

# CIVIL NUCLEAR POLICE FEDERATION



Established by act of Parliament

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## **Ernst and Young Report on Futures Programme V1 Civil Nuclear Constabulary**

### ***Preliminary View of Civil Nuclear Constabulary Federation***

1. The Civil Nuclear Constabulary Federation welcomes this opportunity to comment on the first draft of the Ernst and Young Report on the structure and workings of the CNC. The Federation shares the corporate vision of the CNC defined as... “To be recognised as a provider of a world class service for the protection of nuclear materials and facilities.” At all times we would want to be seen as not only pursuing that vision but contributing actively and constructively to its realisation.
2. The Federation has also had the benefit of an oral presentation by management on the Ernst and Young Report but without the opportunity to dissect the written contents with either our executive or our consultants. The manner of the overview to the Federation inevitably hampers our ability to evaluate the usefulness and relevance of the report. The following comments may reflect this limitation and therefore may not necessarily be the final conclusions of the Federation on the merits of the proposals. We would want to be afforded a reasonable period of more formal consultation to satisfy ourselves we understand all ramifications of the report and to respond accordingly.
3. The most striking and indeed startling aspect of the report is the abandonment of any explicit or even implicit reference to the concept of the office of constable. Instead the report talks exclusively and, presumably, consciously of officers being ‘authorised firearms officers’. In a legal and operational sense CNC officers are Constables in the first respect and also by the nature of their role AFOs, but the Federation is perturbed about the zero reference to constable. We can only interpret this as signalling that a deliberate shift is being proposed which would remove the status of the office of constable from

the officers of the CNC. In our view such a reclassification of the role and responsibilities of the CNC needs a wider and more informed public debate than a report by a firm of management consultants (no matter how distinguished).

4. The CNC is a relatively new organisation being formed in 2005 but as a police service it is the continuum of the former United Kingdom Atomic Energy Constabulary set up in 1955. The loss of prestigious police service status would remove the CNC from the wider police family of the UK's other 44 police forces and will lead to a harmful degradation in standing. The consequences of becoming an armed guard service will be to reduce the attraction of the CNC as a career at every entry level. Potential recruits will prefer to join another Police Force; we will not attract experienced mature officers from other forces and there may even be an exodus of officers to other county forces.
5. We would also suggest that the loss of the right to be seen as a constabulary would seriously undermine our specific target of "Maximising the confidence and support of our stakeholders". Elsewhere in the Policing Plan 2010 the Chairman of the CNC Policing Authority states "We must be an organisation that gives confidence to all". We do not see how becoming an armed guarding service, no matter how sophisticated, will comply with those aspirations.
6. Over the next two decades the UK will see a number of new nuclear builds. It is predictable that nuclear energy plans will excite robust vocal and physical objection. The most suitable means of dealing with a potential terrorist threat would be a CNC still genuinely perceived as a police service rather than a narrowly focussed armed guard service. It is the police who have the acknowledged ability, culture and training to provide public confidence, who will want to see a level of accountability that is associated with a police service. This is also a crucial point for the CNC Police Authority whose governance role would be largely rendered redundant if confined to overseeing a guard service.
7. We of course acknowledge that the core skill of the CNC officer is proficiency with weapons. However we see that skill as setting us apart from routine policing and should be seen as an enhancement of our policing prowess. The report fails to grasp this strength. We suspect the proposal to have three levels of competency through reactive, response and dynamic levels, each with an ascending pay levels potentially runs foul of ageism. As an officer grows older physical dexterity diminishes and with it their skills level with weapons. It is unacceptable that an officer's pay should be so linked to their skill level that pay will be reduced to correspond with decline. We have found ourselves concluding that the corporate if unspoken objective is to offer competitive

rates of pay to attract recruits and that the CNC will countenance and even encourage older officers with declining skills to leave for other employment.

8. We are appalled at this apparent short-termism approach. It is unworthy of a modern employer. The 1993 Sir Patrick Sheehy Report into the UK police service sought, inter alia, to introduce fixed contracts of five years for all officers. The report was rejected by the UK Police federations and eventually the Home Secretary because of its failure to understand that policing was a lifelong career (the difficulty of dismissal of inefficient or corrupt officers is a separate issue) or that mature officers do not, as a rule acquire the transferable skills which would allow them to re-enter the civilian labour market at an equivalent pay level.
9. We suggest that the report lacks any understanding of the current political and economic context. The terms and conditions of the CNC flow directly from the Police Negotiating Board which brings together the representatives of the Home Department Police Federations and staff associations with representatives of the Home Office, the Scottish Office and the Northern Ireland Department of Justice and selected Police Authorities. This negotiating forum has worked well since 1980 and sets the standards for the police service and then indirectly for the British Transport Police, the Ministry of Defence Police and the CNC. Major changes are undoubtedly planned by the Coalition Government and are being promoted by a recent ACPO submission. It is unwise and certainly premature for the CNC to seek to develop ideas for a new kind of police service which in reality is a guard service characterised by deliberately fostering a high turnover. Under these proposals the CNC will no longer straddle a demarcation line between the UK Police Service and the UK Military but will be very firmly located in the Military.
10. Pending further discussion and scrutiny of the Ernst and Young Report by the Federation we suggest that it should be mothballed in regard to our terms and conditions for new entrants, until its relevance or otherwise can be ascertained post the October public expenditure review, particularly as to how that review will relate to the wider police service.
11. With regard to potential options presented in the Ernst and Young report, we see limited merit in option number 2, however, because this option in our opinion moves so far away from the current PNB pay structure, it would be difficult and the CNPF would be extremely reluctant to endorse this option for new Police Constables joining the CNC. Option number 4, as set out in the Ernst and Young Report would be our preferred route for commencement of negotiations, on terms and conditions of employment for new employees of the Civil Nuclear Police Authority commencing employment as Police Constables.

12. Our negative view of the Report should not be interpreted as any reluctance on our part to see and participate in improvements that might be made to the efficiency of the CNC in delivering the Policing Plan. In the present straitened financial circumstances of the public purse this is an obligation on us all.

**Nigel Dennis**  
**General Secretary**

**Peter Storey**  
**Chairman**