

United we stand

All ranks are united in wanting police officers to be properly compensated for on-call duties, according to Federation general secretary Ian Rennie.

Mr Rennie said the situation with on-call had been a 'difficult one' but that Staff Side of the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) are "united" in their stance that officers should be compensated properly for their time and that 'no-one should be directed to do on-call'.

A Police Arbitration Tribunal found in favour of the PNB Staff Side's claim to have a national on-call allowance for all police officers carrying out the duty who have restrictions placed on their personal lives - such as having to be within a certain radius of a police station.

The Federation's Inspectors' Central Committee have raised concerns that being on-call could be made a 'requirement' rather than voluntary and the system could be open to abuse.

If inspectors are called in to work they are only given time off in lieu and are not paid overtime prompting fears they would be most likely to be put on-call as a cheaper option.

But Mr Rennie told delegates at the West Yorkshire Police Federation open meeting that the Official Side's offer of £10 for the duty had been derisory and they want to ensure protocols are in place that inspectors would not be used as a cheaper option if on-call is brought in.

Peter Scott, secretary of the local federation, said that inspectors were worried about their work/life balance and that on-call as a requirement for certain posts had crept in without officers realising they could say 'no'.

He added that the £10 offer on the table would not be accepted. "We would urge Ian to look at what civilian support staff get; anything less would not be good enough."

The matter has now been referred to a Police Arbitration Tribunal to decide on an appropriate amount of compensation for the duty.

What do you think of the £10 offer for performing on-call duties?

Det Sgt Paul Myers, west Division CID, Lincolnshire Constabulary, said: "It's a joke, I work ten hours from 8am until 6pm then go on call until 8am the next morning. It's not being called out sometimes that's the issue; it's knowing that you could be called out.

He added: "I have my children sometimes on the weekend and I say I can take them swimming but I can't go in with them in case I get called in."

Det Con Mark Baker, who works for the covert authorities bureau in Bedfordshire Police, and has to deal with situations where lives may be at risk, such as in a kidnapping situation and urgent intensive surveillance.

DC Baker, who has an 18-month-old toddler and a five-year-old boy, is effectively on-call for months in a year as he is on-call overnight for two to three weeks in a month.

"I love my job but a £10 offer is appalling. Civilian staff get three times the amount being offered and that just makes us feel like pond life at the bottom of the food chain."

Insp Janet Stokoe is based in Wandsworth in the Met, and is also a Met federation representative, said that generally officers did not like doing on-call duties as it ruined their social lives.

"You can get called out any time of day or night, offering £10 is an insult."

Det Sgt Karen Myers, from Surrey Police's professional standards department, told is on call every six weeks for seven nights in a row, including on two rest days.

"I have a daughter of thirteen and it does restrict my private life. If we have to go to my daughter's school for commitments there we have to take two cars just in case I get called away."

Ian Rennie: officers should not be directed to do on-call



Cutting costs: officers are not impressed with the £10 on-call offer

