

SOCA should respect all players

The Federation held a Parliamentary Reception in London with representatives from all ranks lobbying parliamentarians over the Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill.

Clint Elliott, general secretary of the Federation, highlights the issues to David Davis, shadow home secretary for the Conservative Party



Bob Elder, chairman of the Federation's Constables' Central Committee speaks to newly-appointed Met commissioner Sir Ian Blair



Jan Berry, chairman of the Federation, raises concerns over SOCA

What do the parties promise to do for you?



Hazel Blears, police minister

Labour Party pledges include:

- Maintain 'record' police numbers
- The Government plans to have 25,000 community support officers on the streets by 2008 at a cost of £50m. They also plan to roll out 'uniformed' neighbourhood policing teams across England and Wales
- Providing a range of new powers for the police, local authorities and other bodies to tackle anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, nuisance drunks and noisy neighbours
- Targeting 5,000 prolific offenders who commit one in ten crimes
- Cutting crime overall, as measured by the British Crime Survey, by 15 per cent by 2008

What Hazel Blears said at the Parliamentary Reception:

'I do not think we have invested in the career development of our officers as much as we should have.

'Our shift towards neighbourhood policing is a long-term shift and not something that just 'comes and goes'.

Conservative Party pledges include:

- Recruit 5,000 new police officers each year up to an extra 40,000 extra officers within eight years
- Pay specials an annual allowance to try to encourage more people to come forward for the role
- Replace appointed Police Authorities with directly elected police commissioners
- Freeing the police from unnecessary bureaucracy, including scrapping stop and search forms, to walk the beat in local communities
- More rehabilitation places for addicts

What Andrew Mitchell said at the Parliamentary Reception:

'We think the police are far too fettered at a local level by central decisions, we believe in more local control and less ring-fencing on funding.

'We intend to reduce the amount of bureaucracy with the police. Our intention would be to give back more local control to local BCU commanders.'



Andrew Mitchell, shadow police minister for the Conservative Party

Liberal Democrat Party pledges include:

- Putting 10,000 extra police officers on the streets
- Introduce local policing contracts drawn up to ensure a standard of service for each area
- Parish-controlled and funded community support officers
- Reducing abstractions of local police to major crime elsewhere
- To reduce red-tape and increase operational flexibility

What David Heath said at the Parliamentary Reception:

'We take great pride in our constabulary. I believe it is a concept worth holding onto.

'The rank of sergeant is critical to the operation of the police service. If we do not get that right, we do not get the police service right.'



David Heath, home affairs spokesman for the Liberal Democrat Party