

NATIONAL ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT FORUM

QUARTERLY MEETING

HOSTED BY WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AT TALLY HO! BIRMINGHAM

FRIDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2013

1) Welcome

Chris Rowson opened by welcoming everyone to the meeting and thanked Sheila Donscha (Derbyshire) and Ashley Judd (Lancashire) for chairing the two previous meetings in his absence.

2) Presentation by Stephen Walker, Quality Assurance Team Leader, College of Policing, on the Health and Wellbeing Framework on the Quality Assurance Management System

Stephen gave a short presentation on the above and then took questions. It is presently used by circa a dozen Forces and has produced some useful bureaucracy and cost savings. Forces wishing to utilise should contact Matt Johnston by e-mail [REDACTED] in the first instance.

3) Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th June 2013

Were confirmed to be a true and correct record by those present.

4) Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Update on Potential Police Mutual Initiatives

Liz Eades (Surrey) and Ashley Judd (Lancashire) reported on two Police Mutual supported initiatives on a study of the health and wellbeing of staff in Public Protection Units and a people strategy wellbeing event respectively. Liz will give feedback on the former at the December meeting and Ashley will supply further details of the latter in due course.

4.2 Update on the National SMP Service

Dawn Owen reported on progress since the last meeting as follows: It would now seem that the Government Procurement Service (GPS) framework will not be the best route for us plus that perceived extra costs in attempting to establish a National service make a more localised and perhaps regional collaboration amongst Forces a better option. Dawn was thanked for her efforts on this and makes the initiative instigated by Lesley-Anne Moore (Northumbria) to compile a list of SMPs currently used by Forces even more timely and worthwhile. Members yet to respond to Lesley-Anne [REDACTED] are accordingly reminded to do so.

4.3 Update on Fitness Testing

Joe Whittle (Home Office) advised that the proposed guidance to Forces had now gone to Committee and is expected to be published very shortly. Discussion took place on several aspects including action taken during the bedding in period if the officer fails (some Forces take off front line duties whilst others risk assess according to role), whether the test was fit for purpose given it is for a 60 year old and the completion of a medical declaration (Liz Eades is to supply Adrian with that used in Surrey for circulation). This item will be included on the December agenda for further discussion and feedback in the light of operational experience.

4.4 Stress and Related Absences

Steve Mitchel (Notts) is on annual leave and hence unable to attend today. Steve has received responses from 9 Forces to date in respect of his e-mail of 25 July seeking information. Could those Forces yet to respond to Steve [REDACTED] please do so to enable

him to assimilate summary findings to be feedback to the Forum in advance of the December meeting.

Chris Rowson (West Mids) instigated an around the room discussion on trends in sickness absence being experienced by Forces, plus whether and how the cutbacks in funding may be impacting. A variable picture emerged, but with some worrying trends evident in some Forces, e.g. levels of Sergeant sickness due to them having too much placed upon them. **ACTION;** Forces are requested to advise Adrian of any initiatives and interventions being undertaken by Forces to counter any adverse trends being seen. This should be as soon as practicable please after the latest VfM reports are published at the end of September to enable a meeting to be held with PMAS in advance of the December NAMF meeting, with a view to getting them to undertake research into this matter. Ashley Judd has kindly supplied the link to access this information as follows:

<http://www.hmic.gov.uk/programmes/value-for-money/value-for-money-profiles/>

These reports were circulated in draft format on 5th September with a view to any amendments being finalised by 20th September prior to final publication.

5) Injury Awards

5.6 PMAB Contract

An e-mail from Trevor Forbes was circulated in advance of the meeting expressing concerns about continuity of service during the retendering period. Joe Whittle (Home Office) responded that the tendering process was behind schedule and the contract with Health Management Ltd was being extended to January. Joe will keep the Forum advised of future developments in this regard.

5.1 Feedback on the NAMF Guidance.

Feedback from around the room indicated Forces have found this useful and a handful have recommenced reviews. Trevor Forbes is to provide an update on legal cases for circulation. Adrian has a complete set of the guidance which can be supplied to members upon request.

Peter Owens (Merseyside) advised that they had run into difficulty with the 'but for' comparative salary figure. Reference was made to the recent Ombudsman's determination in Beale v MPS and the apparent need for the powers of the Ombudsman to be clarified. Trevor Forbes will contact Paul Barker (Humberside) seeking input / opinion from their Solicitor on this matter. It was also suggested that the Ombudsman be invited to speak at a future meeting.

5.2 Future Training Requirements

Adrian has circulated several e-mails since the last meeting seeking to tease out from members their more detailed requirements plus likely numbers requiring training. Paul Barker (Humberside) had also kindly drafted a proposed agenda, which had found almost universal favour.

From feedback received, it is evident that there is a widespread need for such training within Forces across the whole spectrum of those involved – clinicians, admin support staff and supervisors. There may also be merit in this being two tiered; basic for those new to the work area probably delivered through an e-learning package, and more advanced to ensure those relatively experienced are fully sighted on recent legal cases and the implications thereof, possibly delivered by a barrister.

Adrian has been in discussion with Matt Johnston (College of Policing), who advised as follows:

- 1) An e-learning package would require a commission from the national portfolio leads and would only be available to those with a pnn e-mail address.
- 2) The College was now contemplating holding an event in January which would be free at the point of entry subject to Forces supplying suitable case studies that could be used at this plus other similar events. This news was warmly received by members.
- 3) It is hoped that by the time this is held a review instigated by ACPO into this work area will have been completed, allowing for more structured training moving forward.

NOTE: Matt Johnston has now (20.09.13 at 08:31) sent an e-mail round advising that he has reserved the Conference Suite at Ryton on the 31st January 2014 for this event. Please make a note in your diaries plus those of others within your respective Forces who need to know.

5.3 The Police (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2013

Joe Whittle (Home Office) advised that the NAMF responses, re which thanks were expressed, were currently being worked through and it was hoped that this will become law later in the year. In response to an enquiry received, Joe will clarify whether the regulations will have any retrospective effect – this will be circulated to members in due course.

5.4 Feedback upon how Forces have addressed the *Simpson* Case Findings

Could those members yet to respond to Ian Coombs (Dorset) please do so, to allow feedback at the next meeting. Please note that Ian has now changed roles with Lynn Tong [REDACTED] to whom your responses should now be sent.

5.5 Recent Legal Cases

Trevor Forbes talked those present through the recent legal case summary kindly provided by Caroline Neadley (Humberside). Joe Whittle advised that the Home Office have received many enquiries in respect of the *Grinnell* case and are looking into the issues raised. Any developments will be communicated to members, who are invited to let Joe know, via Adrian, of the envisaged potential impact on Force budgets in the light of this case.

6) Stage 1 & 2 Transfers of Police Staff and LGPS Contractual Enrolment

Paul Barker (Humberside) and Adrian were thanked for bringing this to members' attention. Adrian advised that Humberside have already corrected / implemented, achieving a circa 10% take up rate from non-members, plus that Northamptonshire were looking to implement at the time of the Stage 2 transfer in March 2014.

7) Delegate Items

7.1 Proposed 'Line Management Responsibility for Attendance Management Issues' Event

Carmel McCormack advised that the funding is in place for a one day event, say between 1030 and 1630, to be held in the current financial year – March is envisaged, but attendees will have to fund their own travel /accommodation costs. A questionnaire is to be circulated to Forces shortly.

7.2 Items / Speakers for Future Meetings

Chris Rowson has arranged for John Butcher, Head of Chaplaincy, West Midlands, to make a presentation at the December meeting. Dr James Boag (GMP) and Sheila Donscha (Derbyshire) are to make enquiries about possible presentations on agile working and

mediation services respectively. A possible invitation to the Health & Safety Executive to present will also be considered during 2014.

7.3 On Line Forum for Pension Administrators

Joe Whittle (Home Office) advised of the opportunity for NAMF to be included in an online community they have created for pension administrators. The community allows people to post queries and questions and there is also an online chat facility. The link is below so sign up, have a look, and if you think it would be useful for NAMF please advise Joe at the December meeting (will be included under 'Matters Arising' on the agenda.

https://pensions-forum.homeoffice.gov.uk/wp-login.php?redirect_to=

7.4 Any Other Items

A discussion of the conduct of future meetings will be included within the December agenda.

Date of Next Meeting; Friday 6th December 2013

Confirmed Dates for 2014; 7th March, 6th June, 5th September & 5th December

All at Tally Ho, Birmingham commencing at 10.30am