



SCOTTISH POLICE FEDERATION

Established by Act of Parliament

Audrey Nicol MSP
Convenor
Criminal Justice Committee
Room T2.60
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

Ref: DK/MF/JC/2024

22 March 2024

By email: Diane.Barr@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Nicol

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021

I writing to you in response to your letter of the 15th of March 2024.

The Scottish police federation have been concerned from the outset that police Officers in Scotland have not received the appropriate training re the Hate Crime Bill and the changes that it brings.

Police Scotland have been pushed in a certain direction due to finances and time constraints however the current product falls short, and we believe that it may leave officers exposed and confused re what is or is not a crime under the act.

Currently police Scotland have a 2 hour online training package and although this may be a recognised training platform it's not a platform that has filled our members with confidence in the past. I would understand if officers had completed a face-to-face course of training and were using this a refresher to that, however the way in which this platform works doesn't allow officers to ask questions or check their understanding in a meaningful way.

We see this is extremely important as decisions that officers make when attending calls by the public with subjects that are emotive, emotional, and exclusive to an individual can result in the actions and decisions that Police Officers make, to have serious consequences for that victim or that suspect.

We need to see face to face training and proper scrutiny on understanding.

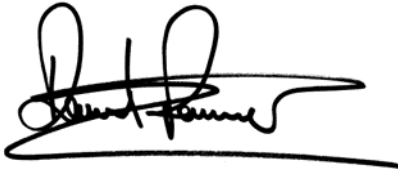
I'm unaware re how many officers will have completed the training course but given that it began on the 5th of February 2024 its unlikely that all officers will have been trained prior to the 1st of April 2024.

As to what training Hate Crime Champions have received and to how appropriate their knowledge will be, remains to be seen.

We were informed on the 20th of December 2023 that a Hate Crime SOP was to be published when the legislation comes into force, however we have not as yet seen any Standing Operating Procedure or Equality Impact Assessment which we require to be consulted on by law.

We will continue to monitor this situation and will be reaching out to our members to see what impact this new act is having on them and the public they serve.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Kennedy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Kennedy
General Secretary