

**To: The Chair of the Probation Board
The Chief Officer of the Probation Board
(Copy enclosed for the Head of Human Resources)
The Secretary of the Probation Board
Members of the NNC**

29th September 2006

NNC CIRCULAR NO.8/2006

Dear Colleague

**ROLE BOUNDARIES - UPDATE FROM NNC MEETING HELD ON 28TH
SEPTEMBER 2006**

Role Boundaries

The NNC at its meeting on Sept 28 noted the terms of the NPD's letter to unions and Areas of 6 September.

The NNC further noted the up to date position in respect of the action points agreed at the final workshop on role boundaries held on August 22.

Role Profiles

The National Job Evaluation Panel, which met on September 18, produced National Benchmark Role Profiles for Offender Managers for the consideration of the Joint Secretaries and the NNC. A copy of the report produced by the National Job Evaluation Panel is **attached**.

The Joint Secretaries met on September 22 but were unable to agree that these role profiles be approved as National Benchmarks. It was agreed that before the NNC could be asked to consider the role profiles, more information would be needed by the NNC on other outstanding matters, namely the revised guidance on tiering, guidance to determine the appropriate format for court reports and progress in respect of the commitment to develop standards for PSO training, as an early part of the development of a new training strategy for PSOs and POs.

It is hoped that sufficient progress will be made on these other issues to enable the Joint Secretaries to consider the role profiles further prior to making a recommendation for national agreement as soon as possible.

Tiering

The final draft guidance on tiering was nearly ready and will be shared with the trade unions prior to distribution to Areas.

Court Reports

The guidance to assist staff in courts to determine the appropriate format for court reports was also near completion and again will be shared with the unions prior to distribution to Areas.

Training

A two day session to start consideration of the training strategy for PSOs and POs involving the NPD, PBA, Skills for Justice, NOMS, Area representatives, and the Unions was held on September 26 and 27. At the end of the workshop it was agreed that an options paper for the future provision of training across the NPS would be drawn up. When a final draft has been agreed it will then be issued for consultation.

The options paper will identify and formalise the timetable in which this work will be completed and an action plan has been proposed to deal with PSO training in the interim. This has been passed to NPD senior management and is currently being considered. The aim is to ensure that training of PSOs is conducted to a consistent standard across the NPS.

The NPD is building on the outcome of this work in conjunction with Areas, PBA and the trade unions, to develop standards in respect of PSO training that it will expect Areas to meet to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to carry out the tasks in the role profiles.

Conclusion

The NNC is concerned to build on the productive joint work on role boundaries that emerged from the summer series of workshops and believes that good industrial relations and good practice would be best served by Areas not making unilateral changes to job descriptions in advance of national agreement.

Yours faithfully

Martin Wargent
Judy McKnight

Joint Secretaries