

CIVIL NUCLEAR POLICE FEDERATION - BUDGET REPRESENTATION 2017

Keeping the Civil Nuclear Constabulary police retirement age at 60 is essential for maintaining the UK's nuclear security.

There is no danger that keeping the Civil Nuclear Constabulary pension age at 60 will set an expensive precedent. That decision would instead match the settlement for most police forces.

The measure would itself not raise costs and modelling for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (not the Federation) suggests that:

- The gross cost of a retirement age at 60 (versus the current plans) would be only £4.4m a year from 2023-2030 and £5.2m a year in the long-run.
- In the short-run, those extra costs would be more than offset by extra case management costs, early retirement, and compensation costs.
- Keeping the retirement age at 60 would produce a net saving of £4.3m a year.
- In the long-run, once compensation costs are paid, the net saving would still be £1.9m a year.

The CNPF has accepted the potential for increased employee contributions to cover increases in costs. There is no financial obstacle to correcting the unfairness between police services created by the Public Services Pensions Act 2013 and securing the UK's nuclear safety. The Chief Constable of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (the employer) has warned that this change to a retirement age of 67/68 would render the service "*unsustainable*".

There are many ways that vital nuclear security could be endangered:

- The prospect of an unrealistic retirement age will hurt recruitment and retention and, over time, the quality of the service. Any deterioration in performance might only become clear in an emergency and with serious consequences.
- In an emergency, nuclear safety will depend on higher standards than can reasonably be expected from officers in their sixties. Physical fitness tests can never be completely failsafe and there would be an incentive for officers to mask health conditions which undermine performance if their employment is under threat.

This safety risk does not need to result from current policy. The pension age for most public-sector workers is being increased to match the state pension age under the terms of the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

There are exceptions for certain classes of workers, however, and the situation facing the civil nuclear police seems arbitrary and unfair:

- Police officers in Home Office forces will continue to retire at 60. Despite the physical demands of the job being considerably greater than for normal police officers, the civil nuclear police are not currently included in that dispensation and their pension age will increase in line with other workers.
- Civil Nuclear Constabulary officers are required to meet high physical standards to keep their jobs. Unlike police officers in Home Office forces, firearms duties are not an optional part of the role that can be given up as officers get older. This makes the higher pension age particularly onerous.
- The impact will be greatest for women, where only an "elite" standard of fitness for those aged over 60 is expected to be sufficient for them to continue their duties.

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About the Civil Nuclear Constabulary

In partnership with the civil nuclear industry, national security agencies and regulatory bodies the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) will deter any attacker whose intent is the theft or sabotage of nuclear material whether static or in transit. If an attack occurs the CNC will defend that material and deny access to it. If material is seized or high consequence facilities compromised the CNC will recover control of the facility and regain custody of the material. This role means that almost all officers are heavily armed and required to meet demanding standards of physical fitness. They have been deployed as armed officers alongside other UK armed police (e.g. in the recent operations following terror attacks).

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