

Justice Committee

Railway Policing (Scotland) Bill

Written submission from the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents (ASPS)

The Association has previously submitted evidence to the committee in relation to the proposed merger of British Transport Police in Scotland with the Police Service of Scotland where most of the suggested questions have been answered and our position remains unchanged since submission.

There are a couple of areas I would specifically like to make comment on:

- It is important that current assets owned/deployed by BTP across Scotland remain in place and are maintained to the present standard so there is no financial detriment to the PSoS when the merger takes place.
- It is our understanding that BTP Scotland presently contributes to national BTP resources such as air support, covert activities, all of which can be provided by PSoS at no cost.
- Previous submissions have raised concerns around the retention of existing BTP officers and staff in Scotland. While there may be a risk that some officers and staff may opt not to remain within Scotland, the merger presents excellent opportunities for existing PSoS staff to specialise in this field of work, sharing their experiences with BTP staff. This, in our opinion, would be of benefit to the merger as it allows for a two-way sharing of experiences.
- There requires to be agreement that PSoS gets seamless access to existing BTP crime recording and intelligence functionality to assist cross border policing arrangements. Changes in cross border powers legislation will allow for present cross border arrangements to be maintained and possibly enhanced.
- Public confidence and passenger safety across railway policing, providing there is a clear public communications strategy, should be enhanced as the PSoS will have greater flexibility for deploying to incidents as well as maintaining a pro-active and visible presence.

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President – Association of Scottish Police Superintendents
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