

# CIVIL NUCLEAR POLICE FEDERATION

Established by Act of Parliament



Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon  
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Dear Minister

I am conscious as I write this letter on behalf of the Civil Nuclear Police Federation that the Civil Nuclear Constabulary comes under the UK's jurisdiction rather than the Scottish Government's. However some 300 members of the Federation serve in Scotland at the Hunterston, Torness and Dounreay Nuclear Facilities, as armed Police Officers, and I thought it appropriate to bring to your attention a serious pension issue affecting Scottish based CNC officers which could potentially have an impact on Nuclear security in your country.

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary is responsible for the safeguarding of the UK's civil nuclear facilities and for the safe transportation of nuclear material within the UK and abroad. Because of their weaponry capability the CNC has recently been entrusted with a key role in responding to any terrorist outrage. In common with their colleagues in England these members find themselves being expected to serve until 67/68 before they qualify for retirement because of the rigid provisions of the UK 2013 Public Service Pensions Act. The rest of the U.K. Police service including Police Scotland can retire at 60, a decision made by Theresa May as Home Secretary in 2011.

What makes the proposed retirement age so unrealistic is that it takes no account of the following facts: the CNC's vast majority 1250 operational officers are all authorised firearms officers (AFOs). They work four day 12 hour shifts, are routinely armed with three weapon systems and carry 30kilos of protective gear and respiratory equipment. They must maintain exacting standards of fitness and weaponry expertise throughout their careers or face early termination of their employment. At Police Scotland or any other Home Department police the AFOs can revert to unarmed duties and continue with their careers.

All correspondence to Chief Executive

The second uncomfortable fact for the UK Government is that there is no prospect of officers maintaining their fitness and weaponry skills beyond the age of 60. It is a medical fact that officer's health and dexterity will decline from their late 50s. Few male officers and certainly no female officers will still pass the test at 60 plus. This clearly raises an equality issue which is also being ignored.

The case for retirement at 60 is supported by the College of Policing who set the standards throughout the UK and by Mike Griffiths, Chief Constable of the CNC, and Vic Emery Chairman of the Civil Nuclear Police Authority. So far, despite our engagement with four successive Ministers at DECC and now BEIS we have been unable to get a commitment that the CNC will get a sensible pension deal. This matter is now urgent as a pension arrangement must be in place for 1st April.

It is surely inconceivable that the public and other representative bodies will have confidence that the civil nuclear facilities and the transportation of nuclear material can be safely protected by aggressively armed officers in their mid to late sixties.

The approaching April deadline for the introduction of new pensions arrangements has given urgency to the resolution of this matter. If you have an unease about this casual attitude to nuclear security or share our dismay that any Government should find it satisfactory to introduce a retiring age which its employees are extremely unlikely to reach then I would be grateful if you could help us by making your views known to the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and perhaps even the Prime Minister?

I look forward to hearing from you. I would also be happy to meet you or someone you think appropriate to give more detail about this impending injustice.

Nigel Dennis  
Chief Executive  
Civil Nuclear Police Federation.

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Mr Vic Emery OBE – Chairman Civil Nuclear Police Authority  
Mr M Griffiths Chief Constable- CBE Civil Nuclear Constabulary  
Mr Simon Chesterman QPM National Police Chief Counsel Lead on Firearm & DCC  
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