



**INSPECTORS**  
BRANCH BOARD



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# SILVER BULLETIN

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**Geoff Stuttford**

Met IBB Chairman

Gives his personal view of Conference



**Mary Wood**

Met IBB Vice -Chairman

Recalls some of the highlights of the 2009 Conference

## CURATES EGG CONFERENCE

This years PFEW Annual Conference was held between 12th and 14th May in Bournemouth and I think it's fair to say from the feedback I have received it has been adjudged a bit of a 'curates egg'- good in parts. Many of the delegates- your representatives I spoke to following this years event had mixed views ranging from: *"I really enjoyed it"* to *"This was the worst ever"* and everything in between.

This was the first outing for the new PFEW top team of Paul McKeever -Chairman and Ian Rennie - General Secretary. I suppose we should be grateful but one unfortunate consequence of having agreed the three year pay deal last October, was that this was the first conference for some time where police pay was not at the top of the agenda and as a result perhaps the event suffered from not having such an emotive

issue to bind the delegates together in common cause.

This was my 11<sup>th</sup> conference and I well remember the days when we would spend all three days engaged in long and all too often very tedious debates about subjects largely irrelevant to policing a Metropolis such as the use of tractors on A roads or changing lighting up times.



This inevitably led to many de-motivated delegates leaving the auditorium early to sample the alternative delights of Bournemouth or back in those days even better- Blackpool!

Thankfully those days are now long gone and our modern day conference is more

focussed on the issues that really matter. Both to the public and those of us that serve them.

A common theme which ran throughout many of this years forum topics was modernisation in all its forms. From H.A.T.O.'s, Civilian investigators and my favourite hobby horse - C.S.O's.

I know many of you believe they serve a useful purpose in the overall policing package but I firmly believe that if we were to offer an informed public the choice between a fully warranted Constable or two CSO's they would take the former every time.

It's not the fault of the men and women who are CSO's as the majority I'm sure are trying to do their very best but the inevitable mission creep has begun in earnest, made even worse (Cont overleaf)

## CURATES EGG CONFERENCE - THE CHAIRMANS PERSONAL VIEW

(Continued from Page 1) with the advent of Jacqui's secret army of public service workers who have been given powers previously the preserve of only fully warranted constables. We've now got counter terrorism CSO's and shopping mall security guards who can issue FPN's for littering! This partitioning of policing services only causes confusion and brings the 'policing profession' into public disrepute.

If you don't believe me just go to [www.ourbobby.com](http://www.ourbobby.com) and see if you can find any real 'bobbies' serving the community.

It was almost universally agreed that one of the best sessions at Conference was fronted by Roger Baker the Chief Constable of Essex who agrees with us about the follies of modernisation and his presentation on how he has achieved a significant increase in real front line police numbers in Essex was very well received. It heartens me that at least someone within ACPO is prepared to break ranks and tell it how it is rather than continually trot out the 'approved' government modernisation mantra.

Perhaps it is for this momentous event that Conference 2009 will be best remembered

Geoff Stuttford  
Chairman MetIBB

## MY CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The separate ranks have their respective own conferences first and at the Inspectors Central Conference the guest was **Vernon Coaker**, the Police Minister who spoke of his support for the police. Last year there was much criticism by the Federation of government targets. Mr Coaker pointed out that there was only one police target now, which is encapsulated in the Policing Pledge. One Safer Neighbourhoods Inspector spoke of her frustration in not having the resources to fulfil the pledge, and felt we were being set up to fail. *'The policing pledge'* she said *'is just what it says on the tin – polish'*.

There was then an update on the **Well Being at Work** project which was launched last year the principle tenet of which is *'the well work well'*. A joint venture with a company called Revitalised was launched to give all inspectors access to their on line Personal Health Management system which includes:

- confidential help and support
- personal training plan
- weight management programme
- ten minute wellness tips advice centre

Their website is [www.ophms.com/icc.aspx](http://www.ophms.com/icc.aspx) and our organisation code is ICC1. I would encourage you to take advantage of this free service for you and your immediate family. You can create your own account by entering a user name and password. You can e-mail them on [enquiries@revitalised.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@revitalised.co.uk)

The 'Well Being' theme was continued when Karen Lansing, a psychotherapist, did a presentation on **Leadership of Heroic Proportions**. She illustrated her talk with a clip of Leo, a police officer with the San Francisco Police Department talking about officer Nick Burko.

Well worth a watch on You Tube. She works with military and emergency services treating officers with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

All the rank committees come together on Tuesday afternoon for the Joint Conference. This began with a session entitled **Sharp Practice – Smart Solutions**. The panel made some interesting points, including the view that most youths who carry a knife say it is for their own protection, not because of gang affiliation. Be that as it may, no magic solution was on offer, although a range of youth involvement projects were discussed.

The next topic was entitled **The Road is Long** during which the panel asked what can be done to better utilise roads policing. Other than terminal illnesses, Road Traffic Collisions are the biggest killer of our children. In 2007 there were 8 fatalities (of all ages) a day; one in every fifteen drivers is uninsured. There was strong support for the view that villains use cars and cars kill people, but putting people in a black and yellow car with HATO on the side wouldn't solve these problems. The replacing of warranted officers with civilian support officers was a theme that ran throughout conference.

Wednesday morning began with a session called **Criminal Investigation Department or Crisis in Detecting?** The contributors who included officers from the MPS asked if things have changed since *Losing the Detectives*, a report by the Federation. Many detectives spoke eloquently about their love of being a detective but frustration at performance indicators that focussed officers on hitting detection targets rather than on securing prosecutions. Workforce Modernisation came in for a lot of criticism, particularly schemes such as those in Surrey, where a DC manages a team of civilian investigators. Detectives are not managers, and civilians aren't detectives.

The now traditional address by the **Home Secretary**, came next but Jacqui Smith, was not as back footed as last year. As with Mr Coaker, she spoke in support of officers, and spoke of 'Investment, not cuts'. She said the pay deal was fair for the police and the public. There would be no reduction in police numbers, which were at record levels. She was giving £2.5 million to the Police Dependents Trust and for Harrogate and Goring on Thames facilities. She spoke of the single confidence target (policing Pledge again), and of her commitment to reducing bureaucracy. She thanked us for an excellent job with G20 and was critical of the media police bashing. A Home Secretary speaking in such glowing terms will not be with us for long, I suspect.

Highlights amongst the questions were about the erosion of police benefits when seen against MP's claims, and about the review of ill health pensions, which feels like a cost cutting exercise. She will get back to us on that one.

**Paul McKeever**, the new PFEW Chairman having taken over from Jan Berry last year, made a fine speech in response raising some good points. On Police Modernisation he said 'modern doesn't mean good'. It is used to throw people off track and stifle legitimate criticism.

1 in 3 men get a criminal record before their 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. 70% of these re-offend. We know who they are but our 'hokeycokey' 'justice system means they are out as soon as we try to put them in to prison. Convictions are not a performance indicator. P.I.'s drive quick wins but are no replacement for good policing. Our overtime culture sustains under re-sourcing and leads to stress and fatigue. This in turn leads to poor decision-making. Civilian investigators and CSO's are not warranted officers and should not replace them.

Over an officers 30-year career there will be 100,000 deaths, and around 1 million people will be seriously injured on our roads. Putting civilians in a liveried vehicle won't do the job that warranted officers with proper resources can.

The Wednesday afternoon session began with a session entitled **Today's Incident, Tomorrow's Trauma** and it looked at Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and if we're doing enough to identify and help sufferers. The question posed was "why do we accept that physical injuries like a broken leg need treatment, but still stigmatise those brave enough to ask for help". There was some moving testimony from PSNI officers and a good definition of courage – It is not the lack of fear but the ability to act whilst facing fear

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This was followed by a lengthy presentation on the science of how the brain functions when under extreme stress. As I understand it, PTSD happens when you can't put the experience into the past, hence symptoms such as nightmares, flashbacks and heightened senses. Treatment from practitioners such as Karen Lansing can teach you coping strategies.

Thursday morning began with a presentation by the PFEW to **Michael Winner** for his work on behalf of the Police Memorial Trust He spoke wittily about how he came to found the charity. He got a standing ovation. See the website on [www.policememorial.org.uk](http://www.policememorial.org.uk).

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Police – The Essex Model** was one of the highlights of the week. Chief Constable Roger Baker told us that the plot had been lost on workforce balance, and removed too many officers from the front line. Policing had become too complex; the back office functions were over engineered so that the tail wags the dog. We are missing the point when we give people a number rather than attend scenes. There's not a crime that's undetectable, just crimes we don't detect.

Criminals are small in number but need to fear being caught. The public want us accessible and visible, they want us to take positive action. They want to be told what we've done too. We worry about the cost of everything but the value of nothing. Some forces have more police staff than warranted officers. You need sworn officers to reduce crime; the best way to reduce burglaries is lock up burglars.

Therefore he'd worked with his Finance manager and Police Authority to increase officer numbers by 600 over 3-5 years at a cost of £27 million. So far he has raised £10 million and got 212 extra officers, as well as taking around 70 out of office jobs. Most of the money came from cutting costs and Essex police are far from expensive for the rate payer. The Essex Federation assured us that both they and the public had felt the benefits.

The final forum session was called **Policing Manifestos – what does the future of policing hold?** And as you might have guessed was an opportunity for the political parties to tell us their plans. Not many surprises from any of the speakers though, Vernon Coaker (Lab), Tom Brake (Lib Dems), Elfyn Llwyd (Clyd Cymru) and David Ruffley (Con). Mr Ruffley spoke of his plans to give custody officers back decision making, reduce paper work, simplify RIPA authorities, move away from 24 hour licensing, abolish the police authority and replace with a Commissioner, continue with neighbourhood policing and to not have a British FBI. When asked about his plans for **police pensions**, he said that he'd no plans, had done no work on it and had no hidden agenda before confessing 'I'm trying to be straight here'. Which of course raised the question what is his usual approach then?

That's a brief trip through the highlights of the week in Bournemouth. In case I've made it seem so, I'd like to stress that it's not all fun. We did manage to raise £30,000 for charity too.

*Mary Wood*

Vice Chairman  
Met IBB