Command Resilience. For the past eight years we have conducted medical health questionnaires. Some of the returns have been quite alarming. All of our members regularly exceed the European Time Directive on working hours. Many of our members suffer from stress and in some cases this has led to medical retirement. We need to do something to address this growing trend. At Conference we will launch the Association Command Resilience Toolkit. The Toolkit will enable members to better monitor their health. The kit contains advice on how to strike a better work life balance. Essentially it provides the

opportunity for all of us to become better Superintendents. I would urge you to use the Toolkit.

As we move forward to a Police Service where officers are encouraged to use more discretion we will hopefully return to a time when we placed greater value on operational competence and good decision making. I am on record as saying that the current promotion processes take little or no account of operational performance. There is insufficient encouragement and too many perceived risks for officers to make difficult decisions or to apply for postings that are more challenging than others.

We need to restore the link between operational credibility and competence and advancement.

The Green Paper talks about reviewing the whole leadership and development process. Let me talk for a few minutes on the aspect that most affects our membership. The Police National Assessment Centre Process (P.N.A.C.).

A.C.P.O. Officers involved in delivering P.N.A.C. and the Senior Command Course are passionate about the future leadership of the Service. We share the same vision in that we want the best people applying for P.N.A.C. and we want the right people getting through and succeeding on the Senior Command Course. I welcome

our recent greater involvement in the process as up until recently the process appeared to be closed to us as an Association.

I wish to acknowledge that the Service has many fine leaders in A.C.P.O. I have personally worked with many of them and hold them in high regard. We do have some outstanding leaders in the Police Service who do have a sound operational background. However, some will tell you that they have achieved their senior positions not because of P.N.A.C. but despite it.

I recently represented the Association at a Police Professional Magazine Round Table Discussion on leadership. The contributors were asked to identify the reasons why there are insufficient numbers of candidates available for appointment as A.C.P.O. Officers. Views offered included job satisfaction, uprooting families and travelling to a different part of the country, A.C.P.O. Contracts and Re-numeration Packages. I acknowledged and agreed with many of these reasons but I also expressed the view that many Chief Superintendents have little faith in P.N.A.C. and see little or no link between their current operational performance and the P.N.A.C. process.

Indeed, let me go one step further, there is a widely held view that to be successful at P.N.A.C. you have to leave the real you and your real Police experience at the door as you enter the Assessment Centre and become the Senior

Officer that ticks the right boxes and says the right things - there is a "Performance" to be given. Many members of our Association believe this to be the case and as a result are unwilling to put themselves forward for the highest ranks. I believe this is a glaring example where the Service needs to re-establish the confidence of all officers. Senior Officers must be operationally competent.

Until the P.N.A.C. process is seen by our members to have greater credibility many officers will continue to decline to put their names forward for consideration. The Service needs to accept this constructive criticism. Making changes to P.N.A.C to raise the value of having operational competence will be a huge step forward.

I would like to conclude the speech by saying once again, I am very proud to lead the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales. I continue to feel privileged to represent members who are hugely talented and committed to public service. When you leave this Conference, I would encourage you to think about how you will personally meet the challenges you will undoubtedly face in the next twelve months.

I would ask you to be confident in yourselves, show confidence in the people you lead and together we will restore PUBLIC CONFIDENCE to a level that truly represents the British Police Service. We must set ourselves the highest standards

and we must deliver for the public we serve to ensure that British Policing remains the best in the world. Thank you.

Ian Johnston QPM