

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Ceartais  
Cabinet Secretary for Justice  
Micheal Matheson BPA  
Michael Matheson MSP



F/T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Mr Nigel Goodband  
The British Transport Police Federation  
134 Thurlow Road  
West Dulwich  
London  
SE21 8HN

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Dear Nigel,

I found our last meeting in August very informative and I appreciate the way in which you and Mr Townsend openly shared with me the concerns of your members. I am keen to continue these meetings and work together with the BTP Federation to ensure railway policing in Scotland has a strong and robust future that delivers high safety standards for the rail industry, passengers and staff; and give a triple-lock guarantee to secure the jobs, pay and pensions of railway policing officers and staff in Scotland.

We have carefully considered the views expressed by you and your members and I thought it would be helpful to provide reassurance on four key matters and other important areas in advance of our next meeting on 6 December.

The BTP provides a specialist railway policing function which is highly valued by the Scottish Government, the rail industry, staff and passengers. Throughout our approach to integration we will ensure that railway passengers and staff continue to receive high standards of safety and security on our railways in Scotland.

Police Scotland has given clear assurances to the Scottish Parliament that specialist railway policing expertise and capacity will be maintained and protected within their broader structure. This will retain the skills, knowledge and experience that BTP officers and staff and embed railway policing within the wider local, specialist and national resources of Police Scotland.

We fully recognise that terms and conditions of service for BTP officers and staff is a very personal matter, particularly in relation to job security and pensions. The Scottish Government will apply a principle of no detriment to the transfer, meaning that we expect future terms and conditions to be similar in overall terms to those that BTP officers and staff enjoy at present, even if some of the details within the terms and conditions change over time.

We will aim to ensure that upon integration, pension entitlement is maintained without detriment. This will be achieved by considering options in line with our established principle that public service pensions should be affordable, sustainable and fair. I recognise that staff would prefer to retain their existing arrangements, and we are engaging with the British Transport Police Authority and Railways Pension Scheme trustees to ensure the best

Taigh Naomh Anndrais, Rathad Regent, Dùn Èideann EH1 3DG  
St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)



outcome for all. We will seek an agreement on pensions well in advance of integration taking place to give officers and staff the reassurance they need for the future.

The railway industry's voice in Scotland's railway policing will be maintained and strengthened with a clear mechanism for regular engagement to ensure transparency for railway operators. The views of railway passengers, police officers, police staff and railway employees will also be heard. We will ensure that railway policing is delivered through transparent and accountable agreements with the railway industry.

Around 93 million passenger journeys are made in Scotland each year and demand is growing; of those about 8 million are cross-border rail passengers. It is important that everyone can enjoy an integrated policing service that protects them at home or at work and the integration of railway policing into Police Scotland will support that.


The BTP in Scotland is fully funded through contributions from the railway industry whereby Network Rail and train/freight operating companies pay for the policing services they receive as set out in a Police Services Agreement (PSA). On Integration the costs of railway policing in Scotland will continue to be fully funded by the rail industry through similar railway policing agreements. In addition, the Scottish Government is seeking to maintain and enhance the current railway policing service provided – which will require retaining, and building upon, the valuable skills, knowledge and experience of BTP officers and staff.

Police Scotland already protect us all as we travel cross-border by road, air or sea and are in frequent contact with the security services to ensure our safety. We plan to build on the successful arrangements in place for other modes of transport to ensure cross-border policing functions continue seamlessly for rail transport.

None of the other options for the devolution of railway policing in Scotland deliver a single command structure for policing in Scotland, with the benefits that provides for policing operations which affect the railways as well as the wider community. The Scottish Government believes that the current accountability arrangements for the SPA and Police Scotland to the Scottish Parliament are much stronger and more effective than could be delivered within a cross-border public authority structure.

As our meeting on 6 December is a joint meeting with TSSA I have copied this letter to Manuel Cortes and Humza Yousaf. I have also copied it to the chief constables of Police Scotland and the British Transport Police so that their officers and staff are aware of these reassurances and the efforts we will continue to make to provide them with an assured career and future in railway policing in Scotland.

I look forward to our next meeting and confirm my strong commitment to work together with the BTP Federation to ensure railway policing in Scotland has a strong and robust future that delivers high safety standards for the rail industry, passengers and staff; and give a triple-lock guarantee to secure the jobs, pay and pensions of railway policing officers and staff in Scotland.

*Best wishes*  


MICHAEL MATHESON