

# CIVIL NUCLEAR POLICE FEDERATION

Established by Act of Parliament



Ms Andrea Leadsom MP  
Minister of State  
Dept of Energy & Climate Change  
3 Whitehall Place  
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12th February 2012.

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Dear *Minister,*

## RETIREMENT AGE OF CNC OFFICERS

As you are probably aware, the Civil Nuclear Police Federation entered into consultations at the beginning of February with our employers, the Civil Nuclear Police Authority, on a new pensions regime as required under the Public Services Pension Act 2013. Across the breadth of the public sector, the Government is introducing pension retirement ages of 65 (and in some cases 68); an age which would have considerable operational and personal consequences for our police officers.

The Federation represents over 1200 fully warranted Police officers solely employed by the Police Authority in the civil nuclear power industry. For the rest of the UK police service, a retirement age of 60 was approved by the Home Office in 2011 for federated officers, i.e. all officers from the rank of Constable to Chief Inspector. The problem facing the participants in the current consultative process is that no progress can be made on devising meaningful pension regulations without a Government approved retirement age to anchor the financial and length of service elements.

A formal and detailed case prepared by the CNC for retention of a retirement age of 60 has been submitted via the Policing Authority to your Department and has been seen by Treasury. In brief, the case is: the role of a CNC officer is very specific in nature, highly specialist and unique in protecting against a changing terrorist threat within a civil nuclear environment. Our prime role is to defend against a terrorist attack, prevent nuclear theft and recover nuclear material which may have the potential to take life.

The CNC is quite distinct from Home Office Police services in that all our operational officers discharge an armed function and there are no other roles for officers to revert to when mandated standards of fitness and firearms begin to inevitably decline as officers approach their sixties.

All correspondence to Chief Executive

The obligatory firearms and fitness capability were devised by the College of Policing specifically for the CNC. That capability is routinely tested, and failure to meet and maintain the stipulated standards will ultimately result in an officer's exit from the CNC. The standards of fitness of CNC officers are comparable of that of Home Office firearms officers, and officers working in Armed Intervention Recovery and Marine Escort teams must meet an even higher standard again. However, the physiological evidence is that there is no reasonable prospect of an officer, no matter how motivated, serving to 68 and capability failure means exit.

The Federation believes that the existing retirement age of 60 for operational firearms officers should be retained, and the pension regulations should be broadly aligned to the Home Office police services. We have every reason to believe that we are supported in our view on the retirement age by the Police Authority and the College of Policing, which has indicated that they are willing to help inform discussion. The case is also supported by Professor John Brewer, who devised the CNC fitness standards which were introduced in 2011.

I am therefore appealing to the Minister to advise the consultation participants and relevant officials that she is minded, as was her predecessor Baroness Sandip Verma to confirm that the retirement age for operational officers will remain at 60 so we can press ahead with our deliberations. You will appreciate that continuing doubt about the retirement age is unsettling for our members and their families, and the uncertainty about their future is causing considerable stress for all concerned.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Dennis', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Nigel Dennis  
Chief Executive  
Civil Nuclear Police Federation.

Copy

Sir Philip Trousdell KBE CB – Chairman Civil Nuclear Police Authority  
Mr M Griffiths Chief Constable- CBE Civil Nuclear Constabulary