



Paul Ginger, chairman of the Inspectors' Central Committee

Breaking ranks

The Police Federation Conference 2008 saw the publication of the *Well Being at Work* survey for the inspecting ranks. The survey raised many issues, some anticipated and some not, for example, a lack of recognition and support from senior managers.

The Inspectors' Central Committee have been encouraging individual boards to raise the issues with their own chief officer groups, as the survey reports were broken down into each forces response. This has raised some interesting results with some forces already engaging with the branch boards to address some of the issues, and they are to be applauded. However, some forces have quite clearly chosen to ignore the findings with different forces facing different issues. Those forces will be named and shamed at conference 2009 and we believe that the failure to respond to the report speaks volumes about those chief officer groups. We have also been working with the Superintendents' Association nationally who have been very supportive.

There are reports of some forces reducing the numbers of inspecting ranks, this at a time when it is proposed in the latest PACE review to delegate yet more powers and responsibilities from the superintending ranks to the inspecting ranks. The new misconduct regulations coming into force at the end of the year also contribute to more work, in that investigations at the lower levels will be designated to inspectors. We are aware that some forces have not considered this when planning their numbers. Increasing workloads, responsibilities and reducing numbers is a recipe for disaster, and this will be raised with politicians and Ministers at every available opportunity.

The Inspectors' Central Committee is currently working to improve the position of the chief inspecting ranks, as it is generally accepted that there is insufficient recognition in the pay packets of those promoted to the rank. It cannot be right that their salary effectively stands still for two years. Whilst regulations allow for chief constables to promote to a higher pay point, not all do this. We do recognise those chief officers who take advantage of this to demonstrate that their staff do truly matter to them.

There are long standing issues around time off in lieu and work is ongoing to clarify the position of the inspecting ranks, such as pushing for duty rosters to be published. It

can only be fair that inspectors and chief inspectors know what hours they will be working in advance and can plan their home lives around that. Having their rest days cancelled with no, or very little advance warning, should be recompensed in some way by the very early notification as to when that rest day is reallocated.

The Olympic Games in 2012 are going to pose some significant challenges for the police service as a whole. Resilience, training and reward are issues that will be relevant to all ranks involved. Whilst the other federated ranks have protections in place in terms of overtime, etc, these are not available to the inspecting ranks and there are concerns over the potential abuses of our members during this and similar events. Work is currently being undertaken to ensure that there is some form of recognition for those members of the inspecting ranks involved, in terms of being away from home and overtime.

The inspecting ranks are required more and more to undertake those roles that until very recent times were carried out by superintendents. We are aware that many of our members now carry out silver cadre roles and there are inherent dangers involved in this, particularly around personal liabilities. The committee is exploring what protections are available to ensure that no member is put in the position of having to find the funds to pay a civil claim against them when carrying out these roles.

Finally, we urge you to make your voices heard to ensure that you are not abused in terms of workload or working hours, and that there are enough of you to provide resilience, leadership and operational effectiveness.