

# TAYSIDE JOINT POLICE BOARD PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE

26 November 2001

Report by the Chief Constable No. PB 53/2001

## SUBJECT: FORCE SICKNESS ABSENCE FIGURES

**Abstract:** The purpose of this report is to apprise members of the positive steps being taken by the Force to address the issue of police absences through sickness and changes made to the recording procedures since the period covered by the recently published HMIC report.

### 1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Sub Committee note the terms of this report.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference is made to Paragraph 13 Minute of Meeting of Tayside Joint Police Board of 13 November 2000 wherein the Board noted Report PB 52/2000 by the Chief Constable. This apprised members that figures contained within the Force's Annual Statistical Return for 1998/99, whereby the total number of working days lost through sickness for police officers and support staff, was understated due to an administrative error. The discrepancy had been identified by the Force and the corrected figures which were contained in the report had been notified to HMIC. The report also detailed the absence figures for 1999/2000.

### 3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 On a continuous basis the Force has been endeavouring to improve matters in regard to the health and welfare of staff in order to achieve a reduction in the number of working days lost due to sickness absence. In addition, a significant amount of time and effort has been invested to ensure more robust recording methods are in place. This has resulted in each Division/Department utilising the same form for the collation of sickness absence figures. These completed forms are thereafter forwarded on a weekly basis to the HR Department for preparation of the force monthly absence returns. Once prepared the figures are checked by another member of staff prior to submission to the Force Performance Manager.

Since his appointment in 19 Doctor Malcolm, a qualified Occupational Physician, has had the dual responsibility of Force Medical Adviser as well as Police Surgeon. In analysing the sickness absence trends as well as the finding from Best Value Reviews conducted of Absence Management and another on the Police Surgeon Service, the Force has determined the need for a dedicated Occupational Physician. To achieve this objective the Force placed an advert in the British Medical Journal to procure the services of a Senior Police Surgeon.

Following appointment of this surgeon it will allow the Force Medical Adviser to concentrate fully on occupational health and allow earlier medical intervention and support to staff which is anticipated will have a positive impact on attendance levels.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of the terms of this report.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 The Clerk has been consulted in the preparation of this report

#### **6. CONCLUSION**

6.1

**JOHN D VINE**  
**Chief Constable**

Police Headquarters  
4 West Bell Street  
Dundee  
DD1 9JU

3 March, 2011

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.