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Employers' Secretary, Charles Nolda

**POLICE SUPPORT STAFF
COUNCIL
Employers' Side**

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**To: Clerks to Police Authorities (copy enclosed for Treasurer)
(England and Wales excluding Metropolitan Police)**

**Chief Constables (copy enclosed for Force Personnel Manager)
(England and Wales excluding Metropolitan Police)**

Metropolitan Police and Forces in Scotland (for information only)

23 February 2004

CIRCULAR EMP/1/04

Dear Sir/Madam

Police Support Staff Council

I am writing to update you on a range of issues, which have been under consideration by the Police Support Staff Council.

PSSC Handbook

As you will be aware, in 2002 the PSSC initiated a review of the PSSC Handbook. The terms of reference for the review were:

“To undertake a joint review of the PSSC Handbook and in particular to:

- Review the role and responsibilities of the constituent organisations of the PSSC
- Clarify the presentation and wording of existing agreements
- Update agreements to reflect recent changes in employment law
- Consider the extent to which there should be any other amendments or additions to existing agreements
- Develop joint guidance on issues such as equal opportunities training and development, health and safety and job evaluation”.

Following almost two years of intensive discussion and negotiation the review has reached a successful conclusion. Under the terms of the agreement the revisions to the Handbook will take effect on 1st April 2004: from that date the PSSC will formally be re-named the Police Staff Council (PSC).

The contents of the revised Handbook have now been approved by the PSSC, and a copy of the Handbook will be circulated to Police Authorities and Forces shortly. We are also looking at arrangements for reprinting the handbook in due course for police authorities and forces, which require additional copies for managers and HR staff. Further details will be circulated as they become available.

Code of Conduct

In 2003 work commenced, under the auspices of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), on the development of a model code of conduct and disciplinary procedure for police staff. The initial drafting work on these documents has been undertaken by a small ACPO working party: however, because of the wide currency these documents may potentially have, it has been agreed by the relevant parties that further development should be undertaken by the PSC. This will enable the trade unions to participate. The objective is to produce a model code and procedure, which can be endorsed by the PSC and its constituent organisations.

The drafts of the code and procedure, which ACPO have produced, will shortly be available. The Employers' Side of the PSC will then commence consultations with police authorities and forces, through ACPO and the Association of Police Authorities, along with the Home Office and the IPCC and the trade unions. Following the consultation exercise it is likely that further drafting work may be necessary, and the final model code and procedure is unlikely to be agreed until later this year.

It should be noted that any model code of conduct and disciplinary procedures adopted by the PSC will have the status of a recommendation only, and will not be mandatory on police authorities and forces. It will be for each police force/authority to decide whether to adopt these either whole or in part.

PSSC: Membership

The PSSC has agreed a request by the Secretary of State for Home Affairs to changing the status of the Home Office representation at the PSSC from observer to full member status. This change in status took effect on 1st February 2004.

This change in status is welcomed by both the employers and trade unions sides of the PSSC, and reflects the importance, which the Home Office attaches to the role of police staff in delivering policing outcomes. The Home Office's full participation in the PSSC will help the council to carry out its strategic role in developing modernised systems of pay and conditions for police staff. As well as contributing fully to the deliberations of the full Council, the Home Office will have a positive contribution to make in support of such working groups as may from time to time be established to take forward detailed business. This may include supporting research to inform the Council's deliberations, as we have done for the Police Negotiating Board and the Police Advisory Board.

Pay and Reward Working Group

As part of the agreement reached by the PSSC in September 2002 on the pay claim submitted by the trade unions it was agreed to establish a Joint Working Group of members of the PSSC to undertake research and discussions on:

- recruitment and retention;
- annual leave;
- performance;
- the extent of low pay in the PSSC pay structure;
- the nature and extent of the gender pay gap in the workforce;
- training and development; and
- work-life balance

For practical reasons the commencement of the work of the joint working group was deferred until the review of the Handbook was completed. Now that the revised Handbook is in place the first meeting of the working group has been arranged for early March, at which it is anticipated a detailed work programme will be agreed.

The working group will not have a mandate to agree any changes on any of the above topics on behalf of the PSC. However both sides wish to see a tightly-focussed exercise with any information and/or conclusions produced by the working party being available in time to inform the 2004 pay negotiations.

The Employer members of the working group are:

Malcolm Doherty, Chair (APA)

Bob Forster (APA)

Maureen Adamson (ACPO)

Jeremy Crump/Lawrence Springall (Home Office)

In addition both sides will be able to call upon technical advisers as appropriate to assist.

On the Employers' Side we will be putting in place arrangements, in conjunction with ACPO and the APA, to consult and keep informed police authorities and forces throughout this exercise.

We will keep you informed on any developments in respect of any of the above items.

If you have any enquiries on this circular please do not hesitate to contact me on 020 7296 6722 or my colleague Emine Ali on 020 7296 6746.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graham Baird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end.

Graham Baird
for Employers' Secretary